

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 everyday. 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 Breakroom. Thanks for tuning in. I'm

Melissa Wissel, Communications Director for the City of St.

Augustine. It's Historic

Preservation Month and time to

get ready for the St

Augustine History Festival. As

the Nation's Oldest City, we

pride ourselves on

authenticity, our cultural

heritage, and protecting our

historic resources. It's a

great time to talk about it and

I've invited Julie Courtney

back to The Break Room. She is

the City's Historic

Preservation Officer. Julie,

welcome back. JULIE: Thank you. It's

great to be here. MELISSA: Festival

is right around the corner.

Tell us about it. JULIE: Well, this is

the second year of the festival

that was created and conceived

by the University of Florida

Historic St Augustine and the

Lastinger Family Foundation

to generate excitement and

showcase every era of St

Augustine's long and storied

history, from our founding in

1565 to modern day. And we hope

locals will come out and enjoy

the weekend of... The City has

scheduled an event on Saturday,

May 13th that will really

appeal to many of our resident,

residents and property owners

who own an older building or

home, and want to learn

more about their historic

windows. Because those can be

made to be energy efficient,

hurricane ready, and an

important way to maintain the integrity of your historic

property. This will be held at our Historic Water Works

building. And the workshop is being led by Austin Historical.

We are hosting the public open house, as well, of this beautiful

building, that is now home to the St Johns Cultural

Council. And you can learn more about it on the History

Festival's website, StAugustineHistoryFestival.com, along with over 20 historic properties in St Augustine.

that you can visit and tour. Many are showcasing

special events that weekend.

MELISSA: Yeah. So, let's go back. So,

our workshop is a window

workshop, which you kind of got

a window workshop. But there's a
lot of people who own historic

buildings, structures, homes, in
you name it. If it's historic

and it needs a new window. You
can't just go put in a pillar

window. JULIE: Right. It makes a big
difference. They say the

windows are the eyes of the
soul to the building and newer windows

just do not look the same. MELISSA: I
was actually with some friends

looking at an older home over
the weekend and they have that

marbly. JULIE: The wavy glass. MELISSA: The
wavy glass. JULIE: This is not

replicated in newer windows.
The profiles, the shadow

lines that fall when you look
at the historic windows, are

just very unique and
distinctive. MELISSA: And the gentleman

who's coming, he's not from
St, he's not in St

Augustine. We were bringing him
in. He's a professional. Can

you tell us a little bit about
what he does? JULIE: Well, Austin

Historical is the leading
resource in the state of

Florida for window restoration.
And they have done a lot

of research on the importance
of keeping historic windows and

know a lot of tips on how to
work with yours. MELISSA: And bringing

someone in, when you want to go
to restore your windows, you

you were mentioning, you can
keep the old windows.

And still be energy efficient
and those are also some of the

things that he can explain?

JULIE: Yes, for sure. He has a lot of

resources that they've studied
and ways to improve your

historic window. These windows
have lasted some, on some houses

or homes, buildings, for over
100 years. So, they're clearly

built to last. MELISSA: Right. But I
don't, I'm not necessarily

coming to this workshop to
repair or redo my window.

This isn't like a this
isn't a DIY. Bring your window

with you. Bring your window and

your frame with you and you're

going to have a glue and all

that kind of stuff. JULIE: Not this

time around. We've done that in

the past and we might do it in

the future, but this time is

just learning more about the

importance of saving them. So

what you can do. MELISSA: Even if I

don't have that historic

structure, it could be an

interesting workshop, if I'm

interested in historic

preservation and in these

beautiful old buildings that we

have in town. JULIE: For sure and

it's a great way to see our

Water Works Building from the

inside and out and just enjoy

that building as well. MELISSA:

Before, so, and that's another

part of the session that we

have. If you want to come and

you're not necessarily

interested in the historic

window piece of it. I can

come and tour the building?

