

OREGON BLACK PIONEERS

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OREGON'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN PIONEERS

MEMORANDUM

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DATE: June 30, 2014

TO: Andre Raiford, Owner, Burger Barn Property

FROM: Gwen Carr, Vice-President, Oregon Black Pioneers (OBP) *GC*

RE: Preserving the Burger Barn Property

The board of directors of the Oregon Black Pioneers supports the community efforts to preserve the Burger Barn property located at 3962 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

The Oregon Black Pioneers mission is to research, recognize and commemorate the culture and heritage of African Americans in the state of Oregon. The Oregon Black Pioneers, in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), have launched a new property survey project entitled *Preserving Oregon's African American Historic Places* that seeks to document historic buildings, sites and structures associated with Oregon's African American history.

Due to its historic and cultural significance, the Burger Barn property is exactly the type of African American historic resource to be included in the property survey. We hope we can work together to preserve the Burger Barn building. If you have any questions you may reach Kim Moreland, Project Manager at historic_places@qwestoffice.net. You may learn more about the Oregon Black Pioneers at www.oregonblackpioneers.com

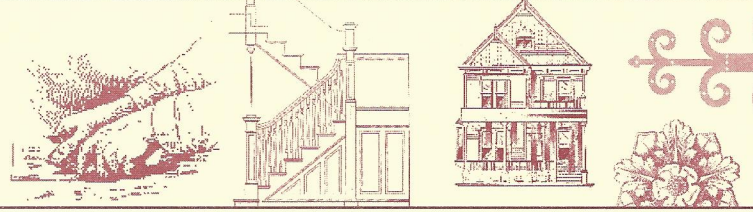
IMPORTANT TAX INFORMATION: Oregon Black Pioneers Corporation (OBP) is recognized as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Contributions to OBPC are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by IRS. OBPC provided no goods or services in exchange for this tax deductible contribution.

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Architectural Heritage Center

701 SE Grand Avenue
Portland, OR 97214
503 231-7264
503 231-7311 fax
www.visitahc.org



June 25, 2014

MEMO TO: Andre Raiford, Owner - - Burger Barn property, 3962 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd

FROM: Cathy Galbraith – Executive Director, Bosco-Milligan Foundation/Architectural Heritage Center

Many of us have long been concerned about the continued survival of buildings associated with Portland's African American community and its history over time. We have been documenting this history and promoting it through our continuing "Cornerstones" initiative, since 1993.

We and others remain concerned about the pending demolition of your building at 3962 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. We know you have a demolition permit and ask that you not prematurely demolish the building at this time. There's nothing to be gained and plenty to lose with a demolition right now, since the development of the larger site at NE Shaver and Martin Luther King is not ready for immediate re-development.

As you and your family know, the former Burger Barn building was owned and housed a restaurant operated by George and Geraldine Raiford Powe; it was a thriving African American-owned business and is historically significant as such. Despite the negative history chapter represented by the "Possum Incident", the building remains an important African American historic resource. "Empty" sites where history once happened are largely irrelevant, once buildings are torn down.

Right now, there are some potential opportunities to secure some funding to assist in bringing the building up to code, so that it can continue to stand and take its place in community efforts to preserve Portland's African American historic places. Specifically, the property sits inside the Interstate Urban Renewal boundary; that URA has announced a grant round through the Community Livability program. "Historic and Cultural Assets" are among the eligible areas for funding.

I would like to put together a funding application for the Burger Barn building through this program. I need your OK to do so, since you are the property owner. The application is due in early September; it is a very competitive process and the application needs to be complete and responsive to every potential skeptic. (I served on the Interstate Urban Renewal Board for a number of years (representing historic Preservation interests) and was a member of the Community Livability Grants program review Committee for four years. (Note - PDC disbanded all of its urban renewal boards last year, in budget cuts.)

