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A Report from Three Focus Groups

for

Hidden City and the Preservation Alliance

For the “Managing Together” Grant

Conducted for

Hidden City Philadelphia

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

By

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Section 1.

Project Purpose and Methodology

Major Findings

**Project Purpose and Methodology**

In spring 2014, Hidden City received a grant from the Barra Foundation for a nine-month project called “Hidden City and The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia: Managing Together.” This joint grant was designed to help these two organizations explore the potential risks and rewards of managing together, considering a range of closer programmatic and corporate relationships.

Heritage Consulting Inc. was engaged by Hidden City to support the talks about collaboration, through a series of stakeholder engagement activities. Three tasks were identified: up to 15 interviews with key individuals, an online survey to begin in summer 2014, and a series of three focus groups held on June 17 and 18, 2014. A final focus group will take place in fall 2014. Heritage Consulting Inc.’s principal, Donna Ann Harris, will also serve as neutral third party facilitator for any collaboration discussions.

The Preservation Alliance (PA) and Hidden City (HC) provided Heritage Consulting Inc. with a list of people to invite to participate in the three focus groups. Stakeholder groups included: 20 Hidden City members, 20 Preservation Alliance members, and 20 members of both organizations. These stakeholders were invited to participate in small group discussions of like-minded people, to provide their opinions about current Hidden City and Preservation Alliance programs; how the two organizations interact with their members and friends; and how a collaboration, merger, alliance or joint venture between these two organizations might work.

Heritage Consulting Inc. sent invitation letters and followed with e-mails and phone calls to encourage participation. Sixty individuals were invited to participate and thirty four (34) attended, a response rate of 56%. Each focus group was very well attended, as each one had between ten to twelve participants. All focus groups took place at the Cultureworks Coworking Space conference room at 1315 Walnut Street Suite 320 in Center City Philadelphia, and lasted from one and half to two hours. The discussions were led by Donna Ann Harris.

Participants were informed that no comments would be “directly ascribed to them” to promote candid conversation. Participants were also informed that their names would be included in a general list of attendees found in Appendix D in this report. Heritage Consulting Inc. prepared and sent thank you letters to each participant.

The script used in these focus groups was completed by Heritage Consulting Inc. and was reviewed by the staff of both Hidden City and the Preservation Alliance. The script was treated as a general guide to focus discussion, but most sessions included new issues of interest to participants, which were not in the drafted script. The script is attached as Appendix E.

At each focus group session, two interns, R. Lindsey Uhl and Ariana Zeno, took contemporaneous typed notes. These notes were merged, evaluated, summarized, and analyzed qualitatively to “make sense” of a large volume of raw notes from each focus groups. Once all sessions were completed, all raw comments were reviewed to identify overarching and common themes across all groups. From this qualitative information, we created this report which contains a narrative of the Major Findings as a summary of the three focus group sessions.

We have organized this report in three sections. The first section contains an overview of the project purpose and methodology and then our Major Findings across all three focus groups.

The second section of the report has summary reports from each of the three focus groups to show the differences between groups based on the common themes discussed. The final section contains five appendix. Three of the appendix are the complete raw sorted notes from each of the three focus groups, which are organized by topic related to the focus group script found in Appendix D. The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants. These comments have not been edited in any way and are the complete record of each focus group session. Appendix E is the list of attendees at each focus group session.

The following section of this report contains the Major Findings of the three focus groups. This section is a narrative summary that describes the relative value of each focus group, identifying the similarities and differences across the focus groups, along with the major points made during the three sessions by participants.

**Major findings**

**Participants the focus groups**

Both Hidden City and the Preservation Alliance carefully selected the people to be invited to the three focus groups. They choose long standing and strong organizational supporters as well as some skeptics of the organization to participate. The purpose of selecting a mixed group was to provide a balanced view during the discussions. In all cases, the respective individuals that participated, were cheerleaders for their team, offering enthusiastic comments about their organization as well as a few gripes. For the joint focus group, each participant had extensive knowledge about each organization. As a result, the joint focus group offered more a nuanced understanding of the role of each organization in the preservation universe that is Philadelphia. This group also offered the most cogent comments about the benefits and detriments of any kind of merger or collaboration between the two organizations.

