

APRIL 2004
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*E. Rivers School, Atlanta, Georgia
Stevens & Wilkinson, 1949
Photo: Amie Spinks*

WELCOME

Welcome to DOCOMOMO US, Georgia Chapter! We hope you will join our efforts to document and preserve Georgia's Modern heritage.

MARCH 25 MEETING

The Chapter's recent meeting at Georgia State University included brief presentations by Amie Spinks, Thomas Little, and Jon Buono. Jack Pyburn presented an update about the 2004 International Conference.



Updating the status of 35 modern structures identified in Robert Craig's article "Is Atlanta Losing Its Early Modern Heritage?" (*Atlanta History*. XXXIX, 1, Spring 1995)

Amie Spinks found 20 demolished, 5 partially demolished, 7 intact, and 3 renovated. Among the more significant losses were Techwood Homes, the first federally funded low-income housing project; and other structures demolished for development related to the 1996 Olympic Games. Currently threatened structures include the Atlanta Constitution Building (Robert & Company, 1945-1947) and the Alcoa Building (Schell, Deeter & Scott and George A. Fuller, 1955-1957). Spinks' presentation highlighted the rapid loss of mid-20th century buildings and sites during the last decade.

Thomas Little introduced the Atlanta Constitution Building using historic photographs and excerpts from period magazine and newspaper articles. The structure is now threatened with imminent demolition to make way for a new multi-modal transit station. Little expressed hope that the historic structure could serve as key part of a development related to the new station. Documentation of the structure's architectural and historic importance is ongoing, and is key to raising public awareness of its threatened condition.

Jon Buono presented the aims of the DOCOMOMO-GA Register, beginning with an overview of early modern design in Georgia. Buono noted the limited recognition of modern architecture in Georgia, as evidenced by the small number of representative sites currently listed as historically significant sites. To expand recognition of Georgia's Modern heritage, the DOCOMOMO-GA Register will adopt previously listed properties, and follow with development of a statewide "windshield" survey to help identify resources. The Georgia chapter hopes to complete 10 formal DOCOMOMO Register nominations by the close of 2004.

Buono presented six criteria for inclusion within the Register, as determined by the DOCOMOMO International Register Committee. The criteria are:

1. Technological Merit
2. Social Merit
3. Artistic and Aesthetic Merit
4. Canonic Merit
5. Referential Value
6. Integrity



*Atlanta Cabana Hotel
1960-2002
Jay Sarno and Jo Harris
Demolition Photo: Jon Buono*

Buono stressed the importance of peer-review for all DOCOMOMO-GA Register nominations. The presentation closed with examples of benefits gained from the survey of modern architecture, including contributions to the study of building typology, architect biographies, and state/local building programs.

Jack Pyburn presented an update on the 2004 Conference (see summary).

An open discussion resulted in a list of possible DOCOMOMO activities and advocacy opportunities.

WEBSITE UPDATE

Additional resources are available for immediate download at the www.docomomoga.org website. Follow the link to "Resources," then to "Library." You will find PDF files and PowerPoint presentations related to the work of the Georgia Chapter.

DOCOMOMO VIIIth INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: IMPORT – EXPORT: POSTWAR MODERNISM IN AN EXPANDING WORLD, 1945-1975

The Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation in Manhattan will serve as the venue for the Eighth Conference. The conference dates are September 29 through October 2, 2004. In addition to several general and plenary sessions, technical workshops are offered. Subjects include the history and conservation of concrete, curtain walls, stone cladding, and the use of color in the Modern Movement. Jack Pyburn, AIA will present "The Role of Architectural Precast Concrete Panel Technology in Post-War Building Construction" at a Saturday morning session.

Registration (through May 30, 2004) is \$300 members/\$350 non-members for Conference and Technology Seminars. A combined fee including Conference and Technology Seminars is \$570 members/\$650 non-members. Visit www.docomomo2004.org for updated schedule and registration information.

ADVOCACY NOTES

THREATENED: ATLANTA CONSTITUTION BUILDING

One of the most important historic sites in Atlanta is the railroad “gulch” extending roughly from the Five Points MARTA station westward to the “decks,” the parking decks associated with the CNN Center, Philips Arena, and the Georgia Dome. For over a decade, this area has been targeted as the location for a multimodal terminal connecting rail and bus service to the city and region.

*View from the “gulch”
Atlanta Constitution Building
February 2004
Photo: Thomas F. Little, AIA*



Recognized in 2003 as one of Atlanta’s endangered landmarks by the Atlanta Preservation Center (<http://www.preserveatlanta.com/acb.htm>), the Atlanta Constitution Building dominates the gulch. Its elegant combination of strip windows, metal spandrel panels, cast stone, marble, and brick compliments its neighbors, the Five Points MARTA station, the historic Rich’s building, and the new Sam Nunn Federal Center. Designed by Robert and Company and completed in 1948, the building stands as one of the few largely intact survivors of the immediate post-war era of Modernism in Atlanta.

