

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The Michigan Historic Preservation Network announces its
44th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference

“THE COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT”

(Working Title)

Wednesday, May 8 - Saturday, May 11, 2024
The John E. Fetzer Center - Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
IN PERSON

You are invited to submit a session abstract to be considered for presentation.
Thursday and Friday, May 9-10, are our major program days.
Approximately 24 sessions are needed.

Deadline: Sunday, September 24, 2023, 11:59 PM

*Abstracts are welcomed from Michigan's
Upper and Lower Peninsulas as well as from neighboring states and Canada
and may come from individuals and panels.*

Sessions will not live-streamed this year.

About Our Theme: “The Collaborative Spirit”

From the very start, Michigan citizens have spoken up when important historic properties faced threats. Homeowners would organize to protect a neighborhood. Others raised their voices to save an iconic city hall. Business owners fought to keep a traditional downtown from being emptied by urban sprawl.

Greater legitimacy was given these citizen voices with the 1966 passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. In Michigan, the country's Bicentennial in 1976 brought forth a decade's-long outpouring of local histories, photo-inventories of historic buildings, and historic designations in every corner of the state. Celebrating Michigan's cultural distinction came to a crescendo with Michigan's own Sesquicentennial in 1987.

Michiganders involved in historic preservation could now see there were others ready to collaborate. Fast forward half-a century! Interested individuals are now joined by trained practitioners in the field—historians and preservationists, architects and engineers, anthropologists and archaeologists. Craftspeople and tradespeople with traditional skills make the work possible. Ancillary expertise has grown up among attorneys, accountants, realtors, and others.

What this year's conference celebrates is the "collaborative spirit" that distinguishes the field of historic preservation. You may be working for a living in the preservation trades or professions, but you regularly work side-by-side with those who are self-taught, students, and those embarking on second careers. Few other fields accommodate such a mixture. It's experience that counts, not just credentials!

Now in its 44th year, the MHPN conference welcomes a wide variety of participants, each returning to their community with new contacts and fresh inspiration. How fitting that we're in Kalamazoo! Through the collaboration of many, the City has raised preservation from an interesting possibility to a necessary consideration.

Three Conference Tracks and Their Audiences:

Through years of collaborative effort, our host community of Kalamazoo has created an extraordinarily lively historic downtown, many welcoming historic neighborhoods, and enviable citizen involvement. Against this backdrop, we seek a wide array of abstracts for our three program tracks. The basic conference program is organized into tracks so that participants have a better idea of each session's content. (No abstracts are sought for the Symposium on Wednesday or the Workshop on Saturday morning because they cover special topics developed by the MHPN. Similarly, the tours familiarize participants with the host community and are developed by the 2024 Conference Planning Group.)

Track One: "Theme" – This track focuses on the conference theme of "The Collaborative Spirit." The track is for individuals, people in business and manufacturing, preservation professionals, craftspeople and tradespeople, elected and appointed officials, and government staff - anyone who seeks to collaborate with others to make preservation efforts successful. For example:

- Present a project in which economic revitalization, a sense of place, the reclamation of traditional downtowns and neighborhoods, tourism, etc. depended on a successful collaboration of people and organizations.

Track Two: "Information and Preservation Basics - What You Need to Know to Make Preservation Work" – This track is for those who need to know more about the laws, policies, and designations; the programs of assistance, tax incentives, and economic benefits; and the best practices and educational programs that provide support for cultural resource management. An idea might be:

- Discuss an instance where a good working knowledge of tax credits and loans, or laws and policies, gave people working together the tools they needed to stand up for an archaeological site or important building in their community.

Track Three: "Case Studies and Applied Skills" – This track is for individual property owners, professionals doing design and hands-on work, and community officials who need to know more about the special design needs of historic buildings, traditional trades, and current building and development practices that can best assure the success of a preservation project. An idea might be:

- Present a case study for an historic building that was saved from demolition and returned to an inventive new use because a group of people, organizations, and funders came together to jump-start the process.