I'm willing to do whatever I can to make possible the preservation, and continued active economically feasible of the Burger Barn building. It is too important to tear it down needlessly at this particular time. Perhaps you can view this as a Raiford family legacy project; in any case, I hope that you will be supportive of a chance to save the Burger Barn building at this time.



King Neighborhood Association
The Soul of Portland
Northeast Portland

July 16, 2014

To: Andre Raiford, Owner of 3962 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard

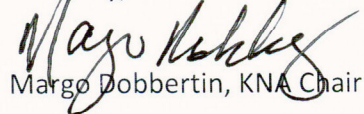
Mr. Raiford,

The members of the King Neighborhood Association endorse the community undertaking to preserve the building located at 3962 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The history of the building itself, as well as its status as a symbol of African-American experience in the Albina area, make it well worth preserving. Preliminary plans to include 3962 NE MLK in an African-American historic resource survey reflect the importance of this site to the community's memory, as well as its present-day experience.

From its status as the second-oldest commercial building on MLK Boulevard, to its long history of use, commercial and residential, by African-Americans, the building at 3962 NE MLK embodies a history that should be kept in living memory. Preservation of the building will permit just that to happen, and we support the community in making it happen.

We join with the Architectural Heritage Center, Oregon Black Pioneers and historic preservationist Dr. Tanya Lyn March in endorsing Teresa Raiford's efforts to preserve the building at 3962 NE MLK and finding creative ways to keep it as a marker of part of the history of the Albina area, and a vital site for community use into the future.

Sincerely,


Margo Dobbertin, KNA Chair

Irek Wielgosz, Co-Chair

Jeff Scott, Treasurer

Leigh Rappaport, Representative-at-Large

Andrew Neerman, Representative-at-Large

Diego Gioseffi, Representative-at-Large

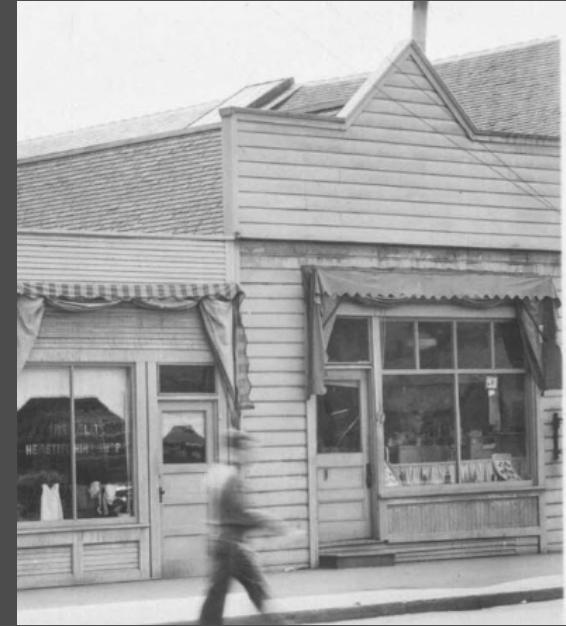
Eileen Kennedy, Representative-at-Large

Nick LaRue, Representative-at-Large

King Neighborhood Association - 4815 NE 7th, Portland OR 97211 - info@kingneighborhood.org



Jantzen Beach 1928
Courtesy Stephen Kenney



Union Ave., 1929
Courtesy City Of Portland Archives

1921 PARKER CAROUSEL & 3962 NE MLK

Tanya Lyn March PhD
Ms. Teressa Raiford
August 18, 2014



Seeking advice and highlighting our concerns about two historic preservation projects that failed to make the 2014 State of City Preservation Report both potentially could have been listed in the section “Portland Historic Resource Watch List” (Image: Postcard Courtesy Stephen Kenney)



Image Burger Barn 2-7-1974 Courtesy Thomas Robinson

Goals

- 1) To rebuild the relationships between communities that are experiencing gentrification and demolition that don't have resources
- 2) To promote community planning that engages residents that currently view preservationist activities as catalysts of gentrification
- 3) Promote interest in education and jobs within the preservation industry to communities of color