**Understanding of the current role and function of both organizations**

Many Preservation Alliance members that participated in the Preservation Alliance Only focus group did not know enough about Hidden City to provide many meaningful comments about that organization. There was some misinformation and supposition about Hidden City’s organizational structure, management and budget. This lack of information hindered a full discussion of collaboration opportunities in this focus group. That said, the comments made by these focus group participants are interesting to read if only to understand what a handful of Preservation Alliance members know (or don’t know) about Hidden City. See *the Preservation Alliance Only Complete Raw Sorted Notes* in Appendix A.

Preservation Alliance members that participated in the joint focus group with Hidden City members, had far better understanding of the work of Hidden City and were able to offer highly valuable insights and suggestions about the value of each organization, its programs and the possibilities for collaboration.

Hidden City members in each focus group, uniformly understood the role and value of the Preservation Alliance and could articulate that its role is advocating and lobbying for historic buildings in Philadelphia.

All focus group participants understood that the primary role of the Preservation Alliance is as an advocate for Philadelphia’s built environment. Hidden City’s primary role was viewed as an educator, rabble rouser and a journalistic resource. One Hidden City focus group participant said “They are such radically different organizations but with exactly the same interests. You can create advocates out of readers and readers out of advocates.”

Finally, several focus group participants summed up the two organizations this way: Hidden City is about people. The Preservation Alliance is about the buildings. Each organization would benefit from taking a little bit from the other, and to learn from each other.” This may be the fundamental basis for further collaboration.

**Programs of both organizations**

In all focus groups, Hidden City’s tours were uniformly praised for their high quality. These tours were viewed as both educational and fun. Hidden City tours offered a ”fun way to see why historic preservation is important.” There were some negative comments about the ticketing for the most recent Hidden City Festival, and suggestions made for improvement. Overall, focus group attendees agreed that the Hidden City Festival’s multi-day experiences were highly worthwhile. Hidden City members were very enthusiastic about the tours and the Festival, and went out of their way to participate in both activities.

Few Preservation Alliance members participated in Alliance led tours, but thought they added value to the organization. There were a few complaints about the quality of the volunteer tour guides by both Preservation Alliance and Hidden City participants.

Preservation Alliance members viewed many activities of the Alliance as a public service to expand the constituency of the preservation movement. Preservation Alliance members that participated in any of the focus groups, rarely participated themselves in the Neighborhood Preservation Conference, Old House Fair, or Homeowner Workshops. There were suggestions to rebrand the Homeowner Workshops to be hands-on preservation workshops, as the word “homeowner” excluded some people who might wish to participate. The new format for the Awards Reception was praised, but some thought the ticket price was too high, even though the event is meant as a fundraiser.

**Hidden City Daily**

The Hidden City Daily was viewed as a highly valuable service by focus group participants who read it. There were many comments about retaining the “cheeky, hip and irreverent” tone of the stories published. These stories were viewed as a compliment to the work of the Preservation Alliance. As one Hidden City focus group participant said “Honestly, Hidden City can get away with saying things the Preservation Alliance couldn’t get away with saying.” Maintaining the journalistic integrity of the Hidden City Daily in any merger or collaboration discussion was a major concern for a large majority of focus group participants. Unfortunately no one offered a viable way to retain the editorial integrity of the Hidden City Daily should a full merger take place between the two organizations.

**Cautions about a full merger**

Only one of the thirty four people who participated in the three focus groups, was not in favor of any kind of merger or collaboration, saying that the two organizations should remain separate. A full merger was not viewed favorably by most participants. There were numerous comments that each organization’s most admired attributes would be lost or significantly diluted should a full merger occur. There were many comments along the line of “The Preservation Alliance is traditional conservative historic preservation and do practical things, like workshops and nominations and the like, where Hidden City is urban exploration and creative and exciting. They are both really necessary and I would fear that that creative side would get lost if Hidden City were to be tucked into the Preservation Alliance.”

**Joint programming**

Most focus group participants saw joint programming as the natural and easy point of collaboration. There was enthusiastic support for joint tours, a co-written magazine, linked content on both web sites, homeowner workshops, seminars and conferences and marketing. A joint focus group participant felt that “Quality control is going to be the problem” for joint tours.

