



Workshops and Presentations

The Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) offers a variety of programs, including Practical Preservation workshops, workshops for historic districts (both for commissioners and potential and current property owners), and presentations on a variety of topics. We can also customize our offerings.

Practical Preservation Workshops

Practical Preservation Workshops are workshops that focus on teaching participants about the physical building, either through a presentation, a demonstration, or a hands-on clinic.



Presentation: In this format, capacity is only limited by the capacity of the site itself. Presentations last about 1.5 hours.

Fee: \$200 for member communities



Demonstration: In this format, capacity is only limited by the capacity of the site itself, but all attendees must have a good view of the skill being demonstrated. The instructor demonstrates a skill and a few people from the audience may try their hand at the skill. A demonstration-oriented workshop lasts 2-3 hours, and some topics include: Wood Window Restoration and Repair, Masonry Maintenance and Repair, and Plaster and Stucco Repair. For these, the instructor will likely bring materials, such as a mock-up of a plaster wall section, for the attendees to see and work with.

Fee: \$400 for member communities



Hands-on: In this format, the capacity is limited to 10-12 participants, depending on the trade and site, because the instructor demonstrates the skill, coaches participants, and the participants actively work on the site or on the materials provided using tools provided. Four hours of active instruction is needed for a hands-on workshop (plus set-up and breakdown), and snacks or a meal may be desired, but food & beverage must happen outside the work space.

Fee: \$750 for member communities



BUILDING ASSESSMENT 101

This workshop is intended for people considering purchasing an older home or small commercial property and want to know how to identify and evaluate the main trouble spots. Participants learn how to complete a basic building assessment and how to determine whether signs of disrepair indicate a simple cosmetic problem or serious structural failure. This program is best when conducted on-site as an interactive “walking presentation” tour led by the instructor through a historic building. An “in-seat” presentation can be arranged if necessary.



GENERAL MAINTENANCE FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

This workshop's participants will learn of the problems common to many older structures, how to remedy them, and how to institute a maintenance program that will prevent the need for many future repairs.



MASONRY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

This workshop investigates stone and brick as building materials and examines some common issues associated with their deterioration and repair. Participants will learn how to assess mortar conditions, how and when to re-point (often referred to as tuckpointing), how and when to replace stones or bricks, and the importance of selecting and using the right replacement mortar.



PLASTER AND STUCCO REPAIR

Participants in this workshop will learn various methods for repairing and restoring plaster and stucco surfaces — both on flat and decorative features — and will also learn maintenance tips to keep their homes looking great well into the future.



PORCH REPAIR

Participants will learn how to diagnose problems, how to repair columns, railings, decking, and steps, and maintenance tips.



WEATHERIZATION

Older and historic houses can be very energy efficient, but need to be insulated and weatherized carefully with their special needs and materials in mind. Learn how to help your older home perform its best while reducing energy costs.



WINDOW RESTORATION AND REPAIR

Participants will learn what it takes to repair and restore wood windows. With the right upgrades, window repair and restoration often provide the same or better energy efficiency than new windows, costs less than replacement, and protects the building's historic integrity.

Historic District Workshops

These workshops usually last between two and three hours.

Fee: \$300 for member communities

HOW TO ESTABLISH A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

For communities considering enacting a local historic district ordinance. Participants learn why Michigan communities decide to protect their historic resources, how to use the State enabling legislation, how to garner support for districting activities, and the process of establishing a local historic district.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSIONER TRAINING

For communities with local historic districts and an ordinance in place. Whether your historic district commissioners are long-standing, new to the commission, or a combination of these, they will benefit from this interactive workshop. Participants will learn about the Michigan enabling legislation that allows a community to establish a commission and locally designated historic districts, the nationally accepted standards to use when making commission decisions, due process, the appeals process, how to work with property owners in the district, and more.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSIONER ADVANCED TRAINING

For communities with local historic districts, an ordinance, and an experienced commission in place. This workshop moves beyond the basics and wrestles with more complex issues. The advanced workshop includes more in-depth discussions of legal issues such as hardship and demolition by neglect and includes two to three optional modules selected by your commission. Possible topics include: hazardous materials (lead paint and/or asbestos), new construction in the local district and issues to consider, substitute materials, and weatherization. MHPN brings in additional subject matter experts as needed for these trainings.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

For communities considering establishing a local historic district, MHPN can facilitate this session as part of a public meeting on local historic districts. This meeting includes two parts: 1) a presentation (45-60 minutes), and 2) an interactive discussion/question-and-answer period with audience members (30-60 minutes, depending on the audience and the municipality). The presentation will introduce what a local historic district is and its purpose, how it affects the property owner, the process of establishing a district, and the local historic district commission and how it makes its decisions. An interactive dialogue with the audience members follows to address audience questions and concerns about local historic districts and the district process.

Presentations

Fee: \$100 for member communities

UNDERSTANDING HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

Historic designations can raise awareness of historic places, be prerequisites for grant programs, and even protect historic buildings. The designation you choose to seek depends on your goals—how to know when to seek a National Register of Historic Places listing, a State Register of Historic Sites listing and when to organize locally for a local historic district. This interactive presentation will answer all your questions about historic designations.

RESEARCHING YOUR HISTORIC BUILDING

If your walls could talk, what would they say? Learn how to investigate your building for clues on its age and design, and learn how to research your house's paper trail, from Sanborn maps to city directories and tax records.

PRESERVATION INCENTIVES FOR NONPROFITS AND COMMUNITIES

Some grants are available for nonprofit preservation projects, including grants from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and others. MHPN also has low-interest loan programs available for intervention and emergency repairs/stabilization, as well as for predevelopment costs. Learn about these programs and more!