

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: HISTORIC PRESERVATION AS A COMPONENT
OF COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY URBAN
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

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This thesis examines some of the ways that historic preservation can be a useful component of larger long-range sustained revitalization efforts in distressed and transitional urban neighborhoods that are home to private nonprofit universities. Case studies demonstrate that university involvement in support of historic preservation as a component of partnered revitalization can lead to healthier neighborhoods, fewer “town-

gown” conflicts, and stronger universities in terms of student retention and other factors of well-being.

The thesis is organized in three sections. The first section examines current problems facing the many distressed and transitional urban university neighborhoods, the historical development of those problems with a mini case study of the University of Chicago in Illinois, and the negative effects on universities, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the host cities. The second section reviews the history of historic preservation in distressed and transitional neighborhoods, the development of preservation planning with a mini case study of the College Hill neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island, and the benefits of using historic preservation within revitalization strategies. The third section looks at the components of successful community-university partnerships and then presents two contemporary case studies where historic preservation has been incorporated into community-university partnered revitalization plans. The two case studies are University City and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Huguenin Heights, Tatnall Square Heights, and Beall’s Hill and Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Problems and benefits of incorporating historic preservation into revitalization plans are explored, in part through interviews with stakeholders.