



PARTICIPATE IN PRESERVATION

*Preserve, Conserve and Protect
Sense of Place, Community, Spirit*

A Newsletter of Preserving the Wildwoods, an Activism Committee
And Partners in Preservation, a 501c3 Nonprofit

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Is Historic Preservation Just Another Government Regulation? The Answer May Surprise You

Preserving the Wildwoods Editorial Board

How many times have you heard the story of someone who just wanted to fix up their old house but the headache of regulations caused them to give up, resulting in the demolition of the home?

One of the arguments against historic commissions in the Wildwoods is that people don't want additional government regulations telling them what to do with their property. A valid point, but think of the current situation in the Wildwoods where all of the existing government regulations are oriented towards the destruction of older homes.

Let's take a case of a small one-story Wildwood cottage built in the 1920s. A home like this is still common in Wildwood and is assessed at around \$100K. Assume the land is 60K of the value and the structure is 40K. With government regulations for coastal areas, if you make repairs on a house that exceed 50% of the structure's value, then you are mandated to lift the house above FEMA's base flood elevation.

If your home needs a major system replaced such as plumbing, electrical, or HVAC, you could easily imagine hitting 20K of work. So as an owner of an affordable home, you are looking at a huge additional cost to lift your house. Once you are lifting the house, you are now dealing with a major construction project to build out a new foundation along with possibly adding a story or two. Since there are no historic districts in Wildwood, your construction project faces more government regulations of bringing your old home up to modern code which can be extremely difficult and expensive. If the owner has the funds, they probably demolish the home to rebuild from scratch. Or the owner sells the house and the new buyer demolishes and builds a more expensive home pushing out another one of the working class homes that made Wildwood what it is today.

There are challenges of living in a coastal environment, but if the government sets the bar so high through flood and building regulations to live in these areas, then it's clear why the working and middle class are being pushed out of these areas. The Jersey Shore has radically transformed over the last few decades from a mix of incomes to being dominated by wealthy 2nd homeowners. It only takes a short drive up to Avalon or Stone Harbor to see all the small cottages and bungalows now replaced with McMansions.

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(Front row, left to right) Theresa Williams, Taylor Henry and Cathy Smith accepted awards this fall for their contributions to historic preservation in the Wildwoods.

Preserving the Wildwoods and Partners in Preservation Win Awards

This fall, our group won two prestigious awards. Preserving the Wildwoods chairperson Taylor Henry received the Young Preservationist Award from Preservation New Jersey, and our nonprofit parent organization Partners in Preservation received the Historic Preservation Award from the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce.

Young Preservationist Award

"This year Preservation New Jersey is celebrating excellence in preservation with the introduction of new categories like the Young Preservationist Award," stated Executive Director Emily Manz. The award is in recognition of a preservationist under the age of 40 making important contributions to the preservation field in New Jersey through their work or service.

Taylor Henry, winner of the Young Preservationist Award, began volunteering with the Wildwood Historical Society in 2017 and quickly rose to become its youngest President in October 2019. During that time Taylor authored the book *Wildwoods Houses Through Time*, and cofounded Preserving the Wildwoods.

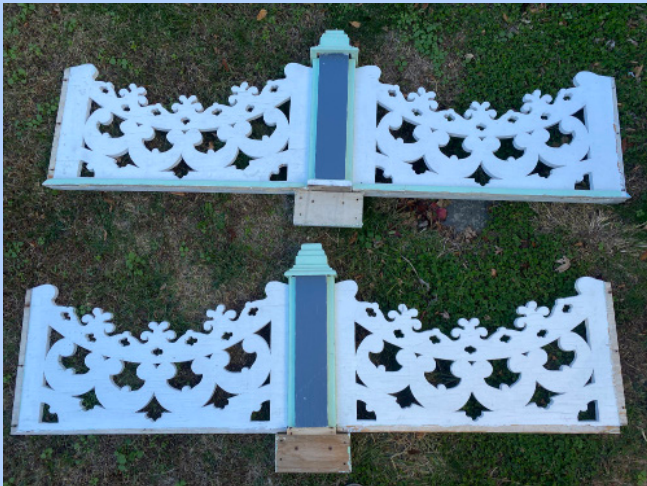
Historic Preservation Award

This award from the county Chamber of Commerce was accepted by Cathy Smith, Theresa Williams and Taylor Henry at the chamber's annual installation dinner. The award will be displayed in the Holly Beach Schoolhouse at Holly Beach Park.

