



SARASOTA ALLIANCE
FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Annual Report 2022

"Managing change is an important element of preservation. We recognize that communities are living organisms, and architecture is not a static construct. Buildings must adapt and shift along with the needs of the humans who inhabit them. Keeping those changes sensitive to the original building fabric and in context with the larger community and our planet as a whole is the challenge."

Erin DiFazio, President (Ex-Officio) Letter, Winter 2022 Newsletter

Our Board significantly expanded the mission-driven work of the SAHP in 2022. We increased our membership roster to over 100 by year-end, enhanced our systems for member management, accounting, and reporting, and for the first time, engaged a paid consultant to manage our new Preservation Program..

The Board has assumed significantly more responsibility to make us more effective at fulfilling our mission. We need to ensure that our organization can sustain itself for the long term and successfully advance our mission.

We thank our supporters, sponsors, and those who share our passion for preservation.

Our Mission:
"To Protect and Preserve Our Historic Places"

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The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation (SAHP) is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit, tax-exempt corporation registered in the state of Florida to solicit private charitable contributions. SAHP acknowledges that contributions are tax-deductible less the fair market value of any goods or services received.

Nothing less than the future of Venice's historic preservation is at stake, and their group, Venice Unites, has marshaled resident support resulting in the re-opening of negotiations to amend key provisions of the new code with City Planning and the County.

City of Sarasota Historic Preservation Board (HPB) - Board Members regularly attend Advisory Board and Commission meetings, offering testimony and facts to advocate for historic preservation and counter demolition permit applications on historic structures. The SAHP prepared and presented a series of recommendations to standardize the applicant's information requirements and improve the processes by which these permits are approved.

The SAHP maintains a good relationship with the City HPB in a challenging political climate.

Vamo Park - The SAHP has worked collaboratively with Vamo residents and Sarasota County Parks and Natural Resources to historically designate and adaptively re-use the historic Vamo Lodge, one of the oldest remaining wood structures in the County.

This bayfront park, including the Lodge (circa 1900), and an adjoining 1925 Mediterranean Revival home, was acquired in 2019 by the County with the support of the SAHP and the community. SAHP organized a community charrette in 2021 which generated strategies and recommendations of potential avenues for restoration and adaptive re-use of the Lodge.

The SAHP subsequently funded the nomination of the Lodge for national register historic designation in 2021, which the County has agreed to assist in completion.

Throughout 2022, members of our Board continued to work with local officials, Parks and Natural Resources, and the Vamo Community to keep attention focused on means to ensure the long-term preservation of these two historic structures.

Sarasota Preservation Program

SP2

In early 2020, we received a \$15,000 grant from the 1772 Foundation. These funds were used to complete a feasibility study in 2021 that demonstrated a need and desire for a funded historic preservation program in Sarasota.

A subsequent survey of our supporters, conducted by the SAHP, further established enough interest in the program to move ahead.

With the assistance of our consultant, Huffaker Preservation Strategies, and the mentorship of the Providence (R.I.) Revolving Fund, we have created this program to offer financial tools and technical guidance for the successful preservation of historic properties.

Our initial capital was targeted at \$300,000 to fund the program. We launched the Greg A. and Eleana Najmy Hall Campaign at our Heritage Awards Ceremony in April 2022, which raised over \$100,000 by the end of 2022. That allowed us to form a Committee to oversee the program and engage a part-time Program Director.

The initial phase of the SP2 was launched in January 2023 with the introduction of the historic preservation easement program. The second phase, which will offer low-interest revolving loans for historic property maintenance and improvements, is expected to launch in 3Q2023.

Historic preservation easements are innovative in Sarasota, though Sarasota County and the Gulf Coast Conservation Foundation commonly use land conservation easements to protect open space.

When fully implemented, we hope to receive 2-3 easements and originate 2-3 revolving loans per year.

Events

Neighborhood Walking Tours

When COVID appeared in 2020, we had to suspend our speakers' program and the popular Annual Homes Tours. However, the Board created COVID-compliant Walking Tours, which enabled us to keep the community engaged throughout the pandemic and highlight Sarasota's historic neighborhoods. We've conducted tours in portions of Central Coconut, Arlington Park, Granada, and the Vamo Drive neighborhoods in Sarasota.

The Walking Tours have also proven popular, usually selling 80% or more of the available slots. Volunteer guides lead 12-13 small groups of 8-10 people on 1-hour tours, sharing relevant facts and history and highlighting the homes' and properties' distinguishing architectural features along the routes. We survey our attendees after each tour to help gauge satisfaction and interest and solicit ways to improve their experience.

North Trail Book

The SAHP published a pictorial guide to the history of the North Tamiami Trail in late December 2021. Well-known historical writer Jeff LaHurd authored the manuscript. The book chronicles the role that the North Tamiami Trail played as the premier gateway to the City of Sarasota, the focus of the 1920s commercial building boom, and the post-WWII development of motels and tourist attractions. A map for self-guided tours is also included.

The SAHP provided an introduction to the manuscript, which touched on the history of Overtown, the City's first Black community. Although it was located adjacent to the North Trail, and Overtown residents participated in the construction of its attractions, Jim Crow laws prevented our Black community from participating in its benefits for many years.

Funded in part by generous contributions from the *Ringling College of Art and Design, Sarasota Airport Authority, and SAHP Board members*, the book has been a popular seller. *Book Store 1*, in downtown Sarasota, sponsored a book signing event with Jeff in March, which was well attended. Over 80% of our initial run of 270 books has been sold or distributed.