**Something other than a merger**

Most felt some other kind of collaboration other than a full merger would work best. It seemed important that the distinctive aspects of each organization be retained. No one identified a specific type of collaboration (such as an affiliation or joint venture) other than joint programming. As one Preservation Alliance focus group participant noted: “We all know there is a spectrum of mergers out there. It sounds like you are searching for that sweet spot within the range.”

Hidden City participants were the most generous and encouraging about some kind of collaboration. One focus group participant said: “I don’t think their missions would collide, and they know and like each other and don’t talk smack about each other behind their backs.”

The differing demographics represented by each organization was perceived as a strength in any collaboration discussion. The joint focus group was especially encouraging of some kind of joint membership, especially if a discount was offered to belong to both organizations.

Specific activities that were suggested to remain separate were: Preservation Alliance awards, easements, litigation about historic buildings, Trust Funds (William Penn Statue), Hidden City Festival and Hidden City Daily. Some saw savings perhaps in sharing back office functions.

As the two organizations continue discussions about what a collaboration might be, a joint focus group participant offered this comment: “This union, to be happy, would have to respect each other’s autonomy, independence, and hipness.”

The next section, Section 2 of this report contains reports from each focus group. These reports are meant as summaries of the major points made by participants. Each report is organized by topic and contains a handful of actual quotes made by participants during the discussion that are representative of the entire discussion. Comments are organized by topic and in the order used in the script.

Section 2.

Focus Group 1 Report Preservation Alliance members

Focus Group 2 Report Hidden City members

Focus Group 3 Report Joint Hidden City and Preservation Alliance members

**Focus Group 1 Report: Preservation Alliance members**

**Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together**

**Preservation Alliance Only Focus Group**

The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants.

Please note the abbreviations of HC for Hidden City and PA for Preservation Alliance appear throughout the remaining sections of this report.

**Introduction**

Of the ten people that attended the Preservation Alliance focus group, nine were members. Less than half contributed to the advocacy or annual appeal. Five people attended the most recent awards reception. Most read the paper newsletter cover to cover, and skimmed the e-newsletter. Only three were friends of the organization on Facebook, but slightly more than half (6) visited the Alliance web site for information. This group was not highly involved with Alliance created events, with only one person attending the Neighborhood Preservation Conference, three attending the Old House Fair and two attending a homeowner workshop.

**Focus group participants talked about the Preservation Alliance events.**

* I’m a big fan of the (PA) printed newsletter. I think it’s one of the best that I get.
* The awards reception has been greatly improved this year.
* I think the tours are fabulous but I haven’t gone to one in years, but I promote them all the time.
* I’m a realtor and have gone to the Old House Fair for many years and a lot of people go because they’re interested in maintaining their house in its original way and want to find professionals who can help them do that and they have found architects there.
* I haven’t gone (to the Old House Fair), but I know clients who have.

**There were many assumptions about Hidden City, some correct, others not. These focus group participants likened Hidden City to being a start up with few formal policies or procedures.**

* I don’t know enough about Hidden City to make any comments.
* But I assume they’re (HC) program heavy.
* They have to meet restrictions from their granting foundations. But they’re (HC) budget is about 1/3 and less employees and the vast majority of their writers are volunteers.
* The issue is imposing something more restrictive or cumbersome than they’re (HC) used to, or that they can sustain. Like filling out timesheets.
* Or on the other hand, the PA having to be so mindful of stewardship and fiscal obligations, it could be they're inheriting problems from an organization (HC) that is loose goosey, with fewer responsibilities and hasn’t had the kind of strong financial policies and procedures that the PA would require. Do we know this for sure? Or we’re assuming?
* I fear that HC is too young, kind of like a startup, doesn’t have responsibilities, financial management concerns.
* Do they (HC) have a budget? (YES) Do they work their budget in the same way? If they are program-based, what are their operations?