JULIE: Yes, that will be open from

9 to 12 as well. So, we

really invite the public to

come out and we have a

self-guided tour flyer that you

can take. And to see the

different important aspects of

the building. MELISSA: That yeah, the

building was restored two. Two

years ago? Yeah. It took about

10 years. JULIE: It was a long process

and it opened up to the public

again two years ago. MELISSA: And if
you're not sure what the Water

Works Building is, it's that
building that sits right behind

the library on San Marco, and so
come by. The History Festival

itself, just to give that a
quick plug, because you

mentioned StAugustineHistoryFestival.com is the

website. And I'm going to throw
out just a few because, we have

over twenty. I have a list, but
I'm not going to read them all.

But of course, you've got the
Colonial Quarter, The Mission,

The Shrine, the Ponce Hotel,
Fort Mose, the churches, all

the churches. It seems all the
historic churches are on the

list this year, Pena Peck
House, The Lighthouse, and
more. So, come on downtown.

Look around town. There's all

kinds of cool stuff to do. JULIE: It
is and it's really geared for

the locals. It's not a tourist
event. So, I think families and

individuals, retirees, anyone
would enjoy all the different

options. MELISSA: Things to do in St
Augustine. And feel like a

tourist but be a local. JULIE: There's
so much to see. MELISSA: And I'm looking

for I'm excited to hear how
things go for. I'm not able to

attend myself, but I am excited
about the program that we've

put together this year. JULIE: It is

exciting. It's very relevant

because there's a lot of push
from the window industry that

old windows are no good. They
need to be replaced and they

just can't be energy efficient
or ready for a hurricane, and we

beg to differ. MELISSA: And we're
going to prove them wrong.

That's right. Excellent. Well,
we have more to talk about. If

you're just now tuning in. You
are listening to The Break

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

City of St Augustine and
Julie Courtney is in studio

with us this week. She is our
City's Historic Preservation

Officer. We're talking about
the History Festival. Don't

forget that's May 11th through
the 14th. But we also

want to talk about, not just the
activities and stuff that we do,

but the people who help us with
our historic preservation, and

that's HARB, our Historic
Architectural Review Board.

We're actually going to do a
campaign this year in our Face

of the City that we do on
social media. Cindy's got that

going. Tell us a little bit
about the people of HARB that

we're going to meet in that
campaign this month. Yes, we're

really excited to highlight
these individuals, because each

of them bring a depth of
knowledge on historic architecture

and how buildings have been
constructed over time. They

also bring a unique perspective
from the work that they do each

day. It is not easy being
responsible to review the many

applications that come in each
month, and they do not always

agree, but they work hard to
apply our architectural

guidelines for historic
preservation, which are the

standards that they have to use
to consider in their review. And

they are, work hard to be fair
and reasonable, as well. So

Catherine Duncan is our Chair.

She was a long-term downtown

resident of the city. She's
a licensed architect. Gaere

McDonald is the Vice Chair and
the certified general

contractor. Jon Benoit is a
president of a custom home

building company. Brad Beach is
our newest member, but is also a

local architect. And last but
not least, Paul Weaver, who

recently received the De Aviles
Award from the City Commission.

He has been on our board for
over fifth, or over 19 years, and

is a historic preservation
consultant. And as we look at

these individuals who work so
hard to preserve what is

special and the authenticity of
our City, our Preservation

Month is a good time to
acknowledge the many others who

work tirelessly to do the same
for St Augustine. And one of

those is Dr Leslee Keys, who
will be receiving the Adelaide

Sanchez Award this month. And people
like Ken Smith, architect who

is hoping to retire soon. I
just talked to him on the

phone. He's such a great
resource for these big
preservation projects that you
see going on around the City.

All of our local architects,
contractors, and trades people

whose knowledge is really
irreplaceable. MELISSA: We have to have

HARB in place in order to keep
the City looking the way it

looks. Yes. If we didn't have
that, who knows what our

downtown area would look like.

