

**Society for the
Preservation
of Greek Housing**
PO Box 2765
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NEWSLETTER

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A Word from the President

Synergism is the joining of two or more forces to achieve a goal that could not be obtained by any one force individually. The goal of the supporters of the SPGH is to educate the public on the historical and architectural significance of the fraternity and sorority houses on the UI campus and to preserve and document the unique architecture of those houses.

The SPGH must strongly support the educational/architectural/historic aspects of its charter. To fail to do so would result not only in the loss of the value of such education per se, but would also jeopardize the tax status of the SPGH. If the tax status is lost, the tax advantage of contributions to the SPGH is lost. Fewer funds would result in less repair and maintenance of many of the old chapter houses.

Those of us who are actively involved with the SPGH will strive to balance those forces that have combined to make the SPGH a reality. We look forward to working with all of you.

Houses Currently on the Historic Register

Alpha Delta Phi, 310 E John, C
Alpha Xi Delta, 715 W Michigan, U
Beta Theta Pi, 202 E Daniel, C
Delta Kappa Epsilon, 313 E John, C
Delta Upsilon, 312 E Armory, C
Kappa Delta Rho, 1110 S Second, C
Kappa Sigma, 212 E Daniel, C
Phi Mu, 706 W Ohio, U
Sigma Alpha Epsilon, 211 E Daniel, C

Program Implementation Committee

The Society Program Implementation Committee has been busy the past three months. Applications have been submitted by Alpha Tau Omega, Delta Phi, Phi Kappa Sigma and most recently from Sigma Phi Delta. Each house has had a well thought out program and prepared construction project. ATO was the test case for the Society and had a great deal of their project approved for Society funding. Their architect provided the Committee with a detailed breakdown of each area of work and the associated costs. There was enough description for the committee to verify compliance with the ten items of the Grant Application checklist. Don't forget that all ten must be met in the affirmative or not applicable in order for the rehabilitation item to qualify for funding through the Society.

The Delta Phi and Phi Kappa Sigma (Skulls) Fraternities have also made applications that make their houses more viable places to live without compromising the architectural integrity of the facility. It is important to note that some of the items requested on the Grants Applications do not qualify through the Society but that does not mean the house cannot affect the work. It just means that the item cannot be funded through the Society. If you need a copy of the Checklist and Application Packet, or want to discuss your intended project for compliance, please contact Rod Reid at 217-352-7696 ♦

Documenting Your Chapter House

The Chapter History

A history of your fraternity/sorority chapter and your chapter house should be written and a copy preserved in the University Archives. An individual should be selected to research and write the history. The person chosen could be the chapter historian, an involved alumna/alumnus, or any member with the interest, knowledge, and time to devote to the project. Because history does not stand still, it is important to develop procedures for updating the written history according to an established timetable, i.e. every ten years.

In researching the history, it will be necessary to identify and locate all available sources of information. Records may be located in the fraternity/sorority house, with individual alumnae/alumni, or at the national headquarters. It may be necessary to solicit material from alumnae/alumni and to undertake a project to do oral history interviews to supplement the written record.

The University of Illinois Archives can be a valuable resource and provide advice and assistance in researching your history. The Archives has publications, photographs, and other documentation. To assist with future research and updating of your history, copies of material collected in writing the history, including

oral history interviews, should be deposited in the University Archives. The individual researching and writing the history is encouraged to consult with the archivist for student life and culture.

In writing the history, it is important to include information on the founding (dates), charter members, influential members, and all significant events and activities. It is also important to record information about the chapter house(s), including construction date, architects, financing, renovations and repairs (interior and exterior), and any damage done to the house by natural disasters such as fires or floods. The history should contain information about all buildings that the chapter occupied in since inception.

Architectural Records

It is important to preserve the architectural records of your chapter house. Preservation negatives and prints of the architectural drawings (blueprints, specifications, interior and exterior) should be made and deposited in the University Archives. The negatives should meet archival standards and the positives should be printed on archival paper. The preferred size is 8"x10".

Proper steps should be taken to preserve the original drawings. They may be preserved in the University Archives with the copies. If the chapter prefers to keep the originals, they should be stored in a dark, dry, fire-proof and water-proof

environment. In many cases originals are in the possession of the architects. The chapter should obtain copies and maintain them as their own set of originals in one of the two manners detailed above.

Photographs and Videotapes

Photographs of the interior and the chapter house throughout its life should be maintained. These photographs may document structural and cosmetic changes to the building, the landscape and environment surrounding the house, events and activities held in the house, the interior design and furnishings, and the basic changes in living conditions and life styles of members. Older photographs may be solicited and copied from alumnae/alumni. A plan to insure that the house is photographically documented on consistent basis should be developed.

In addition to photographs, a video record of the house would be of value. In addition to its research and historical documentation value, it would have legal and evidential value in case of fire or other damage or destruction to the house. A copy of any video should be stored off the premises in a safe location.

Dated and identified copies of all available photographs and videotapes should be preserved in the University Archives. ♦

Preservation Copies of Architectural Drawings

The architectural drawings of your chapter house are valuable sources of information and should be preserved. The Society for the Preservation of Greek Housing can assist you in their preservation.

The Society's Preservation Committee will have photographic preservation negatives and prints made of your architectural drawings and split the cost with you. The cost is approximately \$6.75 per image. Your fraternity/sorority would provide funds for half of the cost of making the photographic copies and the Society would provide matching funds for the other half. The preservation copies would be maintained in the Society's archives which are housed in the University of Illinois Archives. They would be available for copying upon request.

The society will budget a certain amount each year to apply towards matching funds for this process. Therefore, there will only be a certain number of projects that will be financed each year. For more information or to apply for matching funds to have your architectural drawings copied, contact a member of the Society's Preservation Committee. Together we can preserve an important part of your heritage. ♦

Did You Know...

The National Register Does Not

-Disallow private property owners from making changes or painting their house; you can tear the building down.

-Force property owners to make any improvements of their property

-Force businesses to change signs

-Create a review commission

-Limit the use of buildings

-Cost the property owner anything to be listed on the register

-Make the owners erect or buy any signs or plaques

-Request the owners to research their property, except for the initial application

The National Register Does

Bring national recognition to an area by identifying it as an important place

-Protect properties from any federally funded or licensed projects (such as a state highway or sewerage plant using federal funds) affecting National Register sites by comment through an environmental Impact Statement

-Allows owners of income producing properties (both commercial and rental) to take advantage of benefits concerning historic properties as provided for in the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981

-Often increases the value of property

-Increases community awareness of local history and creates a sense of pride in achievements.

Treasurer's Report

The Society for the Preservation of Greek Housing currently has a cash balance of \$9706.88, thanks to the 46 founding members of the society who originally contributed to founding the establishment of the society and enabled it to receive designation as a 501c3 charitable foundation.

Since the receipt of this designation, which is very important in aiding the Greek System to raise funds for the preservation of the houses, the Society committees have been meeting regularly to carry out the objectives of the Society.

There have been two organizations join the Society in 1994 and a request for annual dues of \$300 from the continuing organizational members which has resulted in 18 responses. It is anticipated that all members will send there annual dues after meeting with their corporation boards. An additional category of "Annual Society Member" has been established at \$25 per year for individuals or companies who wish to be kept informed of the Society's activities and support it's objectives.

Four Greek Houses are presently applying for grants from the Society to preserve the historic and architecturally significant portions of their facilities. We look forward to working with all member organizations to preserve our houses ... and our heritage. ♦



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