**The Preservation Alliance focus group members who did have a passing knowledge of Hidden City activities focused more on tours or in some cases the Festival, which were uniformly praised.**

* HC’s organization and all that, web presence and way of engaging is leaps and bounds above PA – feel like you are getting secret access to things you never get access to.
* I had a tour with HC and it was great, an underground track looking at graffiti and looking at ways to develop the idea and look at significance and all that, and it was great – and Facebook was the way I found it.
* HC has a way of making things seem sexy, whether its access or a different way of seeing a streetscape, and make cities more accessible to people who previously had no awareness of the built environment – not about like ooh lets save this façade – but it’s about quirky weird things like a gateway drug that gets you high on the experience and the ideas of say the high line in Philly like New York’s high line and all that. They make things easy to do. It hooks them.
* I think HC is revealing something that PA has been doing for so long which is not isolating ourselves. They (HC) are making us more relevant, mixing contemporary art and music with old buildings.

**The Preservation Alliance’s identity and value as an advocacy organization was paramount**

* Advocacy is the PA more important impact. With new staff, the tone at the Alliance is more positive. More fact based, less emotional.
* When you grow up, you join PA.
* We (PA) tend to pick our battles with more ammunition. Whereas they (HC) just shoot and say it’d be a real shame. We (PA) say it shouldn’t be destroyed because it has this easement and that district and this covenant and so is protected in this way, etc.
* PA goes on about how it must be preserved and stuff and HC stuffs it in your face.
* PA has been said to care more about buildings than about people.

**The value and identity of Hidden City is through its public programming which is perceived as “cool.”**

* HC is a fun way to see why historic preservation is important.
* Like HC is almost a gateway to PA.
* When you want to remember why preservation was cool you go to a HC events.
* They talk about threatened buildings or streetscapes. They discuss issues that might be below the PA’s radar.
* HC raises the profile, shows it off to people, and raises a broader awareness of preservation, where PA has the power to legally maintain a building and the tools to do so. And it’s actually their job to do so.
* HC is able to help advocate without using the same tools.
* HC enlivens preservation. The way they present the building it’s very people-centered. They show people in the buildings and in the pictures relating to the buildings, inside and experiencing the building and the landscape and the like.
* Technology, that’s what HC has. What young people do with technology is so simple, all so intuitive, they engage people and get people into it with Twitter and stuff. We (PA) don’t have it. The way our (PA) organization has been put together, we haven’t been put together with a basis of technology. They (HC) started based on that and with the facility to do that.

**Maintaining the journalistic integrity of the Hidden City Daily was not a major concern for this group, perhaps because they did not read the Daily often.**

* I don’t think it’s a problem that people won’t read HC anymore because they are associated with PA.
* I don’t know how journalistic integrity could be compromised, if we have the same goal.
* Doesn’t think that people will go “oh now they have an agenda because they’re in PA, so I won’t read them” – no more like, they’ll just be bigger.
* I do think their (HC) articles have saved buildings by getting it to the forefront. They can get articles in places and be so effective and do things none of us can do we share the outcome and the passion.
* You look at the Hidden City Daily there is a definite irreverent tone that I don’t know if meshes with the PA tone, especially for corporate donors. In HC, you can find articles that are taking pot shots at the very people who are supporting the PA. This would have to be reconciled.

**Some focus group participants believed there were fundamental differences between the two organizations.**

* What I’m hearing and from my own experience, is that PA, being a more established group with fairly extensive membership and events that cost money to get into, is at one end here and the other is at HC where you can go to the event for free like the town hall in Germantown. But it’s so easy to go to and cheap when you have to pay and it’s a fun event. They are just different kinds of establishments.
* In my mind, HC will always be the group that gets into cool places you can’t normally get into, kind of voyeuristic, not preservation and advocacy. For me PA is about preservation. They are on different ends of the spectrum.
* With the easement program, the PA is obligated to maintain and defend those easements and it has to maintain their 501c3 status. If it ever wants to get an easement again it has to be able to defend that it can support the easement which is nice and stuffy but it may create a difference between the nimbleness of HC and the responsibility of monitoring and enforcing those easements. Can it be bridged? Sure, but it has to be fully thought out.

