

Avoid Demolition



Morocco is unique in that so many of its downtown buildings remain. The “hole” created by demolition is never filled, even if a new building is erected. Many small towns have chosen to demolish rather than hope for restoration, but it is a sad and scarring decision. Renewed Heritage was formed, in part, to provide an alternative. Our goal in taking on the Laundromat rehabilitation is to show that with community support in labor and donations, a small town really can preserve the buildings that define it. The material cost is not as great as some imagine, but time is short.

More inside...



The Potential of Restoration

Renewed Heritage has secured the rights to this building at the corner of State St. and Polk Street. Through private donations and volunteer labor, we will rehabilitate this landmark to recapture the charm it possessed as the *Sellers' Service Station*. This project is intended to demonstrate the potential of restoration in uncovering Morocco's assets. Original materials will be refurbished and reused whenever possible. We plan to use this building to support other projects and training efforts in restoration and preservation.



Renewed Heritage



Renewed Heritage, Inc. was formed to provide a way for current and former residents to pool their resources of time, creativity, talent, and money toward a common goal: restoring the assets that make this a great place to live. Much of our current focus is on downtown buildings and homes, but a rich community life is more than that. The practicality and potential of locally grown foods, repair shops, and even small hospitality-related businesses is recognized by many, but help is needed to catalyze these “new” ventures. Our aim is to fill this role. Read on to see how.



A local nonprofit organization.

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You might recognize the building on the other side as the old Morocco Laundromat, now boarded up and crumbling. It does not have to stay this way. With ingenuity and community support we can rehabilitate this building, demonstrating that the preservation of our town is a choice not a dream. The historic storefront with stained glass is still intact behind the wood panels. The artist's rendering at right shows how the building could look, enhancing the appearance of the downtown area.



Laundromat Q & A

What will you do with the building when it's complete?

We believe that communities benefit from establishments catering to local art, music, and conversation. An evening-oriented coffeehouse would fill this role well. It requires very little in terms of interior investment, since a rustic look is typical. It could also be reserved for a variety of meeting needs, and private gatherings.

Isn't it too far gone?

Other than the rear wall, the building is in surprisingly good structural condition. Steps were taken in '06 to reduce further deterioration in the walls. An evaluation in May '08 by a historical structural engineer confirmed what local experts had said: As with most old brick buildings, years of neglect can be erased by a committed restoration effort.

Isn't it too expensive to repair?

The material cost is not great. Once the roof is replaced and rear wall stabilized, for under \$20,000, the majority of the remaining work can be done with volunteer labor and expert supervision. Completion expected in '09.

Mentors/Youth/Preservation

Whether it's an orchard, a garden, a repair shop, or an old building, involving energetic youth with a few caring adults can provide great benefits for our community. With the appropriate selection of sites, workers, and mentors, we hope to provide youth and adults with rewarding experiences that enhance our community's appearance and local economy. The work environments we create will be wholesome and educational in terms of history and skill building.

Renewed Heritage seeks opportunities in a variety of areas in line with our goal of uncovering, utilizing, and preserving local assets. Our immediate, primary focus is on building and home restoration, using a mentor/youth approach. Our initial experience in preparing the former Sellers' Service Station and Laundromat for renewal indicates that this method is very enjoyable, rewarding, and effective.

The deterioration of our town is not inevitable or unavoidable, but action is needed. Two other local assets waiting to be uncovered are preservation-minded adults and youth. We believe this is the best way to bring back the best of what we have here. We are seeking funding through donations or private loans to start this process, although we anticipate that this venture will eventually be self-supporting.

Renewed Heritage, as a 501(c)3 nonprofit, accepts monetary tax-deductible donations, but also equipment, salvaged windows and doors or buildings offered at reduced prices. If you would like to invest in Morocco, call 285-6074 to donate or to learn more. Our new website is coming in November 2008, www.renewedheritage.org.

