

Development and Preservation

We continue to find ourselves faced with the need for buildings and parks, and the quandary of where to build them. We need our built environment to meet our functional needs and artistic preferences. Our choices are to re-purpose an existing building or park, or to construct something completely new on an undeveloped piece of land.

We cannot cover the earth with man-made buildings and parks, we must not. We need an undeveloped, natural environment — a wild environment — with which to discover and restore our humanity. The Earth also needs such an environment. Every day we face a choice of imposing our needs on Nature, or cooperating with Nature to meet our mutual needs.

We have a need that is too often not recognized, the need to hold onto our history. This is why we have museums, why we smile when we see a 100-year old bank building, still with the architectural design that was popular one hundred years ago. re-purposed as a garden center. This is why we wonder why a street has the name it does and why our fascination with the discoveries of archaeologists in Egypt continues apace.

How can we simultaneously meet our needs for development and preservation?

- a) When we conceive a need for a building, look among the existing population of buildings for one that can be repurposed and whose architectural design can be preserved in some way without denying our modern artistic preferences.
- b) For buildings that have lost their structural integrity and face extensive reconstruction or replacement, adopt criteria focused on preservation.
- c) There will always be buildings that require complete removal and/or replacement, for these see the next item.
- d) Document existing buildings with photographs, drawings, and maps. Display these in a community museum.
- e) Document new buildings as for existing ones. This establishes a baseline for subsequent changes.
- f) Write histories of the community growth that explain the patterns of development and the names given to streets, buildings, and parks. Display these histories in a community museum.
- g) Preserve and protect the unbuilt, natural environment.
- h) Teach and encourage children to experience, even submerge themselves in, the natural environment.
- i) Adopt programs to assist older and mobility-impaired residents to revisit the natural environment.
- j) Community planning to inventory community values, needs, assets, and liabilities.
- k) Community planning to establish processes, rules, guidelines, and resources to support development and preservation.

Inevitably, a consistent adoption of the directions listed above will require local laws and funding sources. These can be addressed by item (k).