

Solutions Shared for Maintaining Historic Landmark Status

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better informed about the value of historic structures and the importance of authenticity helps preserve a community's character, he said.

Mr. Neumann, who performs architectural reviews for Island projects, suggests that applicants provide more information to help make his review more comprehensive. Documents and photographs that show the way a building or a site looks now, compared to what is being proposed, along with photos of the surrounding area, would aid in the process.

When performing an architectural review, Mr. Neumann uses the city's zoning ordinance.

"That's the legality I use to assess a proposed building," he said.

The current ordinance does not prevent demolition, but requiring city approval for demolition of any Island building is a suggestion offered by both Dr. Busch and Mr. Neumann.

The city might consider other options before a building is demolished, said Mr. Neumann, including moving it, which has been a pattern on the Island over the years.

For historic buildings, Dr. Busch said, criteria that more closely models the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation would help the Island retain its historic character.

To assist property owners, federal grants are available to



Built in 1890 and 1891, the East Bluff cottage Craig Mawr is seen here as it appeared in 1900. The cottage was built by the Walsh family of Chicago and is a vernacular Queen Anne style of architecture with turrets for viewing the lake. (Photographs of the cottage courtesy of Mackinac State Historic Parks)

those who seek to renovate National Historic Structures. Landowners who establish conservation easements can receive tax credits.

Mackinac Island does not have to go the way of Chicago's Soldier Field, say national and state preservationists. The 83-year-old football field was stripped of its National Historic Landmark status last year after undergoing major remodeling when its trademark Doric columns were hidden beneath a seating area.

The concern among preservationists is that Mackinac

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At right: This photograph was taken in 2005 following a complete restoration by new owners Ann and David Levy, who purchased the home in 2000. The East Bluff cottage is owned by the Levys, who lease the land from the Mackinac Island State Park Commission. Restoration of the cottage followed the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The guidelines are followed for all exterior restoration projects in Mackinac Island State Park.



The appearance of the cottage was altered in the early to mid-20th century.



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