

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 Break Room.

Thanks for tuning in. I'm

Melissa Wissel, Communications

Director for the City of St

Augustine. It's May, it's

Historic Preservation Month, and we just

finished the second Annual
History Festival here in St

Augustine. Of course, we're
always celebrating history,

doing our best to preserve it
and keeping our history alive

and well, with our residents, not
just our visitors. This week in

The Break Room for the first
time, Candice Seymour is

joining me. Candice is the city
of St Augustine's Historic

Preservation Planner. She works
closely with our Historic

Preservation Officer Julie
Courtney, who's been on with us

before. Candice, welcome to The
Break Room. CANDICE: Thanks. It's great

to be here. MELISSA: I'm, it's great to have you. I can't believe we

haven't had you on with us before. You've been with the

city since 2015. You've been through some of our

departments and I think you have found your home in the

Historic Preservation Office.

Tell us about your start in the

Clerk's Office. CANDICE: Yeah. So, I started in the City Clerk's

Office as a Recording Secretary and I mainly recorded the

meetings for the Planning and Zoning Board and Historic

Architectural Review Board.

Although I did other boards as

well. And yeah, it was just it was a great start. It was a

great way to kind of see all of
the mechanisms that make the

City run. Because the clerk's
office really does retain a lot

of the documentation and
records for a lot of different

departments. MELISSA: They are, or
Darlene as our Clerk. They are,

you, the Clerk's Office is
the library, the vault, if you

will. Of all of our public
records. CANDICE: Very much so. And I

always like to say that the
Clerk's Office is also in the

preservation business, because
they have some very cool

historic documents in the
Clerk's Office as well. They

have the Original Incorporation

papers for the City of St

Augustine. Some great old maps,
flat maps going back to

when the city was first
plotted. Yeah some

really neat stuff. MELISSA: So it's not
just minutes? CANDICE: It's not. MELISSA: Well and

and Darlene's a great
representative as our Clerk.

She's a history buff. But you
also have an interest in your

background in heritage tourism.
Let's come back to that in a

minute. But you left the Clerk's
Officer went up to Planning and

Building, which is the
department that houses Historic

Preservation. CANDICE: Yes. So, I kind
of made a lateral move over to

the Planning and Building Clerk
position, which was basically

doing kind of the background
work for the Historic

Architecture Review Board
primarily, also helping with

Planning and Zoning Board, and
reviewing sign permits, which

you and Julie had talked about
last time. MELISSA: Yes, that's right.

CANDICE: But yeah, so it was a really
good kind of introduction to

how the Historic Architectural
Review Board meeting agendas

and packets get organized and
put together. MELISSA: And it's like you

said, it's everything from
windows, rooftops, signage on

businesses, right of ways. And I
don't know if people realize

just what goes into a HARB
meeting. You were just

talking, you said you had 13
applications coming up in a

meeting. CANDICE: Yes so every
application that gets submitted

is require to be submitted 30
days prior to the meeting, and

that is to give us as the staff
time to do research on the

property, to look at what our
architectural guidelines say

about each project, and to make
sure that that project is in

compliance, or find ways to get
it into compliance. If it's

not, we generate a staff report
and the staff presentation for

the meeting. So, it is a lot of

effort. And it sometimes takes

some back and forth with the
applicants for the projects to

see if they need to tweak
anything, or provide additional

information, as well. MELISSA: And if I
submit my application and I get

told I'm going to be at a
certain meeting. Could it be

changed or postponed? Cuz I
just can't get all my paperwork

in? CANDICE: Potentially I guess. So, if
you get the initial

documentation in for a meeting,
but there's some required

information that's missing by
the time the meeting comes

around, there is the chance that
the board may choose to

continue your application,
because there is insufficient information to review
it. MELISSA: Wow. So, keep us honest at

HARB which you do. And tell me a
little bit. You we were

mentioning your heritage
tourism background. You and I

were talking on our way over
here. Give us a little

background about Candice. I
love your, I love your history.

It's a young history. You're
very young. But I love

your history. You started out.
You were in college. You lived

here, but you did some tours
yourself. CANDICE: Yes. So, to work my

way through college, I was a
tour guide. I also did

several other things in

heritage tourism, ticket sales,

gift shop, etcetera. But my
favorite was definitely tour

guiding and I've been a
licensed City guide since

December of 2005.

I still retain my tour guide

license, just in case. I

don't know. MELISSA: But you're not out

tour guiding now. CANDICE: No. Okay. Not
very often. No. But yeah so

I've done ghost tours, school
field trips, and I did work for

the Old Florida Museum for
several years, and doing their

educational program, and then
also coordinating their public

tour, as well. So, that was a
fun time in my life. And we

had some pretty neat adventures
there. MELISSA: And now you get to do

this as your job. If
folks are just now tuning in,

you are listening to The Break
Room. I'm Melissa Wissel,

Communications Director for the
City of St. Augustine and in

studio this week, we have
Candice Seymour. She is the

City's Historic Preservation
Planner. So, we've talked about

the Clerk's Office, Planning and
Building. You and I were also

talking about an interesting
alternative aspect of an

organization that kind of
focuses on preservation, which I

would never put two and two
together, and that's the Fire

Department. CANDICE: Yes, absolutely.

Our Fire Department is very

catered to our City

specifically because of its

high concentration of historic

buildings. A lot of them

wooden, and so that really

informs how they respond to

fire emergencies. And my husband,

who is a Lieutenant for the

St Augustine Fire

Department. So proud of him.

His name's Brandon. He also

teaches a building construction

class related specifically to

the fire service. And his

knowledge was instrumental in

me understanding, you know,

initially the aspects of

construction that go into

historic buildings. And that's

very important for a

firefighter to know.

