

ANNOUNCER: You've tuned in to another  
edition of The Break Room. A

weekly conversation about how  
the City of St Augustine

works from those who do the  
work every day. Hosted by the

City of St Augustine's  
Communications Director Melissa

Wissel. The Break Room offers a  
closer look at the different

City departments and provides  
updates on current and upcoming

projects and events and now  
your host, Melissa Wissel.

MELISSA: Welcome to The Break Room. I'm  
Melissa Wissel, Communications

Director for the City of St  
Augustine. Thanks for

listening. May is Historic  
Preservation Month, so what

better time to invite the  
City's Historic Preservation

Officer, Julie Courtney, to join  
us. It's Julie's first time in

studio, so we'll take it easy on  
her today. Julie, Thanks for

stopping by. JULIE: Thanks for having  
me. MELISSA: You have been working for

the city for about two and a  
half years, so you're not new to

the division. You were  
promoted to Historic

Preservation Officer, so  
congratulations. You always

have stuff going on. You really  
picked right up where Jenny

left off. Tell us about what  
all continues to happen in

Historic Preservation. JULIE: Well,

thank you. Jenny did leave a

really solid basis for us to  
work off of. And she was very

forward thinking and had a lot  
going on after she left in

October with being in the city  
for 10 years. We're working

on updating our architectural  
guidelines for historic

preservation. Those haven't  
been updated since about 2011. And they  
are the recommendations that

building owners need to look at  
and refer to when they're

changing the exterior of their  
building or their property,

especially if they are in the HP1  
through 5 zones. We're

trying to make them more user  
friendly and update them with

more styles, including  
mid-century modern buildings

that we see especially in Davis  
Shores. We're also

working on the partial  
demolition ordinance that has

been a process that we've  
worked with through with the

Historic Architectural Review  
Board. And then the

Planning and Zoning Board. And  
we're looking at trying to

refine the language of our  
demolition ordinance to include

things that affect buildings. A  
lot of building owners want to

change their buildings over  
time and just removing a porch

or taking off a chimney. Those

types of things really alter

the building's historic  
architectural integrity. And so,

we want to like work with the  
homeowners to think about those

changes. MELISSA: So I can't just go  
take my porch off? Well, if I

live in a historic district. JULIE: It  
would need to go before our

Historic Architectural Review  
Board. But we're trying to

refine the language and talk  
about some things that can be

done with  
administrative approval. MELISSA: Okay,

and just to touch on this  
architectural guidelines for

historic preservation. It  
sounds kind of dry. I will, I

will admit, but it's really  
important. I mean, those are the

things that that's what keeps  
us authentic. JULIE: Right. I mean

St Augustine has such a rich  
and varied historic

architectural inventory and  
we're just trying to make those

buildings maintain their  
architectural integrity and

stay unique. That's why so many  
people come to visit our

downtown. And that's why  
properties owners often pick

their house or the neighborhood  
that they lived in. MELISSA: Right. So I

don't want to go make my nice  
beautiful Spanish style into a

mid-century modern, necessarily.  
There's a couple of those

around. JULIE: Right. We want to maintain that important sense

of place that we really enjoy in our city. MELISSA: Right and that's

really what historic preservation is all about.

And we also have these National Register Historic Districts.

Throughout. Does that, so it's something that, once we get

that nomination, once we get that check in the box, does it

just stay always? JULIE: No, not really. We have seven

historic district through the National Register of Historic

Places. And we're in the process of updating three of those,

Lincolnville, Abbot Tract, and

the Model Land Company.

Things evolve over time and  
we haven't really had those

looked at or surveyed since the  
1980s and early

1990s. So, those are  
being looked at and updated.

MELISSA: Again, going back to this  
change of place or the change

of the field, those  
neighborhoods. If too much has

changed, it may lose its charm,  
or we have to make sure that it

maintains its, I say, charm, but  
that historic value. JULIE: The

designation could be lost,  
especially if too many

buildings have been altered. And  
individually contributing



buildings, if they've been  
altered significantly, or of

course if they've been  
demolished, they will no longer

be considered designated. MELISSA: Okay.  
So it's really an ongoing

thing. It's not like once you  
get that designation, you just

move on to something else. JULIE:  
Right. It always evolves and

we're trying to update them to  
reflect the period of

significance, especially  
Lincolnton that has some very

important civil rights history.  
And know that the buildings now

are 50 years old so that they  
can be looked at and included

within that update. MELISSA: Do you have..  
I'm going to I'm going to ask

you a question that may catch  
you off guard and I don't know.

