

HELPFUL HINTS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECTS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

- Be creative and search beyond the traditional sources of assistance. Professional fund-raisers are emphatic that "the best fundraising is local."
- Project sponsors tend to focus fundraising efforts on large business firms or corporations that have facilities in the area; but it's astonishing what can be earned by a series of bake sales, community suppers, benefits (costume parties, dances, concerts, recitals, readings, lectures, film matinees, variety shows, talent nights, charity auctions, and other "home-grown" performances), and similar festivities.
- Local writers, poets, musicians, and other performing artists may be willing to do benefit readings or concerts.
- Road races and walk-a-thons (and other types of "thons") are popular fund-raisers, too.
- Speak to bank trust officers about any local or individual trusts, bequests, and foundations that they administer, with "purposes" that might encompass the goals of the preservation project.
- There may even be some municipal trust funds that could help--check with the Trustees of Trust Funds for more information.
- Fact-finding tours to other towns, to meet people involved with similar projects, aren't generally used as fund-raisers but certainly do raise awareness and build networks.
- putting "Opportunity Knocks!" features, focusing on the properties and possibilities, in local, statewide, and regional newspapers, business and trade journals, and fed to national wire services
- *Yankee Magazine* coverage
- placing a real estate advertisement in "Historic Properties" section of the National Trust *Historic Preservation* magazine ("imaginative new use needed for...")
- working with real estate firms that specialize in marketing historic properties
- holding a widely advertised open house and walkover, with generous refreshments, at the building/s; have easels, flip charts, and markers so people can write down their ideas (put a few notes down beforehand to prime the pump and avoid the *horror vacui* of a blank sheet) -- this is very effective if several other local organizations act as co-sponsors and compete to get the most representatives there; you could even offer door prizes.
- consulting with municipal boards and commissions (Planning Board, Budget Committee, Capital Improvements Program subcommittee, Heritage Commission, Historic District Commission, Recreation Committee, Conservation Commission, et al., as well as the Selectmen) to consider (and brainstorm, if suitable) how the building might fit into Town (and town) long-range needs, or help to address future concerns and priorities
- reaching out to community groups (representing the arts, business, education, recreation, religion, social services, etc.) to solicit their ideas and possible participation
- organizing a profit-making investment group to provide pooled resources for acquiring, preserving, reusing, and managing the property
- using the federal IRS "certified rehab of a certified historic structure" preservation tax incentives for income-producing preservation work (contact Christine Fonda, the Division of Historical Resources' National Register and Tax Incentives Coordinator, for more information)
- thinking of new ways to solve old dilemmas -- for example, site issues can be intimidating, but often parking spaces and access to restroom facilities can be arranged or leased from abutting entities, especially for staggered uses that don't conflict with their own needs.

Chasing dollars is only one part of a historic preservation project; changing minds is sometimes harder. It's a challenge to look at buildings on problem sites, needing love and care and investment, and then to gather the imagination and creativity for envisioning the widest possible range of potential--and appropriate--future uses. And some of the most effective methods to turn nightmares into dreams sound ridiculous, but they are effective!

Here are strategies that have worked:

- organizing an *ad hoc* (often, self-selected) advocacy group to guide the preservation effort ("we'll *have* to do it because no one else is...")
- having large-group brainstorming sessions
- having small-group (task team) brainstorming sessions (these can be turned into friendly competitions--one step beyond parlor games--which are often more productive than mass deliberations)

This list looks long; but it's really a quick recitation. With more thought, preservation-minded people could come up with an even more comprehensive -- and effective -- collection of ideas.