JULIE: And that was set up as part of

our ordinance. It's, our City
Commissioners appoint this five

member board. The members
meet monthly and review

applications for different
things. If you are looking to

make changes to your building,
especially if you're in the

historic preservation zones one
through five, or facing HP one

through three. Any exterior
changes to your building or

property modifications have to

possibly have approval first by

our our board. And they also
look at City wide, any building

that is going to be demolished
that is 50 years or older, or

any partial demolition as well.

MELISSA: That goes to like we were just

talking about windows, porches,
roofs, chimneys. Anything like

that. And there's a
guideline. You've talked about

the guidelines before. There
are guidelines. Things like

paint color. JULIE: Yes. That applies to
different, the different HP

zones especially. They are
important because that is the

way we've been able to to
maintain, as you said, that

unique authenticity of the
City. MELISSA: The integrity. It's

what people come here for.

JULIE: That's right. I mean, the

tourists are definitely drawn
to Florida for many different

reasons. But St. Augustine, you
hear time and time again, of how

beautiful of a City it is. The
old historic buildings. That

sense of place that is so
unique. It's just so different

than anywhere else in the
country. MELISSA: Yeah and without it,

we we're not historic. JULIE: Right
and for the residents who own a

building, they are able to
enjoy that sense of place as

well with their unique building
that they own themselves. And I

think a lot of them who

consider keeping it more

historic are happy they've done

so. MELISSA: And do we have any major,

I'm putting you on the spot

here a little bit. What are

some of the things, examples you

can give. I mean, we were

talking about roof lines and

windows. Do we have something

that we're working on it... that's

I know ,we did tha,t well the

water works would be an example

of a historic structure.

We couldn't just go in there

and replace the brick with new

brick. JULIE: Right and they are

actually carefully restoring

the windows currently. Those,

they considered, you know, some

people thought, oh we should
just replace these old windows.

But they've been taken out and
are actually in the workshop

being restored. And the actual,
you know, the wood, if there's

rotten, just the areas of other
rotten are being removed and

replaced with new wood. MELISSA: The
floors were another thing in

there. You can't just go in
there and. JULIE: Well, for for HARB

and for our pure view, it's
only on the exterior of the

building. But yes, there
are many different houses and

buildings, that even our City
Hall, is a constant challenge

that the City has really been
committed to preserving the

building that's very unique and
special. MELISSA: And I'm going to wrap

up with one last thing that's,
that people don't really think

about, is signage. JULIE: Yes, that's
always a source of contention.

But we try to make
especially our HP zones, our

downtown core, the signs have
to comply with standards. And

there's a sign ordinance and a
sign permit process. MELISSA: And we

have to abide by those two.

JULIE: That's right. MELISSA: The City does. We

can't just put up any kind of
sign around St George

Street. JULIE: So our staff works hard. We have a small staff. I, we

work with Candice, Seymour

Preservation Planner that I

think you'll be talking to in

the next few weeks. Hoping to

get more on here this morning.

Yes, and our City Archaeologist

team Andrea White and Katherine

Sims. Yeah. MELISSA: So it's great work.

JULIE: Thank you. MELISSA: It's constant. JULIE: Yes

it's never ending. MELISSA: Well, thank

you for taking time to come and

speak with us this week.

Again, the History Festival this

weekend, May 11th through the

14th. Come check it out.

Lots to do, lots to see, and

most especially, come by the

Historic Water Works Building.

Go for a walk Saturday morning.

Come by the Water Works. Do the

self-guided tour. Check out how
you learn about historic window

preservation and come visit the
City. JULIE: Thank you Melissa. MELISSA: If you

missed part of this broadcast
and want to go back and listen

from the beginning, you can
find us on your favorite

podcast app. Get a listing of
all of those podcasting

platforms at CityStAugRadio.com. We're on Spotify, Apple

Podcast, Spreaker, and more. 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.

Follow us on our social media

platforms. You'll find us this month especially talking about

Historic Preservation Month and our HARB members. Find us on

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. All of those

channels are @CityStAug.

Until next time, thanks for

tuning in. ANNOUNCER: You've been listening to The Break Room, a

weekly program addressing projects 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.