**There were some concerns about a merger or collaboration between the two organizations.**

* So they (HC) want something that we’ve (PA) got.
* But are they coming with debt? What are their obligations? If there is a debt balance for an organization, that calculates things differently is hard to evaluate
* If the merger comes, what are they bringing to the table in terms of assets and obligations? What are they bringing? Seems like they are nimble and don’t cost that much.

**Maintaining the identities of both organizations is important to these focus group participants, but many saw the benefits of a merger/collaboration of some sort.**

* We all know there is a spectrum of mergers out there. It sounds like you are searching for that sweet spot within the range.
* PA gets HC’s cool factor, the HC gets the PA editorial know-how – PA gets also the younger members, HC gets the deeper benefit in the sense that there’s a longstanding organization with longstanding relationship with city officials and staff that’s been there for decades and the like.
* And we overlap, we both perceive ourselves as watchdog organizations.
* On other hand, because they (HC) are small and young, they are perceived as more nimble operationally, so that’s a virtue that might be lost or hampered in doing a merger with PA.
* In many ways, they (HC) are preservationists; they’re just not calling themselves that.
* So if the two got together with respect to their goals it could be a good thing - it might bring the extremes together better.
* Both offer similar messages, maybe it can energize the base more?
* There could be a structural relationship between the two organizations, just not a merger. Which would be something to explore first. Because there are such great differences and so many common interests, perhaps they could just be approached by different directions.
* If a merger was to occur it would be very important to keep the HC identity – it could be like “the x studio within y firm,” or something, like they do in architecture.
* Maybe this isn’t a merger but maintaining their own identity and partnering for events and stuff - cross promote and cross fertilize and get the crowds to go back and forth, but not become the same space.
* There is enough difference in focus and spirit that you do not want to lose either one. I would be nervous that a full merger would sort of sap the spirit out of them (HC). They (HC) could feed off of each other in some ways but we should work hard to maintain it.

**Focus Group 2 Report: Hidden City members**

**Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together**

**Hidden City Only Focus Group**

The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants.

**Introduction**

Of the 12 people who attended this focus group of Hidden City members, only four were paid members but eight had contributed to the Indigogo campaign last year. All participants read the Hidden City Daily, eight read it daily and six read it in digest form every week. Three focus group participants were writers for the Hidden City Daily. Eleven of the participants are Friends of Hidden City on Facebook and keep up to date through that social media channel. All have visited the Hidden City website for information. Six attended the 2009 Festival, and eight attended the 2013 Festival. Six people attended Hidden City organized tours including: the Parkway tour, Reading Viaduct, Navy Yard, Girard College/Mother Bethel Church and Fine Arts. Half have called the Hidden City staff for information or story ideas. Hidden City staff also have come to events, exhibits, or classes of participants or made connections with others. There were two unsuccessful joint grant applications, and one media sponsorship noted. Three participants traded breaking new tips or story ideas with Hidden City staff.

**Hidden City’s website is viewed as providing consistently high quality information.**

* “I think the quality of the website has improved dramatically in the past year, from when Brad Mall started working for them. It’s his talent. He didn’t live in the area before, so when he came back it’s gotten so much better and more consistent and the like.”
* “The coverage has been noticeably more consistent over the last year for sure; the quality but also the number of stories and fresh content on a more regular basis.”
* “I think Brad learned his lessons at Philly Skyline, really took them to heart and and brought them to Hidden City.Brad really knows what he’s doing and the site has changed and improved with that.”
* “There was a separate website for the festival which seemed like a good idea but it pulled people away from the regular site and that might not work well.”

**Tours sponsored by Hidden City are a much-loved introduction to Philadelphia, for new and old residents alike.**

* “In general, for me, Hidden City has shown me a city I didn’t know.”
* “It just opened up what the city is for me.”
* “You learn about things either you didn’t know existed or things you really would have liked to know more about.”