So just answer honestly. I  
know Jamie Perkins our CRA

Administrator has been doing a  
lot of work with the design

standards. Is that so that  
you're involved with or it's

similar to what you're doing?

JULIE: Well, it's something that's

important to us and we do need  
to work together to make sure

that the standards are kept and  
that the design and

architectural significance is  
maintained. MELISSA: Okay. Same same

idea though. Making sure that  
we're not putting modern

looking buildings over in

Lincolnville. JULIE: Right. MELISSA: Okay and

we have historic landmarks. I

know you've got two under

review right now. Can you touch

on those? JULIE: Those were actually

designated recently, and that's

exciting because when you think

about it in the Historic

Architectural Review Board's

past, there has only been three

properties or buildings that

were designated as local

historic landmarks. And

just since October, our HARB

Board did designate 307 Menorca

Avenue and 2 Tremerton Place

as local historical landmarks.

And they recognized the

importance of these buildings

and they're thinking about the  
importance of doing more of

those designations. MELISSA: Can you  
tell us what made, what was

behind the two of them, just a  
little bit? JULIE: Sure. 307 Menorca

Avenue was actually a  
certificate, certificate of

demolition application that was  
being reviewed and in our

research we found that that was  
one of the 11 original houses

on Davis Shores. And it  
also had in a very important

person that was attributed to  
living there. The person

that helped Doctor Davis  
develop Davis Shores and keep

that development going. MELISSA: So,  
that's where that demolition,

you have to go to before the  
review board. You can't just go

in and kind of slide that paper  
under the.. Under the

desk and say hey can you sign  
this for me? JULIE: Any building

within their city that's 50  
years or older does have to

look be looked at by the  
Historic Architectural Review Board. MELISSA;

That's fantastic. Yes. And 2  
Tremerton. JULIE: 2 Tremerton Place.

The building owner was actually  
really forward thinking and

just wanting to think about his  
very significant bungalow style

a house. It's very intact and  
beautiful and he wanted to make

sure that when he moved on that

the next building owner

couldn't just demolish it and  
build something completely

different. MELISSA: So he's trying to  
save it for posterity? For

the future. JULIE: So it's very  
exciting for him to come

forward with that. MELISSA: That's  
really, that also says a lot

about the person living there  
that it was important for its

own value for the future of the  
city. That's great. If

you're just now tuning in,  
you're listening to The break

Room. I'm Melissa Wissel,  
Communications Director for the

City of St Augustine. This  
week, we're talking about

historic preservation since  
it's May and Historic

Preservation Month. I've  
invited Julie Courtney to join

us. She is the city's new  
Historic Preservation Officer.

Before we go, we do have a few  
more minutes. We've got an

upcoming history event. The  
first ever St Augustine

History Festival. What can you  
tell about that? JULIE: Well, it's

exciting to be part of the  
city's participating. It was

created and conceived by the  
University of Florida, historic

St Augustine and also the  
Lastinger Family Foundation,

to generate excitement about  
our history and the nation's

oldest city. So, we're  
going to try to showcase every

era of St Augustine's long  
and storied past from our

founding, in 1565 to modern day.  
And there's many different

venues that are going to  
participate and highlight some of

their collections or their  
resources. And we are going to,

as staff, participate in a  
presentation on Saturday, May

14th, starting at 11 AM.  
Jessica Beach, the Resilience

Officer and I will do a  
presentation on resilient

heritage, why preservation and  
resilience is important for the

residents of St Augustine.



And our City Archaeologist, Dr.

Andrea White, will do a  
presentation at one o'clock and

she'll cover the history  
beneath our feet and how St

Augustine's heritage through  
archaeology is being discovered.

And so that's very exciting  
because it's going to be held

in the Waterworks Building,  
which is a great example of

preservation and rehabilitation  
and action, which is now going

to be used by the public.

MELISSA: That's that's like, the is, like

the pinnacle example of, I don't  
know if pinnacle is the right

word to use, but it is the true  
example of historic, like you

just said, historic preservation  
in action. JULIE: Yes, an adaptive

use. So, it was used as a water  
works building originally. And

now, it's going to have many  
different exciting uses. MELISSA: Now,

before we go, I'm going to say  
this.. Andrea, if you've ever, I

know you've heard Andrea and you  
know Andrea very well. I've

never seen, I don't I don't  
know a lot of archaeologists.