Contest to Win Wildwood Gingerbread Trim

We've acquired gingerbread trim from a home in Wildwood. We want the gingerbread to remain in the Wildwoods and are running a contest so one lucky person can get this unique piece of Wildwood history. Visit our website, fill out our entry form, and you will be in the running to win this piece of Wildwood history. Your bid will go to our non-profit organization to help fund future Wildwoods preservation projects.

Submissions close on January 31st, 2022. We'll announce a winner in February 2022. Contest is open only to entries who intend to keep the gingerbread in the Wildwoods. The trim is located in Wildwood and will require you to pick it up. For pictures and details on the trim, as well as the online contest form, visit <https://www.preservingthewildwoods.com/blog/wildwood-gingerbread-contest>.



Correcting Common Misconceptions About Historic Preservation

Preserving the Wildwoods Editorial Board

Most people when they hear the words “historic preservation” conjure up visions of streets lined with brick Williamsburg-style buildings, Victorian gingerbread, or Doo Wop style signs and railings. Historic Preservation is more than that.

Preservation is all about the past: There is a misconception that preservationists are strident devotees of the past who resist any and all changes. Actually, preservation is quite future-oriented because there is strong focus on modifying buildings for future use. Only a small percentage of historic buildings are restored. Most are adaptable and easily repurposed.

Adaptive reuse is the process of repurposing buildings that have outlived their original purposes for different uses or functions while at the same time retaining their historic features. This process benefits the environment by conserving materials and natural resources (Does vinyl siding have the strength and quality of old brick?). It also helps to maintain a community identity. As examples, Heckendorn Shiles Architects converted the Ambler Boiler House, a power-generating station in Pennsylvania, into a modern office building. Mills and factories throughout New England, especially in Lowell, Massachusetts, are being turned into housing complexes.

Preservation freezes buildings in time: Preservation projects are flexible, allowing architects and developers to preserve what is unique and irreplaceable while bringing a building up to modern safety or accessibility standards. For example, adding modern earthquake protections to buildings on the West Coast or providing buffers against flooding in high-risk areas.

Preservation is only for the rich and elite, and for high-style buildings: Historic preservation isn't about house museums anymore. Today's preservation movement is increasingly diverse focusing not just on architectural landmarks, but on more modest sites of social and cultural significance.

Historic Preservation is not about stopping change and is certainly not about squeezing out creative and exciting new development and architecture. Preservation allows us to retain the best of shared heritage to preserve or adapt sites of unique quality and beauty, revitalize neighborhoods, spur economic revitalization and quite simply, create better communities.



Creative Preservation

This Wildwood homeowner (left) wanted to double their living space. Instead of demolishing the roof and building up, they did a double lift and framed up new living space below. SJ Hauck Construction has been saving houses throughout the Wildwoods and beyond by lifting them above flood level. Learn more at sjhauckhomes.com (Photo courtesy of SJ Hauck)

Want to stay informed about development in the Wildwoods but can't attend meetings? Visit [preservingthewildwoods.com/blog](https://www.preservingthewildwoods.com/blog) to read our monthly recaps of Wildwood Planning & Zoning board meetings!

Preserving the Wildwoods is always looking for volunteers to join our team. To get involved, please visit www.preservingthewildwoods.com/get-involved

The Lampliter Motel Sign Saga Continues

Preserving the Wildwoods Editorial Board

The Sobresky/Mutter Family won the second Lampliter Motel sign we rescued earlier this year! The Lampliter was where they stayed at every year and they were devastated when the motel was suddenly sold and demolished. Fortunately they will now always have a piece of their favorite motel.

The family started going to the Lampliter in the summer of 1997. "We would go every year with my parents," they said. "Then after my Dad passed away in 2009, we started a new tradition every summer, Girls Week! It was me, my 2 daughters, my Mom, my sister and my niece. We will really miss going to the Lampliter! It was such a great place! So many memories! Thank you for letting us have a piece of it!"

The funds raised by auctioning off the signs went directly to our nonprofit parent organization Partners In Preservation and to compensating A.B.S. Sign Co., Inc. for their services.



