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*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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### Saving the Lampliter Motel Sign

*By Taylor Henry, PTW President*

The Jonkers were the winning bidders on the west-facing Lampliter Motel sign we rescued from demolition! Pictured is Phil Jonker with the winning prize. Ever since he was a child, his family stayed in the same room in the Wildwood Crest motel every year for the state Firefighters' Convention, because his dad was a firefighter. But in 2021, the motel was suddenly sold and demolished, marking the family's last stay at their home away from home. The Jonkers will display this cherished sign at Erskine Lakes Volunteer Fire Company in Ringwood NJ in memory of Phil Jonker's late father.

The east-facing side, which also included the frame, went to a family who had been going there for 24 years until it was knocked down. "Of course we were devastated," they said. "Now we'll have a piece of it!"

Although we would've liked to see the whole motel saved, we are glad a piece of it will live on. Thank you again to Preserving the Wildwoods member Chris Tirri for springing into action to rescue this sign (plus room keys and more) before it was too late. The funds raised with the sign auctions went directly to our nonprofit as well as compensating ABS Signs for their services.



*Above: ABS Signs helped Preserving the Wildwoods save the sign of Wildwood Crest's historic Lampliter Motel when it was demolished in May 2021. Photo courtesy Taylor Henry.*



### Wildwood: A Body With Many Parts

*By Gail Hayman Cohen, PTW Board Member*

I envision the Wildwoods as a body with many parts, alive and thriving, with each part of the body wholly dependent on the other body, the bones so to speak, is our history, which weaves the many stories that have come from many centuries of experiences. Many of those stories are found in our historic buildings — structures of all types — Victorian, Folk, Italianate, Queen Anne, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Doo Wop, etc. Our shared history comes alive here every day. Visitors to our island can come to appreciate the many layers of our journey...some sad, many joyful...and learn and then share. We owe it to our ancestors as well as future generations to embrace and protect our history.

*Left: Let's not treat our historic buildings the way Holly Cottage on Rio Grande Avenue, built in the 1880s, was treated before it was unceremoniously demolished in 2002. Photos courtesy David Williams.*

# Reviving the Wildwoods' Historic Preservation Commission

*Preserving the Wildwoods Editorial Board*

Like the Wildwoods, Philadelphia is experiencing a surge of redevelopment that threatens its historic buildings. Although two-thirds of Philly's buildings are old enough to be deemed historic, only 3% have been formally recognized, leaving the rest unprotected and vulnerable.

Their Department of Planning and Development is in the process of completing a historic survey of its building stock, an intensive inventory that will take years to complete. In the meantime, those unprotected buildings are being demolished so quickly and haphazardly that some are calling the city "Demodelphia."

Similarly, in Wildwood, our group completed a survey of the Historic Buildings of Pacific Avenue this spring as requested by the Pacific Avenue Redevelopment Advisory board, and now we've resumed our survey of the entire city. Ever since we started this project in 2019, we've lost dozens upon dozens of buildings that were already surveyed. We still have years more surveying ahead of us and can't afford to lose much more.

"Philadelphia's history isn't a burden, it's our calling card," Ashley Hahn wrote in a May Philadelphia Inquirer editorial. "But increasing numbers of old buildings are demolished annually by city contractors and private owners, landfilling reusable materials and untold histories."

The newspaper called for its city to instate demolition review. "Without demolition review, the city is undercutting its well-intentioned survey before it starts," Hahn wrote. "It can't have Historical Commission staff extend a hand to communities promising to protect sites they value, while the other issues demolition permits for the same places."

Like the Inquirer calling upon Philly, we are calling upon Wildwood to immediately enact demolition review. This could be the job of a Historic Preservation Commission, a volunteer advisory board that answers to the Planning & Zoning department. We have one such commission in our master plan, although it has been inactive for over a

decade. We ask the city to dust off the Historic Preservation Ordinance and consider our recommendations for members to appoint to it. See [preservingthewildwoods.com/blog](http://preservingthewildwoods.com/blog) for that list of recommended members.

