

PROJECT RESEARCH REPORT

ROSSON HOUSE RESTORATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

Only the intent of the proposal is outlined here. The proposal will be presented to the board in December, 1975, and will be sent to the membership in its final form in January or February, 1976.

PROPOSAL: That the Jr. League of Phoenix, Inc. enter into a contract with the Rosson House Restoration Board and the City of Phoenix,

1. To restore the interior of the first and second floors of the Rosson House, and
2. To develop and publish a pamphlet outlining the history and restoration of the Rosson House, and
3. To develop a docent course, train volunteers as docents, and to conduct tours of the Rosson House, and
4. To allocate funds in the amount of \$40,000 over a two year period for restoration, docent programs and historical pamphlet, and
5. To turn the project over to an approved governing body in three years.

BACKGROUND: The Rosson House on 6th and Monroe Streets, a Victorian home built in 1892 by Dr. Ronald Rosson, was purchased by the City of Phoenix in 1974. The home has been listed in the Historic America Building Trust since 1946, and was registered in the National Trust Registry in 1971. It is the State of Arizona's BiCentennial or Heritage House following the "Meeting House" program initiated and proposed as a Heritage '76 project by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The house will always be owned and maintained by the City of Phoenix. In January of 1975, Mr. John Driggs was appointed chairman of the Rosson House Restoration Board. The Jr. League is represented on this board by Kim Sterling.

The Rosson House is located within the Booker T. Washington Neighborhood Development Plan (BTW NDP or NDP). The NDP is a federally funded program, operated by the City of Phoenix and includes all the area from 6th to 12th Streets, and Van Buren to Madison Streets inclusive. The program has been in existence for three years and its purpose is to purchase (with federal funds) properties within this area, resell them to either individuals, corporations or commercially oriented ventures which comply with the over-all purpose and conceptual plan for the area. These redevelopments include single family housing, multiple housing, commercial ventures and a specific designation for "Cultural and Visitor Orientation" purposes for the three blocks directly across from the Civic Plaza. The Rosson House was purchased by NDP funds ahead of its purchase schedule and will be formally turned over to the City soon. The NDP project terminates when all of the property has been purchased, resold, and developed.

The Rosson House is an outstanding example of Victorian architecture. It consists of three floors and rooms. The house will be restored as typified between 1892-1910. Demolition on the exterior is scheduled for the middle of November, 1975, and the interior work can begin in March, 1976. Plans are in effect for purchase of surrounding property for an extensive garden area which would greatly enhance the house.

NEED: This is the first official effort of the City of Phoenix at historical preservation. It is imperative that the long range goals and planning, not only for the actual restoration, but also for the home's continuing program, insure it as a viable aspect of the community's heritage and the stepping stone for the further development of Heritage Square. The Jr. League can be of invaluable influence not only by lending support toward the completion of the home, but by initiating a viable program and assistance in long range planning.

VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT: It is imperative that twenty (20) members volunteer for this project at the time of the vote in order to insure its passage and ultimate completion in the character of the Junior League and its standards of excellence.

FORMAT AND ADMINISTRATION The project will be co-ordinated by the League project chairman and her committee and Mrs. William Osborn and Mr. John Armer II of the Rosson House Restoration Board. Mr. Robert Frankeberger, A.I.A. will be the overall co-ordinator for the entire project. The project chairman will sit on the Rosson House Restoration Board until that board terminates.

SILVA HOUSE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Only the intent of the proposal is outlined here. It is subject to revision and is still being researched under CSAC. However, the committee feels that the general membership is entitled to be informed of its findings.

PROPOSAL: That the Jr. League of Phoenix, Inc. enter into negotiations with the City of Phoenix for the purchase or lease of the Silva House (Miramon property) on the corner of 7th Street and East Adams,

1. For restoration as a period museum, and
2. For use in the future as a possible Jr. League Headquarters contingent upon membership approval, and
3. For allocation of funds for a lease-purchase agreement in the amount of \$20,000 over a two year period, and
4. To include in such an agreement a clause stipulating that Jr. League monies shall revert to the Community Trust Fund if negotiations are unsuccessful.

NEED: One of the concerns researched by the Project Research Committee has been what function the Rosson House will serve when restoration is completed, and what effect that restoration will have on the surrounding environment. To that answer several others have taken definitive action. From these concerns and interests have come the concept of Heritage Square. Although the area, not unlike the Rosson House, is no longer its former self, it has evolved toward becoming the meeting house for Phoenix. Obviously the Convention Center-Civic Plaza makes this possible. The regional and even national aspects of its activities demands of the Rosson House and Heritage Square to become the focal point of a more local flavor. The area as an emerging meeting house district, and the implied charge to include a local aspect in its further development, suggest provision and encouragement for returning civic, cultural, and professional groups and organizations from their offices and meeting rooms in the suburbs to the urban center. Such groups exist now and their members are legion. They are self-generating, and for that reason could locate anywhere. More importantly, their traffic contributes to the market, whose demands are met by shops, restaurants and amusements. They have common activities and therefore, needs; meeting rooms, exhibition space, office, duplicating and mail rooms. Aside from these practical considerations the district could offer meeting opportunities between groups which urban centers nurture.

These concepts are presently being studied by a commission of the City Council to develop a market research and economic feasibility study for the Rosson House block and the surrounding area. If this study indicates a favorable climate for the development of the Heritage Square concept then other groups such as the Central Arizona Chapter of the A.I.A. plan to build an environmental arts center and locate there. The Performing Arts Combined Talents, Inc., the Phoenix Historical Society and the Arizona Museum are also proposing to relocate adjacent to Heritage Square.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Due to limited space, details concerning budget and volunteer opportunities were deleted from both proposals. This information may be readily obtained from any committee member, and will be issued to the membership before a proposal is presented for vote.

Thank you for your interest.

The Project Research Committee
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