"Stymied By Success" Webinar Explains Why the Wildwoods' Motels Weren't Preserved

If you want to learn more about the evolving preservation movement in the Wildwoods, a 1-hour November webinar by Preservation New Jersey and Stephanie M. Hoagland of Jablonski Building Conservation is a must-watch.

"At the turn of the 21st century, the future for Wildwood was looking rosy," said Hoagland. "With over 300 mid-century modern motels situated along a six-mile long barrier island near the southern tip of New Jersey, the Wildwoods were finally being recognized as the largest collection of Doo Wop motels in the country.

"In short order, the Wildwoods became a victim of their own success," Hoagland continued. "With a large number of 'Mom and Pop' motels, no chain stores, and its beachside location, the Wildwoods had a distinct 'sense of place' and an authentic identity. Its unique character quickly attracted developers eager to cash-in on the island's new-found popularity. Modern, innocuous condos, clad in vinyl siding, began popping up all over the island."

To find out what happened and what we can do to solve it, view the Q&A entitled "Stymied by Success" at <https://youtu.be/bECTfhv6B1Y>.

#WildwoodsHousesThroughTime

This sketch (right) of a Gothic Revival house at 115 East Rio Grande Avenue is from the Wildwood architectural survey prepared by John J Olivieri architects in the 1990s. This still-standing 1884 cottage is the oldest residence in the city. Read its history in the 2018 book *Wildwoods Houses Through Time*, and email us at preservingthewildwoods@gmail.com for a copy of the survey!

What was demolished this week? What was restored? Follow us at facebook.com/preservingthewildwoods for daily development updates from the Wildwoods!

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Historic preservationists advocate for regulations that help owners of older homes repair their home instead of driving them to demolish or sell their homes. The Wildwoods are not Cape May and historic regulations in the Wildwoods would not be concerned with the type of shutters or paint used on your house. The goal of the Wildwoods historic regulations is to prevent demolitions by grandfathering in older homes so they don't have to be burdened with a crush of government regulations to do necessary repair and maintenance projects. Historic home regulations will help keep the quaint and affordable homes standing and keep the Wildwoods from looking like every other generic place along the Shore.

We'll never live in a world with zero regulations and when you own property there will always be some rules you'll need to follow as a homeowner. So if we're going to have some regulations on our property, why not support positive regulations that are geared towards keeping people in their homes as opposed to the existing government regulations that are all oriented towards the destruction of older homes?



The Power of Positivity

Gail Hayman Cohen, PTW Board Member

Things often look worse than they really are. Media, including social media, sell advertising and subscriptions filled with stories that generate anger and disappointment. Comments from pundits, commentators, and “spout-off” participants do the same. It always seems as though pessimists appear wiser than optimists.

It is always easier to be a pessimist than an optimist because the former needs to only identify problems, while the latter must propose solutions. Preservation is about just that. Identifying problems and trying to find solutions that will help maintain community character.

It is easy and costless to express one’s grievances and opinions on a venue like “spout-off” that grants anonymity. It is much harder to put actions to words by joining or supporting an organization that does just that. Preservation helps keep communities beautiful, vibrant, and livable and gives people a stake in their surroundings but only if they turn words into actions.

Condotel: Preserving Motels Via Adaptive Reuse

Taylor Henry, PTW President

When a motel is converted to a condotel, it is spared from demolition and instead adaptive reused for a new purpose. Often, sadly, the conversion results in the loss of original signage and theming. But it doesn’t have to be that way! Many condotels maintain their historic elements, setting a standard for preservation of Doo Wop architecture. The Lollipop Condo Motel, the Astronaut Motel, the Carriage Stop (*right*) and the Cara Mara are some great examples.

If you are a developer planning a motel-to-condo conversion, please hold onto the features that make your building special! Keep those signs and facades. And pick up a copy of “How to Doo Wop” from the Doo Wop Preservation League (The Wildwoods, NJ).



Keep in Touch!

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PIP website: www.partnersinpreservation.net

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Show Your Support; Make a Donation!

Two ways to make a tax-deductible donation:

1. Mail a check to Partners in Preservation, PO Box 2538, Wildwood NJ 08260 (optional: write “Newsletter” in the memo)

2. Make a donation or become a friend via PayPal at wildwoodnjhistory.com/donate or www.partnersinpreservation.net

Thanks for your support!



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