As much as it's important for

me to know, because it keeps the

firefighters safe and it keeps

neighboring building safe, as

well, when they respond to

fires. MELISSA: Well and I will give a

little shout out to Brandon,

too. I've I've known Brandon

over the years as an

acquaintance, but I know that

he's been recognized for his

work in the Fire Department,

his leadership. So we're very

fortunate to have him. And I'm

sure you feel the same.

But I would never
put firefighting and historic
preservation, you know, together.

But clearly they have to break
the door down if they have to
break the door down. But

it's more about understanding
how those structures are built.

CANDICE: Absolutely, yeah. For them, it
is understanding how the

structures are built. And for
us, it's understanding, you

know, the architectural
features that comprise that

structure. And I always feel
like historic preservation is

very much an organizational
effort and a community effort

more than it is just Julie and
I and Andrea and Catherine

working on our little Historic
Preservation Division and

reviewing permits. It's far
more than that. The preservation of

buildings is important because
it tells the history of our

City. And coming from heritage
tourism, I see how very

important that is, especially
in the downtown core, but each

of our neighborhoods, our
National Register Historic

Districts, tells the story of
their development, through

their architecture. And the
property owners in those

districts are doing historic
preservation all the time when

they choose to rehabilitate

their buildings in a way that

promotes that architectural
heritage of those buildings.

MELISSA: And downtown has a much more
strict guideline and they have.

But you're talking places like
Davis Shores, Fullerwood, any,

any neighborhood in the
community. CANDICE: Lincolnville,

Fullerwood, there are
seven National Register

Historic Districts in the City
of St Augustine. And each of

those has a list of buildings
that contributes to that

district and they contribute
because their architectural

features and the time frame
when they were built are closely

unchanged. MELISSA: For example, for....

Put you on this spot. CANDICE: For

example, Lincolnville has a
very high concentration of what

we call frame vernacular
buildings. And those wood frame

buildings have kind of distinct
features that separate it from,

say Davis Shores, which has much
more a mid-century modern-style

buildings, because of the time
period in which it was

primarily developed. MELISSA: Right and
I don't necessarily want to see

a mid-century modern building
in Lincolnville. Even

though we have some. CANDICE: No. It would seem
very out of place and, you know,

the fabric of the the history
there would be altered if one

were to be built. MELISSA: And we have
overlay districts? Is that part

of the preservation? Or is that
just part of reconstruct? CANDICE: so we

do have the entry corridor
overlay districts. So, that is

another review that we do.
we have the design standards

for entry corridors and our
staff reviews any projects

along those entry corridors,
which include King Street,

Anastasia Boulevard, and San
Marco Avenue. We review them

for compliance with those
standards, with those design

standards for each corridor, and
we have our Corridor Review

Committee that also reviews

larger developments. MELISSA: Well, and

that's how we keep our, the
fabric of who we are, our

identity. We didn't have all of
this, and we just narrowly

escaped some legislation, I
think, if I recall correctly.

That was big. CANDICE: Yes, that
was very large. It it would

have preempted the City's
ability to deny demolitions of

buildings in floodplains and
that was very concerning.

MELISSA: Right. Cuz the whole city is
practically in a floodplain.

Yes. CANDICE: Yeah. Pretty much
everything East of US-1. MELISSA: Yeah.

Well, and that does make a
difference. I, you know, people

may not appreciate the

significance of that. Between

Representative Renner,

Representative Stevenson, our

Mayor, our City Manager, Mr

Regan, who did not give up

the fight even as he's closing out

his career. So, we owe them a

shout out and a thank you as

well. Tell me a little bit

before we have to go. We're in

a project with Pena Peck House?

Is that one of our, the windows?

Is there a project going on?

CANDICE: There is a restoration project

that Julie has been working

very closely with our General

Services Department to get all

of that settled so... MELISSA: Cuz we we

actually got it. We actually

maintain buildings, as well.

Not just City Hall and the

Fire Station and the Police

Department. CANDICE: Yes, the City does

have a handful of historic

properties that it maintains as

well. The Penia Peck House

included. MELISSA: Yup and so if you're

walking down the street and you

see all this history, be glad

that Candice is our Historic

Preservation Planner. CANDICE: Sometimes

I like to joke that I'm like

the contractor's least favorite

person to hear from, because it

usually means that they have to

change something in their

initial design. MELISSA: You can't use

that font or you can't have

that color or you have to use a

material. Materials are
just as important too, right?

CANDICE: Yes. Materials are very
important, while the size and

shape of a wood shape shingle
that's made of a composite

material may look the same as a
wood one, when you put it on a

building in totality, they
genuinely do look different so.

MELISSA: So those composites that people
say, but then it will be here

for another 500 years! No. CANDICE: Our
architectural guidelines are

very strict about what
materials can and can't be used.

MELISSA: And sorry not sorry kind of a
thing, like, you know. CANDICE: HARB has

really no way to approve a

composite material on a

building, so. MELISSA: That's I guess

that's a good thing. It keeps

us keeps us authentic. CANDICE: Yes in

our Historic Preservation

Districts. Yes it does. MELISSA: Good.

Well, Candice thank you so much

for coming telling us all about

what you do, and preserving our

City. CANDICE: Absolutely. MELISSA: And we're

glad to have you. And if we

ever see you on the street in a

costume giving a tour, we know

that you're authorized to be

there doing that. If you missed

part of this broadcast and

want to go back and listen the

beginning, you can now find us

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Apple Podcast, Spreaker, and

more. Find a complete listing
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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 all of our

social media platforms. You'll
find us on Facebook, Twitter,

and Instagram [@CityStAug](https://www.instagram.com/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.