**Hidden City’s Festival is also enjoyable and popular, but there is room for improvement. There are opportunities for collaboration with the Preservation Alliance to provide assistance to sites featured, post festival.**

* “There is sometimes a disconnect between visiting the festival site and the quality of the installation or activity that is being placed in it.”
* “Maybe that's the problem, that the art and the site are competing. I found the installation would detract from the building and not tell me more about the building which is what I would like to have learned more about.”
* “I remember the first festival was kind of a bit rag tag; you heard through word of mouth where and when things were going on. The second festival had more promotional presence and web marketing and the like, but I still thought not enough yet.”
* “I have two Ivy degrees and I couldn’t figure the ticketing process out.”
* “I do remember the deck of cards from the first Hidden City, which was really cool, a great take away. I still have that from the first one. That made me always remember who they were. I wanted to find out what was next.”
* “I was a little unsure about how community engagement would go. A lot of neighborhoods have not necessarily seen the buildings as anything other than blight. I did see some of the installations as almost inappropriate for local residents, and that was a concern how that will be taken by the broader population. But I do think it’s been a cool way to get into buildings. There are so many building geeks in the city.”
* “The pastor of the church felt like after the festival was over, there was no continuity either on their part or on the part of Hidden City. They felt it was like a bunch of white folks came to see the church to see the thing and never came back. I think going forward there might be a conversation about it, maybe a missed opportunity. Maybe it has to do with funding and meeting of nontraditional spaces, lived in places not abandoned one. They need to figure out how to continue momentum, from discovery to regular use.”
* “Preservation Alliance could step in after festival site was selected and celebrated, to give tools to preserve the building to bring in potential funders, or a Community Design Collaborative grant.”

**Hidden City members are concerned that if they were to collaborate with the Preservation Alliance, they may lose the hip, irreverent quality of Hidden City journalism.**

* “They need to be able to maintain journalistic integrity.”
* “I wouldn’t want to lose the somewhat irreverent hip quality of Hidden City; not only as a journalist or a citizen of Philly. Even the name of Preservation Alliance is boring. I don’t know if I would join it, even if they do the same thing. Hidden City sounds exciting and they make you want to be a part of it even it is doing the same thing as Preservation Alliance.”
* “I would hate to see Hidden City moving from its journalism to advocacy because one of the things I think that is so great is its journalistic independence.”
* “Honestly, Hidden City can get away with saying things the Preservation Alliance couldn’t get away with saying. I think at times Preservation Alliance is more muted and unable to speak as freely because they are not journalists, they are an advocacy organization and promoting an agenda.”
* “Anything that muddies the water should not be done. Journalistic integrity should be maintained, editorial integrity, the products that are sent to people during the visit should be very clear as to what is done by whom, contextual parts, etc. Don’t mix them up, as there should be some sort of clear thing of what is journalistic and what is advocacy, which is tough!”
* “Given the people who are actually involved in the day to day with each organization, Pete, Ben Caroline, Brad, these are people with strong personalities, tenacious people who aren’t going to give up their editorial independence and what not.”

**Hidden City focus group participants expressed that if Hidden City were to collaborate at least to some degree in print, they could help “freshen” the feel of the Preservation Alliance publications.**

* “It could be a lot better (PA newsletter)
* “Having talked with Preservation Alliance about potentially doing magazine with them, some of the obstacles are the newsletter has to please their donors, good for pleasing donors but not so great for reading.
* The thing Hidden City has is a brand, they are exciting and they are cool. If they’re (HC) to do it (new magazine), Preservation Alliance has to take a big step back and let Hidden City really run the show. Rebranding would be hard and Hidden City should be the brand of the magazine – Preservation Alliance should be part of the editor of the mix but it should ALL go through the Hidden City filter and not be impeded by the work.”