Carl is a great, is a great  
archaeologist as well, her

predecessor. I've never seen  
anybody get so excited talk

about digging in the dirt. So,  
her presentation, I'm sure, is

going to be fascinating. You  
and Jessica though are coming

together. I'm really, I hope  
that our listeners will

consider trying to come out, if  
you're able to on Saturday of

the weekend, at the Waterworks  
Building starting at eleven

o'clock. You're talking about  
resilience and historic

preservation. I think our  
residents often feel like they

don't really affect them as  
residents. But you guys are

going to really try to apply  
that to our residents. Why

that's important. Can you talk  
just a little bit about that

before we? JULIE: Sure. I mean,  
everybody's been affected by

the recent hurricanes, and also

sea level rise issues, and it

does really affect all building  
owners. And so we're going to

talk about first what the city  
is doing to deal with that.

They have received a lot of  
grant money. So, Jessica will

really be going into that  
further. And I'll be trying to

talk about what you as a  
building owner can do to your

property. I mean, sometimes you  
can't raise your house, so

there's other things that can  
be done to help protect it.

MELISSA: From sea level right now.

And I think too, I think you and

I have talked about this, and  
I'll give a nod to our

residents. I know our residents  
get really frustrated because

as you have said to me, you know,  
they all feel like all we ever

do is protect things for  
tourists and that's not true.

We, yeah go ahead. JULIE: Well,  
we do know that our tourists

are being drawn and we're, the  
city, you know, that income is

income producing for the city,  
and for business owners and

really for property owners,  
because their property values

are higher because of that.

But the sense of place

that is so important to us, as  
residents, really needs to be

maintained for us to have that  
quality of life continue. And we

just want to make sure  
everybody can protect their own

individual buildings because  
the city can't do it all.

They're working very  
hard to address the things that

can be addressed, but we as  
individual building owners need

to do our part as well. MELISSA: Right.

And so that is on Saturday, May

14th at 11 o'clock. And this is  
the first year you mentioned it

of the History Festival, so  
hopefully everyone will get a

chance to come downtown. And  
this is really pointed toward

our residents, just so people  
understand. We're really

trying to keep this as a

resident activity. Of course, we

can't help the fact that I'm  
sure our visitors going to hear

about it and want to  
participate. And real quick

before we sign off, if our  
listeners are still tuning in,

you've got things at the  
Colonial Quarter ,you've got the

Castillo, Flagler College at the  
Ponce Hotel, the Lighthouse

Museum is doing a presentation,  
I think they found a button

that they're going to unveil,  
the Pena Peck House, the

National Guard, and Fountain of  
Youth, Fort Mose. So check it

out, the website is the, I  
believe it is [StAugustineHistoryFestival.com](http://StAugustineHistoryFestival.com). JULIE: And it  
runs from May 11th through the

15th. And that's  
really highlighting our

Historic Preservation Month.

We're going to have a

proclamation to celebrate that  
and to celebrate people saving

places, which is the National  
Trust for Historic

Preservations theme for this  
year, to recognize everyone

doing the great work of Saving  
Places, whether it's big or

small, and those who inspire  
others to do the same.

MELISSA: Excellent. And that's a wrap.

Thanks for coming in. JULIE: Thank you

for having me. MELISS: We'll have you  
back. If you missed part of

this broadcast and want to go



back and listen from the

beginning, check us out at [CityStAugRadio.com](http://CityStAugRadio.com). We

want to keep you informed about  
what's happening in and around

the city, and most importantly  
that you hear it here from the

people doing the work and  
making it happen every day.

Find us on our social media  
platforms. You'll see us on

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Instagram @CityStAug.

Thanks for tuning in. Until  
next time. ANNOUNCER: You've been

listening to The Break Room, a  
weekly program addressing and

programs offered by the City of  
St Augustine. Join us each

week as the city's

Communications Director, Melissa

Wissel, has in-depth  
conversations with the people

who make our town work to meet  
the needs of our community. The

Break Room is produced by  
Communication Specialist for

the City of St Augustine  
Cindy Walker. See you at this

time next week for another  
edition of The Break Room.