Preservation as the Movement of Yes
Introduction

In the previous issue of *Forum Journal* (Fall 2015), we asked preservation leaders and allies to help us envision the future of the historic preservation movement. In the introduction, Stephanie Meeks, president and CEO of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, wrote:

*I believe that to keep growing preservation for the next 50 years and beyond, we need to keep working to become a “Movement of Yes.” … [P]reservation needs to be about more than simply stopping bad things from happening to old buildings. Of course, there is still an important place for local preservation controls. But … instead of being the ones who hold back change, and say “no, you can’t do that,” we must lead by example—innovating, adopting new tools, crafting new partnerships, and finding more ways to adapt and reuse historic buildings.*

That got us thinking.

When we tell people about the preservation work we do and the issues we care about, why do we sometimes get a negative response—hostility (“What right do you have to tell property owners what to do?”), skepticism (“What do you do-gooders know about the tough realities of business investment, real estate, or urban development?”), even bewilderment (“Why do you bother?”)?

What are we doing wrong? Even more important, what are all the things we’re doing right but are failing to communicate?

This issue of *Forum Journal* tries to answer those questions from the perspectives of preservation practitioners and partners engaged in diverse activities and entities: preservation law, urban revitalization programs, Main Street efforts, Community Development Corporations, statewide and local advocacy groups, Preservation Green Lab projects, state historic preservation offices, and local preservation commissions.

We invite you to join the discussion. How are you, in your own activities and interests, advancing preservation as a “Movement of Yes” in your community? And how are you celebrating that in a way that makes others eager to join in? FJ