**Hidden City participants viewed the two organizations as radically different, but with many of the same interests.**

* “What Hidden City does is communicate and interpret what is happening with preservation news and these old sites. I think Preservation Alliance is not doing the interpreting; they’re doing the actually trying to preserve the sites. I’m concerned Hidden City will become a mouth piece of an organization. There is a distinct political line that I don’t think Hidden City can cross in certain ways.”
* “I think Hidden City has much younger membership and the Preservation Alliance is older, and there is this perception that Preservation Alliance is the senior preservation organization in town and then there’s Hidden City and some one-offs.”
* “It would also help make Hidden City more mission-oriented. The Preservation Alliance has real concrete goals to save very specific buildings and the like, and maybe Hidden City could be a lot more about advocacy, moving beyond just being a journalistic organization.”
* “They (PA) have their own history. They intersect at points. Preservation Alliance has been here a little longer and honestly it’s more difficult to do what they do. But Hidden City has in a very short time established its own identity and a focus of interest just as the city is attracting a younger population and older people are moving back to it and becoming more interested in it. People who used to live in the suburbs are now becoming more interested in the history of the city, whereas before, they only viewed it through the eyes of a commuter. There’s a new, vested interest in where we live and what does it have to offer us.”
* “The Festival should stay Hidden City and not get included with Preservation Alliance.”
* “I think that question of roles is a good point. I think demographically, the combination could really double the size but also the engagement level of the audience because if you think about the kick-off of the festival 2013, being under the viaduct with some Indy rock band and everyone is like “I’m having a beer.”
* “They are such radically different organizations but with exactly the same interests. You can create advocates out of readers and readers out of advocates.”
* “If Hidden City could be a voice to educate people in preservation or history, to get people interested in preservation or in being Philadelphians, it would really be great because there would be a lot of education about what Preservation Alliance is already doing through the voice of the brand. Get the young people excited and give them the “how to” kits.”
* “I was just thinking about in terms of if Hidden City wants to think about ways they can be subversive and advocates for Preservation Alliance, it’s not just about writing but tour sites and where they’re selected. Pete and Nathaniel are really great at finding sites, but if they were open to Preservation Alliance offering suggestions and let ideas come from neighborhoods and not just their brains that’s where community outreach starts.”

**Hidden City focus group participants see the problems in a potential merger, but they believe that an ongoing discussion and open mind could resolve these and pave the way for some kind of serious collaboration.**

* “They’re (PA) going to have more of a young today mindset. I think the Preservation Alliance would want to start to morph into that – where else are they going to get their funds from ten years from now? I’m not saying they change their brand so drastically. They have to have this conversation and accept the fact that people are changing and moving on and those moving in great up in a different world.”
* “The strength of the Preservation Alliance is as a lobbying force, which is great when you agree with them, but nuance is not their goal, and in some cases they need to get nuance completely out of the picture, which can hurt them in certain circumstances. I think the beauty of Hidden City is the nuance and the ambiguities and they choose sites, romantic, ruined sites that do have a lot of ambiguity in them. That’s not to say I think the idea of a merger is ridiculous, but it is something that has to be addressed because there is tension here.”
* “My instinct is perhaps this (potential merger) should be aired in a joint meeting where members of both are invited. It should be aired before the total membership. In the long run, there’ll be more money coming in, more enthusiasm, and passion. When you have insular boards that make decisions on high, organizations can dissipate.”
* “I feel both of these entities are fulfilling roles that no one else can in the city can fulfill. And since both are under stress to survive as non-profits, there needs to be a very clear and honest conversation about what expectations are, about who provides what for who and how that will impact them and what they’re doing currently as standalones.”

**Hidden City focus group participants were positive about further collaboration with the Preservation Alliance, hoping that a collaboration might fill in the gaps of each organization.**

* “They could share a lot of the back-end management that is needed to keep both of the organizations functioning successfully. That is probably really expensive for each organization to do on their own.”
* “Tours would be a natural point of collaboration.”
* “Both are at risk. Both are in jeopardy.”
* “I don’t think their missions would collide, and they know and like each other and don’t talk smack about each other behind their backs.”
* “I think Hidden City helps make the preservation conversation more nuanced, broad and accessible.”
* “This union, to be happy, would have to respect each other’s autonomy, independence, and hipness.”
* “I think it’s a match made in heaven.”

**Focus Group 3 Report: Joint Hidden City and Preservation Alliance members**

**Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together**

**Members of Both Organizations Focus Group**

The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants.