THE GOOD



THE BAD



THE UGLY



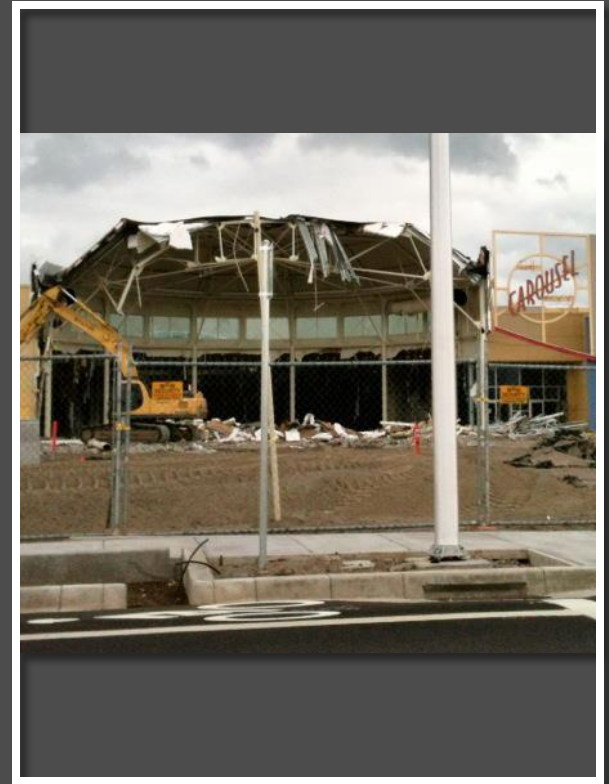
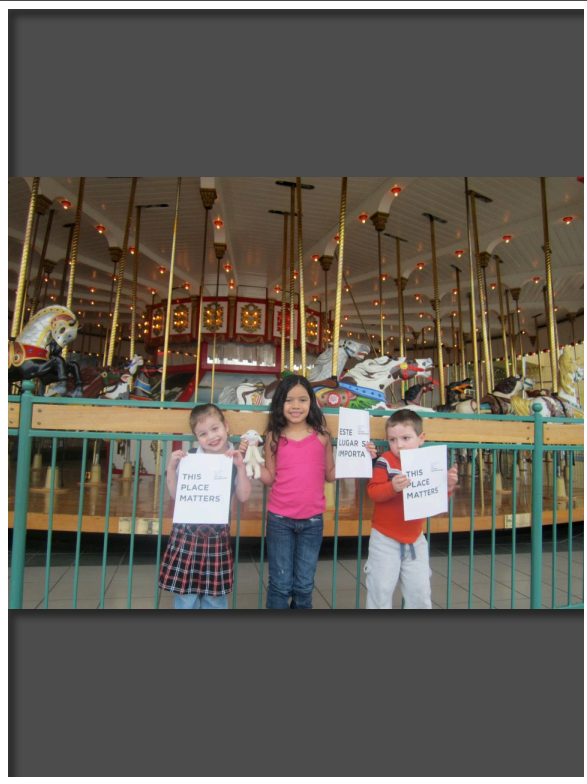
3962 NE MLK Today

Urgency:

Active Demolition Permit
That will be executed without
access to social and economic
capital

We need a valid, defensible
cost estimates to fully
rehabilitate structure

PDC Community Livability
Grant Due September 26th,
2014 seeking additional letters
of support



Despite Efforts of 100s of Volunteers and Restore Oregon the 1921 Parker Carousel is still in limbo. Held hostage in a box store on Hayden Island as the owners navigate the politics of the Columbia River Crossing Project. Removed from the National Register of Historic Places by legal loopholes.



Thank you.

Image Courtesy Ken Hawkins

Mike's History Tours

June 26, 2014

MEMO TO: Andre Raiford, Owner—3962 NE Martin Luther, Jr. Blvd. Property formerly known as The Burger Barn.