Abstract Submission:

An abstract includes the following component parts. Find the Session Proposal Form on the conference page of the MHPN's website, complete it, and submit it via the email address provided on the Form's last page.

NOTE: *It has become common for individual speakers to be included in multiple abstracts. While open to this, the Selection Committee asks any speaker proposing to present in more than two sessions to talk with Conference Manager Janet Kreger – kregerj1981@att.net.*

- **Session Title for the Brochure:** Provide a title that will capture the participant's attention.
- **Topic Statement:** A topic statement of 50 words or less becomes the description in the conference brochure – if your abstract is selected – meant to engage the participant's interest so they attend your session.
- **Summary for Accreditation and Promotional Use:** In 300 words or less, describe the session. This summary allows the Selection Committee to understand what you propose to achieve. The MHPN endorses the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards* and, if appropriate to your topic, asks that you describe your adherence to them in this summary.
- **Learning Objectives:** Provide at least four (4) brief learning objectives fulfilled by your proposed session. These help secure continuing education credits from the American Institute of Architects, American Institute of Certified Planners, etc.
- **Program Track:** Tell us which of the three Program Tracks might be best for your session. Do know that if chosen, however, your session may be assigned to a different track based on how it fits into the overall program.
- **Time Needed:** Tell us how much time might be best for your session. You may be requested to adjust your time pending other submissions and timeslot availability.
- **Type of Presentation:** Help us anticipate your tech and AV needs.
- **Your Moderator:** Is there someone in your session who would like to serve as Moderator? If not, an MHPN Board Member will be assigned to you.
- **OPTIONAL: Photos or Illustrations:** If there are visuals that can help the Selection Committee review your session, please upload them with credits and an indication of whether you have permission to use them.
- **Speaker's Contact Information:** For *each* speaker provide:

- Name as it would appear in the conference brochure if the session is chosen. (For a panel, the first speaker on the Session Proposal Form should be the best one to contact with questions or requests.)
 - Any suffixes to the name – i.e. Ph.D., AIA, Esq., CPA, etc. We do not use prefixes in the brochure.
 - Work Title
 - Work Affiliation
 - Mailing address including address, city, state, and zip code
 - Phone
 - Cell phone for calls and texts
 - E-mail address
 - (If you are unavailable on Thursday, May 9, or Friday, May 10, 2024, please let the Conference Manager know.)
- **Biography:** 150 words or less for *each* speaker, covering such things as education, relevant experience, role in a project, role in the session, etc.

Deadline:

Your abstract is due on or before Sunday, September 24, 2023, by 11:59 PM. Submit it using the email address on the last page of the Session Proposal Form found on the conference page of the MHPN's website – www.mhpn.org. Receipt of the Form will be acknowledged. Conference Manager Janet Kreger, can respond to e-mailed questions about preparing your abstract – kregerj1981@att.net. *Sample abstracts for each Track are available on request.*

Acceptance/Decline and MHPN Terms of Participation:

The Selection Committee will notify selected speakers on or before Sunday, November 5, 2023. Declines will also be acknowledged and those abstracts archived.

If a speaker is selected, the MHPN hosts them on the day he or she speaks, including registration fee, food and beverages, tours, and evening activities. In return, the speaker agrees to present during the assigned time slot without compensation, reimbursement for travel or overnight costs, or an honorarium. If a speaker remains at the conference beyond the day on which they present, the MHPN offers registration fees reduced by 50% as a small means by which we can say thank you.

Speaker Recognition:

Although speakers are not paid, their names and affiliations are included in a conference brochure with a distribution of almost 8,000 copies in Michigan, the Midwest, and around the country. Their participation is noted on preservation-related websites, social media sites, and in e-blasts. They are featured at a well-respected conference that draws 375-400 participants.

Thank you for submitting your abstract for a great session!