Although our city is younger than Philly, it is no less historic. Now is the time to act by enacting demolition review measures in Wildwood before it's too late.

## Recent Mentions in the Press

Preserving the Wildwoods has been active in the local preservation scene recently - you might have even seen us in the news!

*The state shut down the Shamrock bar. Some think Wildwood will never be the same.* (Philadelphia Inquirer, July 3, 2021). PTW board members Taylor Henry and Jackson Betz discuss the impending demolition of the Shamrock pub and its implications for local preservation.

*In the Wildwoods, discover the iconic attractions that give it its eclectic atmosphere.* (Jersey Best, August 10, 2021). PTW board member Chris Tirri discusses the Wildwoods' Doo Wop motels and their attraction for tourists.

*Fascinations Grand Chorus builds on 'tradition of horror' with 'Terror in the Night: Act Two'.* (NJ.com, August 1, 2021). Jersey City songwriting duo Fascinations Grand Chorus mentions PTW while promoting their latest, Wildwood-inspired, album.

*Shamrock Memories Live On, Despite Dismantling* (Cape May County Herald, July 23, 2021). PTW president Taylor Henry discusses the salvaging of artifacts from the Shamrock pub.

## Adaptive Reuse: A Future Direction for the Wildwoods?

*Gail Hayman Cohen, PTW Board Member*

Adaptive reuse is "the process of taking an existing structure and updating or adapting it for a new use or purpose," according to [prosoco.com/what-is-adaptive-reuse/](http://prosoco.com/what-is-adaptive-reuse/). "This type of construction often occurs when a building's previous purpose becomes outdated or even obsolete."

Restoring or retrofitting an existing building is an investment in a neighborhood, a community and a town. It "increases market value, enhances the quality of community and related activity, and attracts more interest and investment," the article continues. It is also good for the environment, as it is the biggest way to recycle.

Agudas Achim, built in Chicago's North Shore in 1922, is a magnificent structure built in a combination of styles and detailing including influences of the Romanesque-Revival style and with Spanish and Art Deco influences. The building consisted of a sanctuary that had seating for 1,750-2,200 and included offices, kitchens, classrooms, and multipurpose rooms. The building operated until it closed in 2008.



*Use your creative imagination: How can this building be reused? Photo courtesy Preserving the Wildwoods*

Developer and adaptive reuse specialist Cedar Street Companies acquired the property and devised a plan to restore much of the three-story building and divide its interior into 40 chic studios and one-bedroom rental apartments. A lot of the core characteristics were kept including architectural details, the façade, foyer and staircase remained and the Ark case and stained glass windows were donated to area synagogues.

## Survey Shows Most People Prefer Classic Wildwoods Homes

By Dennis Pierce, PTW Board Member

When it comes to the charm of older buildings versus new construction, people overwhelmingly prefer the older Wildwoods residential buildings. That is the consensus according to a survey put together by Preserving the Wildwoods in partnership with QuestionPro software.

The architectural survey contained 10 randomized questions each with two images. One image was of new residential construction built in the last 20 years. The other image was of residences built before the 1920s. Over 200 people completed the survey and the results showed that people preferred older buildings by a large majority: 88% to 12%.

The goal in creating this survey was to gather data on the type of building styles preferred by visitors, residents, and fans of the Wildwoods. We hear anecdotally that people are sad from the destruction of buildings on the island and are unhappy with the explosion of cookie-cutter new construction. Concepts such as charm and character have a subjective element, but the results from this survey provide objective data showing the beauty and uniqueness of older architectural styles are what the majority of people want in the Wildwoods.

The results of our survey are in line with results found by a National Civic Art Society survey that showed the majority of Americans preferred classical architecture for government and federal buildings. Their survey found that more than 72% of people preferred the traditional architecture which is similar to our result of 88% preferring traditional Wildwoods architecture. Just as Americans prefer their courthouses to have the pleasing forms of classical columns and pediments and not be dreary concrete and glass bunkers, we also prefer the Wildwoods' homes to evoke a simpler time of porches, greenspace, and more modest accommodations.