FROM: Tanya Lyn March PhD- PhD in Urban Studies from PSU, MS in Historic Preservation from Columbia University. I am currently an educator and work as a preservation consultant.

The Black History of Portland is missing from the major history books. I spent seven years researching Guild's Lake Courts for my PhD in Urban Studies at PSU. I have recently helped assist efforts to have the PDX Civil Rights history interviews archived at PSU. My colleague Mike Ryerson and myself operate a walking tour company in Northwest Portland. Our walking tours have been highly effective teaching tool and retail promotion. I see the proposed action to save and restore the Burger Barn location as a catalyst for cultural heritage with a focus on a unique local Black History. Our company is supported by several businesses in the areas we showcase. I believe the 114 year-old history of your property and access to food, beverages and history as Teresa Raiford has proposed will be a viable economic vehicle for your businesses as well as a historical gathering point for heritage tourism.

I have attached the 1990s history of your properties. I have also broken the surface on the Gray Family (1906 residents who were Black Americans) and lived in the residence formerly listed as home and an established a business on Union Avenue on your properties in MLK.

The potential to use the significant history of the community to create a dynamic unique retail anchor is enormous. Burger Barn needs to stay in the family, I want to support the development and preserve culture and community. To assist in this effort I will with your approval complete the nomination to get this listed under Restore Oregon's most endangered buildings list. I have had success getting a building on the list in the past by nominating the Jantzen Beach Parker Carousel. In addition my network of educators and preservationists are excited about bringing resources, awareness, and funding support to this project for Your Family.

PART IV: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION Home of Harry and Katherine Gray

1. Describe the historical significance of the place. What makes it important to you, the community, and the state?

This site offers a sense of place for local black community members. It is one of the last reminders of Portland's inclusion in our country's history and fight in the struggle for civil rights. Many black Americans living in Portland still work towards the goal of equality today. The property at 3962 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd (formerly 640 NE Union) has a firm history linked on a national level in Black History, culture and civil rights going back to the early 1900s. In 1906 the resident of the property built by Peter Yost was a black woman with family, Katherine Gray. Mrs. Gray was a founding member of African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and founder of the Harriet Tubman Club. The Gray family in the early 1900s used Henry Gray's profits from gold mining to move into the residence and ran a home business from this location in 1906 the same year that the Golden West Hotel opened. Katherine Gray served as Vice President and her daughter Edith Gray served as secretary for the Colored Women's Council in 1914.

In the '60s 3962 NE Martin Luther King Blvd. was the location of the Black Panther riots, then fast forward to PDX infamous 1981 Opossum Incident ["Possum Incident"] a racially charged incident with Portland Police and the actions taken by then Commissioner Charles Jordan, and other elected officials in City Hall and throughout the state that led to marches, protests and eventual firing and reinstatement of the officers who perpetrated the crime of unlawful animal dumping on the restaurant steps of a thriving black owner business. Much of the neighborhoods in the MLK commercial corridor has been transformed by gentrification. This property is one of a few remaining structures owned by a founding family in what was once a thriving black community. This property is the second oldest structure located on Martin Luther King Blvd. north of Fremont Avenue. It is the site known for the Good the Bad and the Ugly history of North/Northeast Portland.

2. What is the current use and condition of the place?

A restaurant was still operating at 3962 NE Martin Luther King Blvd until closing in November of 2013. The property is currently boarded up and was previously scheduled for demolition before letters of support and community engagement encouraged the owner to halt. This property is located within the Interstate Urban Renewal District. Plans to demolish the structure in order to build a multi-story quarter block structure for retail use raised awareness within the community. The halt by owner/developer, per request has allowed us to begin working toward a retail indicator to restore and use the property to promote education, create jobs and preserve history while increasing economic interests in the area for neighbors and visitors to Portland. Without financial assistance to renovate the 114-year-old structure one of Portland's last century old buildings along Historic Union Avenue/MLK Ave. would be lost.

