

START TALKING



About Small Town Conversations

Most rural towns of Western North Carolina have small populations, limited professional help, vacant downtown buildings and declining employment. But in some of these small towns, local folks and volunteer organizations have found ways to build on their assets and overcome obstacles.

HandMade in America's *Small Town Conversations* provides a way for homegrown solutions to be shared. We are creating a network of mentors, knowledgeable small town folks willing to have conversations and help people in other towns, to share their experience.

Small Town Conversations provides low-cost knowledge sharing through simple workshops, offering WNC small towns a way to tap into the experience and strength of their region.

Our Mission

HandMade in America's mission is to grow handmade economies through craft, cultural heritage and community assets.

LEARN MORE

Scan this QR code to find out more about HandMade in America.



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Renovating Big Buildings in Small Towns

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

10:00 am – 1 pm • Old Fort, NC

Learn how to get money for your project

Meet and Mingle with Mentors who have completed successful renovation projects

Meet potential funders and contractors for your renovation project

Enjoy the Old Fort Depot and Railroad Museum



The
Rural
Center



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About the Workshop

Renovating an old building is about reinvesting in your town's heritage, generating jobs, supporting independent businesses, increasing civic participation, and bolstering a community's sense of place. It requires an organized approach, but the organizational structure of each project varies for each community.

Meet with mentors who have worked on successful renovation projects such as the Mitchell County Courthouse, the Stecoah Valley Cultural Art Center and the Don Gibson Theater.



About the Mentors

Dr. Dan Barron is a retired professor from the University of South Carolina, where he worked for 30 years. He now serves the people of the beautiful Toe River Valley and AMY Regional Library. He is the Chairman for the Mitchell County Courthouse

Foundation and was an integral part in building the leadership team to complete the renovation.

Carol Dodson is a professional commercial property manager and developer. Since 2002, she has renovated 3 historic buildings in Downtown West Jefferson and continues to be active as the

Vice-President of the West Jefferson Community Partnership and Chairwoman of the Tourist Development Authority.

Bob Hensley has been involved with the Small Towns program since its inception in 1996 and serves as secretary of the Bakersville Improvement Group. With 42+ years of experience in building construction and renovation, he was the project manager for renovations and restorations in the Historic Courthouse in Bakersville.

Brownie Plaster was founding Chairwoman for Cleveland County Historic Preservation Commission and currently works as chairwoman of Destination Cleveland County, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to promoting Cleveland County's cultural heritage through events and venues such as the Don Gibson Theatre, which she helped raise the funds to renovate.

Lynn Shields developed the Stecoah Valley Cultural Art Center in Robbinsville, NC where she raised more than \$3 million to revitalize the building and develop its programming. As retired Director of the Center, she continues to work there as financial director and sustainability advisor.



9:30-10:00am Registration and Coffee

10:00 - 10:30am Big Building Renovation from Start to Finish - *An overview of the process.*

10:30am - 11:30 am "Prospecting" with Mentors, Funders, and Contractors

11:30 am - 12:00 Sustainability: Panel Discussion on how to keep the project alive after renovation

12:00 - 1:00pm Lunch and Networking

1:00pm Questions & Answers



REGISTER

BIG BUILDINGS IN SMALL TOWNS

Tuesday December 6, 2011

Please complete, detach and return this form with a check for your registration fee made out to:

HandMade in America.

Registration fee: \$30/person or \$95 per small town team (up to 5 people)

Registration deadline: November 30, 2011

Mail to :

Small Town Conversations
HandMade in America
P.O. Box 2089
Asheville, NC 28802

Name: _____

Town: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to join our Small Town Conversations Mailing List? Yes / No

You can also register and pay online at:
www.handmadeinamerica.org



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