The building served as offices for Ralph McGill’s Atlanta Constitution through 1953 and would later become known as home offices for the Georgia Power Company. Sculptor Julian Harris created a 72-foot long sculpture depicting the history of the Constitution for the main entrance along Forsyth Street, now displayed in the CNN Center MARTA Station.

In 1995 the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources found the Atlanta Constitution building eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1995, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The MOA outlines steps that must be completed prior to undertaking the Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal project. These steps are intended to mitigate loss of historic resources, here the Spring Street Viaduct and the Constitution Building. While not specifically mentioned in the MOA, preliminary plans for the Multi-Modal Terminal being discussed at this time did include significant modifications to the viaduct and demolition of the Constitution Building.

Unfortunately, this significant structure may be lost. The State of Georgia has been given the authority to demolish the structure by the City of Atlanta while plans for the terminal are developed. While it is easy to characterize the building as an “eyesore” or “threat to public safety” given its current state of neglect, those involved in the terminal planning efforts owe it to themselves and to the city of Atlanta to consider the significance of this structure. Could a rehabilitated Constitution Building serve a role?

DOCOMOMO US, Georgia Chapter, has posted a selection of historic and recent photographs of the structure at www.docomomoga.org/pages/constitution/constitution.htm.

NOTEWORTHY NEWS

A session at the Georgia Association of Historians recent conference, "Selling the Past," included presentations from Robert Craig, Professor, College of Architecture, Georgia Tech; Steven Moffson, Architectural Historian with the Department of Historic Preservation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources; and Paul Simo, Director of the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program.

Robert Craig presented "The Four Styles of Architecture," defined by Craig as Art Deco, Modern Classic, Streamlined Moderne, and Modern. The presentation included examples of major modern works in the Atlanta area, many now demolished.

Steven Moffson presented "The Modern Movement in Georgia Architecture," illustrating the impact of mid 20th century international and national design movements upon Georgia. Examples of modern sites from throughout the state were illustrated with photographs.

Paul Simo presented "What the National Trust is Doing to Preserve Modern Architecture in America." Simo used examples of work encountered in his work with the Georgia Trust's Main Street Design Assistance program.

Christopher Hendricks served as Commentator for the session.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Next chapter meeting is scheduled for May 2004 (location and time to be announced).

SESAH Publication Awards Nominations

The Southeast Society of Architectural Historians 2004 Publications Awards Committee is seeking nominations. The awards are for publications either on the topic of architecture in the South, or by authors who reside in the South. A book, article or essay may have no more than two authors who reside in the South; no more than two authors; and the nominated authors must be living. An article or essay should be copied and have its complete bibliography included. Book titles must also include full bibliographical information so they may be ordered from the publisher. The deadline for submissions is August 1, 2004, and should be sent to John O'Brien, 3526 Southwood Drive, Knoxville, TN 37920-3121, or via e-mail at bo4@utk.edu.

APRIL

Society of Architectural Historians Annual Meeting

April 14-17, 2004, Providence, Rhode Island
Visit www.sah.org for more information.

Georgia Trust Annual Meeting & State Preservation Conference

April 16-18, 2004

Savannah, Georgia

Visit www.georgiatrust.org/whatsnew/annual_meeting for more information.

The APTI Southeast Chapter (<http://www.apti.org/chapters/southeast/southeast.htm>), Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network, Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions (www.uga.edu/gapc), Society of Georgia Archeology (<http://www.georgia-archeology.org/sga>), and Georgia Downtown Association are sponsoring events in collaboration with this event. See you there!

JUNE

American Institute of Architects 2004 National Convention

June 10-12, 2004, Chicago, Illinois

Visit www.aia.org for more information.

SEPTEMBER

International DOCOMOMO Conference VII

Import-Export: Postwar Modernism in an Expanding World, 1945-1975

September 29 – October 2, 2004

Columbia University, New York, NY

Visit www.docomomo2004.org for more information.

OCTOBER

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy Annual Conference

October 13-17, 2004, Madison, Wisconsin

Visit www.savewright.org for more information.

SESAH Annual Conference

October 28 to 31, 2004, Knoxville, Tennessee

Visit www.sesah.org for more information.

2005

Society of Architectural Historians

58th Annual Meeting

April 6-10, 2005

Vancouver, British Columbia

Call for papers, abstracts due 9/27/2004

<http://www.sah.org/>

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This newsletter appears periodically as an update for those interested in the activities of DOCOMOMO US, Georgia Chapter. Please send information that may be of interest to our readers to newsletter@docomomoga.org. All content ©2004 DOCOMOMO US, Georgia Chapter