3. What are the current and long-term threats to the place?

The building is located within the Interstate Urban Renewal Area. There is a demolition permit for the building. The owner who also owns adjoining properties had/has plans to develop the area in order to build a two-story mixed-use structure on the larger footprint. Our concern is that without a serious pledge of confidence or credible recognition such as the designation this property will not be restored and the history and opportunity to educate future generations from a local historical venue connected to civil rights will be missed.

4. What efforts have been taken to preserve the place in the past? What's being done to save it today?

Research and volunteer outreach work for the preservation of the property is currently being done by members of Oregon Black Pioneers, Bosco Milligan, King Neighborhood Association, Tanya March PhD and family members of the Raiford-Powe's and the sincere consideration of owner Andre Raiford.

Included are their Letters of Support (see attached) (drafting by Cathy Galbraith) Kickstarter and other crowd sourcing opportunities are being discussed. Inclusion in an upcoming documentary titled *Whitelandia* is also being considered.

PD C Community L

5. Is there local support for saving the place? Who, specifically, could Restore Oregon count on for local support and leadership if the place is listed as one of the Most Endangered Places? Conceptually, what role would Restore Oregon play in 2015? Who—if anyone— might oppose preserving the place?

Restore Oregon could help us pencil out the vision in an economic sense. Your organization can help increase the profile of our efforts along with the partnerships we have with the Architectural Heritage Center, KNA, Oregon Black Pioneers and the Raiford family. We believe that this property will help create a precedent and can also be used as a catalyst for future districting and development within communities that are experiencing urban redesign. It is the family and communities hope, that the preservation and cultural aspects of a communities "shared history" will encourage local preservation of other properties.

6. Are there any regulations, resources, and/or strategies already available to save and protect the place?

URA funds are a potential. Crowdsourcing is also a very viable opportunity to raise a good percentage of start up funding.

7. What is likely to happen to the place if it is not listed as Most Endangered? What is the intent of the property owner regarding the preservation of the place?

If the property at 3962 NE Martin Luther King Blvd. is not listed as most endangered it will send a message to the owner, prospective partners, and allies in preservation, that this location/structure is not significant enough to save with the sparse resources we have. It is also very likely that the structure will be demolished to make room for a viable

economic structure that will still be black owned, but will not have the charm, diversity or most importantly the history of the existing structure that now occupies that location.

8. *What would a successful “save” look like to your community?*

A successful save would be the restoration and active use of the structure. Our long term plans include using the basement of the structure as an accessible public archive for World Arts Foundation, Inc. preservation materials, we also plan to use the building itself as a hub for local African American Heritage and Tourism. A location of historical relevance providing local history via media and art, in the form of literature, video and photos to educate future generations. A huge attraction and retail indicator for economic stability is included in the plans for implementation of Soul Food Lots PDX, a soul food themed food cart hub, the adjoining lot currently serves as a parking lot for the building. The Soul Food Lots PDX plan is being developed as a resource for the community, to be used as a gathering place for current and past residents of Albina, center for inclusion in the archives housed in the structure. The carting element will host founding family soul food and historical era themed music to build a comfortable space with marketable economic sustainability.

9. *Is there anything else that Restore Oregon should know when considering this place for the 2015 list?*

The 1981 history of the events at the establishment are a dark chapter of the history of the City of Portland and of the Portland Police Department. The events are not the exclusive history that the owner of his family want highlighted in the preservation effort. The family understands that this chapter is a small part of the history of the property. The center space will include archives from those within ~~the community~~, ~~the conspiracy~~ who would like to donate to the collection. The family wants to share a balanced history of our community at large. This year in our country America will celebrate the 50 Year Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act being signed by Lyndon B. Johnson after ~~the~~ the assassination of President Kennedy. The timing for creating precedent in historical preservation is critical for this generation. Elders documentation and inclusion of history will help us share and preserve our nation's infrastructure, culture and history, as well as a few local stories that really matter and should not be forgotten.