It's clear that there is something special to these old homes that resonates with the public. Older homes provide us with a sense of place. Newer construction tends to fill up an entire lot to maximize square footage, creating a claustrophobic effect on the street. Compare this to the older homes which generally take up less of the lot so they provide some breathing room to pedestrians with trees, grass, and plants.

Older construction also has quirkier elements such as turrets, unique facades with clapboards, stucco, brick, shingles, and interesting roof lines such as clipped gables, steeper roof angles, and dormers. These elements become part of the local flavor where people remember the "house with the witch's hat turret" or the "house with the purple diamond shingles". Newer construction leans more towards a boxy design using neutral colors to maximize a return on investment for developers. The modern style leads to the cookie-cutter mentality where it becomes difficult to tell if you are in Wildwood or Sea Isle City.

With such a strong preference from the public, our recommendation is for developers, builders, and government officials to take more design guidelines from the past and incorporate them into new construction to maintain the distinctive character of the Wildwoods.

For more details on the survey results, please see the results here: <https://www.preservingthewildwoods.com/blog/architecture-survey-results>



### #WildwoodsHousesForSale

In the post pinned to the top of our Facebook page, you can take a look inside the oldest building on Pacific Avenue, 3120 Pacific, built in the 1890s. It needs some TLC but could be truly glorious with the right amount of dedication. So many possibilities ranging from a family home to a hotel with retail at ground level. Could be restored with grants and tax credits. Most new houses don't have tin ceilings, plaster walls, marble fireplaces, ornate staircases, solid old growth woodwork and doors, or stained glass windows! For sale by owner. To find out more, contact the owner at 609-425-7720.

### Keep in Touch

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### Write to Us

Partners in Preservation: PO Box 2538, Wildwood, NJ 08260

### 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](http://wildwoodnjhistory.com/donate) or [www.partnersinpreservation.net](http://www.partnersinpreservation.net)

Thanks for your support!

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## Mourning a Loss: The Ivy Hotel

*Taylor Henry, PTW President*

This building was demolished early this year.

Most people remember it as the Barnabas House, but don't realize it was originally the Hotel Ivy or that it was moved by truck to its final location.

Hurricane Sandy wasn't kind to this area. Nonetheless, if this building sustained the same damage in a preservation town, it may have been remediated instead of demolished.

We can look at our old buildings for their potential, not just their challenges. Although it's too late for this one, there are more still standing that deserve creative and innovative vision. Let's look at our town with more positivity.

*Left: An early 20th century view of the Barnabas House in its original role as the Hotel Ivy. Photo courtesy Wildwood Historical Society.*

## Preserving the Wildwoods Promotes Planting Trees and Flowers in the Wildwoods

This summer Preserving the Wildwoods launched a new campaign titled "Bring the Woods Back to the Wildwoods". The campaign's goal is to inspire business and home owners to plant trees and flowers for their positive impact on the environment and our wellbeing.

The campaign includes posters that were distributed to local businesses. The posters are reprints from Natalie Kieninger, who was involved with Main Street Wildwood in the 1990s. Preserving the Wildwoods also worked with local expert Steve Murray to produce an informational article on the types of plants appropriate to the Wildwoods' coastal climate.

If you are interested in a free "Bring the Woods Back to the Wildwoods" poster to display on your business or home, please contact Preserving the Wildwoods at [preservingthewildwoods@gmail.com](mailto:preservingthewildwoods@gmail.com)

For information on types of plants and trees appropriate for a South Jersey seashore environment, see <https://www.preservingthewildwoods.com/blog/plants-and-trees>



*Preserving the Wildwoods members Dennis Pierce, Gail Cohen and Taylor Henry present the "Beautifully with Flowers & Trees" poster to Wildwood Mayor Pete Byron at City Hall on July 30.*

**PTW**  
**Promote, Preserve, Protect**  
**Partners in Preservation**  
**Preserving the Wildwoods**

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