Six To Save Sarasota County Heritage Awards Programs

The Board of the Alliance, in late 2021, agreed to take the lead role with these programs, which were initiated by, and are currently offered in partnership with the History and Preservation Coalition of Sarasota County.



The Sarasota Six To Save program, entering its fourth year, highlights threatened historic resources in the county. It is intended to bring attention to the threats and initiate dialogues with interested parties to strategize paths to preservation.

Raising community awareness of the threats can help build support for preserving these resources. A critical component of the program as well is educating property owners about the resources available to them and the economic benefits of historic designation.

Every successful preservation effort enhances the economic and cultural environment of the entire community.

Annual Sarasota County Heritage Awards

In 2022, SAHP chaired the committee which selected eleven recipients to receive recognition for their significant and lasting contributions to historic preservation.

The Awards were presented at a luncheon held at the Sarasota Garden Club in April.

In addition, SAHP honored the families of Greg Hall and Eleana Najmy Hall, who were instrumental in advancing architectural awareness and preservation efforts in Sarasota. At the ceremony, the SAHP launched the Greg A. and Eleana Najmy Hall Preservation Campaign to help seed the funding of our new preservation program. The Campaign raised over \$100,000 in contributions in 2022, putting us well on our way to launching the program in 2023.

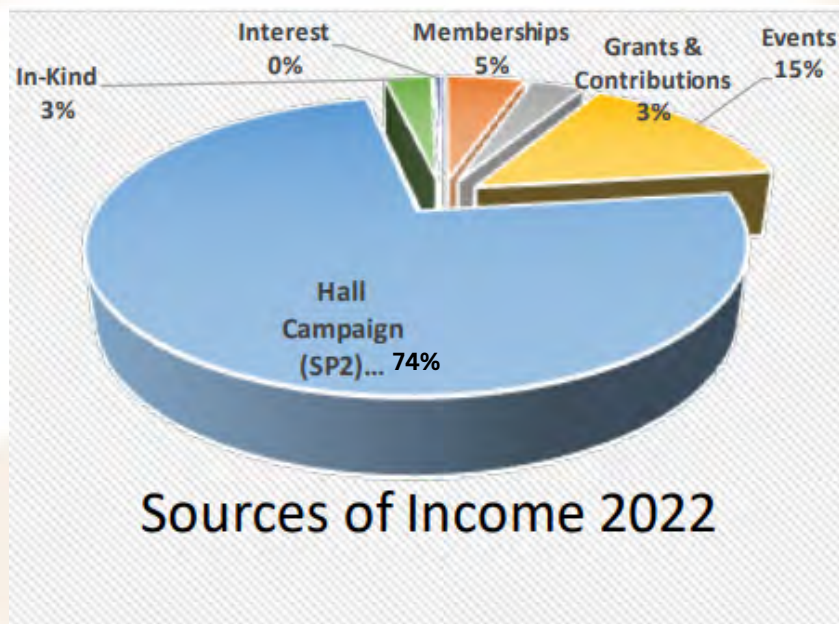


Our host, Dr. Frank Cassell, with Award Recipients, The Centennial Steering Committee, Harry Klinkhamer, Renee DiPilato, Nicole Rissler, Brian and Katherine Leaver, Larry Humes, and Alexandra Vargas-Minor

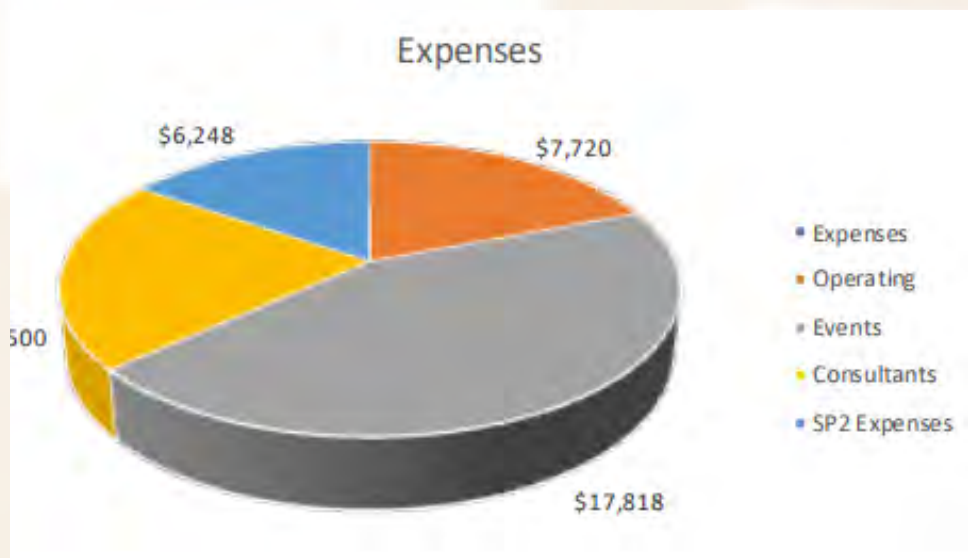


Louis and George Najmy, Suzanne Hall Benjamin and Samuel Hall Lorrie Muldowney, Erin DiFazio

Financials



Our Greg A. and Eleana Najmy Hall Campaign successfully raised over \$100,000 toward our goal of \$300,000 to fund the SP2. Thanks go to the Hall And Najmy families, our members and supporters, and sponsors - the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the Paterson Foundation (Giving Challenge 2022), the Arena Foundation, and our Board members.



SP2 first-year expenses were allocated to our consultant, Kirk Huffaker, and Erin DiFazio, who was engaged by the board to shepherd the SP2 as our Program Director.

Expenses totaled 33% of Income.

Total Assets at year end were \$156,000