**Preservation Alliance Activities**

Twelve people attended the joint focus group. Of these, only nine were paid members of the Preservation Alliance. Three contributed to the advocacy appeal and only one contributed to the annual appeal. Only four people attended the most recent awards reception. More than half of these people read the paper newsletter, but all read it cover to cover. The same number read the e-newsletter. Less than half of the focus group participants are friends with the Alliance on Facebook. Seven have visited the Alliance website for information. Only one person attended the Neighborhood Preservation conference, no one attended the Old House Fair in the last year, and two people attended the Homeowner Repair Workshops. Two people attended Alliance led tours, the mentioned tours they took of Northern Liberties, Sacred Sites of Old City and Society Hill. Less than half, called the Alliance staff for information. Four people contacted a politician or attended an event as a result of an Alliance Advocacy Alert. One person attended the Emerging Preservation Leaders seminar and found it highly useful. Three people were involved in the Young Friends or attended an event organized by this group.

**Hidden City Activities**

Eight were paying members of Hidden City and five had contributed to the Indigogo fundraising effort. Most read the Hidden City Daily, but five got it the weekly format, but all read it thoroughly. Four of the participants said they wrote for Hidden City, More than half were friends of Hidden City on Facebook. Ten of the 12 people said they visit the Hidden City website to get information. Five attended the 2009 Festival, and seven attended the 2013 Festival. Four people attended tours organized by Hidden City including 19th Street Baptist church tour, Hawthorn Hall, music history and Broad Street. Four called Hidden City staff for information. Two people bought the calendar or give it as a gift. One attended the anniversary event for Boathouse Row, and another person attended a workshop that Ben Leech ran about the Philadelphia Register and another workshop on Strategic Planning.

**The Preservation Alliance has greatly improved the format of their awards ceremony this year, but for some the event is inaccessible because of cost.**

* “Infinitely better this year, this format is better than previous program, it used to be interminable, like four hours. “
* “There was lot of opportunity for socializing and networking this year.”
* “It should be $50 or less, really a little less. The tickets are so hard to secure that a lot of people who’ve nominated structures for awards couldn’t come and that’s silly.”
* “Some people have paid $100 for awards like that and here there’s not even a real meal for $150 and that seems overly expensive.”
* “When you have an awards ceremony with tickets for $150, that’s not for young people.”
* “But it’s also a fundraiser. It’s the most lucrative one they’ve had in years, a lot of it is because of the format. People wanted the two hours to schmooze.”
* “There are so many other places in the city that deserve the attention of something like this, like the Rotunda in West Philly or the 19th St. Baptist Church. Using the Preservation Alliance awards ceremony as a way to bring attention to a particular space would be a good idea.”

**Hidden City’s Festivals are well regarded, but the Festival could be also be improved.**

* “As a newbie to the area, the 2013 Festival was a phenomenal introduction.”
* “I bought an all access pass for me and my husband and we must have gone to a dozen sites. It was terrific.”
* “Sometimes at the sites you’d have a lot of great information about a building, but sometimes there was only background on the art in it and not a lot about the building. It would be nice to have a mix.”
* “Some of their handouts were just right, with the perfect amount of information provided to know what you were looking at and refresh your memory with pictures. Others had really very little.”
* “I do remember the ticketing process online was a little confusing to me, with a few extra steps.”
* “The online experience was inconsistent across locations. The videos for some were great; you knew what to expect, whereas, there were others where the coverage was really minimum.”
* “Unless you know the city really well, you’d be a bit lost, and a map indicating where all the sites are located, made available prior to the festival, would be helpful to know.

**Home owner workshops could perhaps be rebranded in order to reach a wider audience, with members of both groups invited.**

* “I think a kind of a partnership opportunity might be some more hands on programming – workshops on how to replane, or something, which could appeal to the maker crowd, which could be very exciting.”
* “I think homeowners workshops are fantastic and interesting, but as a non-homeowner, I wouldn’t go. I love the topics, but they are not for me.”
* “If we could rebrand them slightly as “how to” and “hands on historic preservation” that’s not just directed at the home owner but more DIY type preservation focus.”

**It may be hard to reconcile the honest journalism of Hidden City with the necessary politics of Preservation Alliance, yet that journalistic integrity must be preserved.**

* “If they merged fully, all Hidden City articles would have to have disclaimers that ‘this doesn’t represent the views of Preservation Alliance.’”
* “There already enough Hidden City articles out there that would offend enough people politically, which Preservation Alliance can’t do.”
* “I wouldn’t want to see the PA advocacy function impaired or HC’s journalistic independence compromised, or either group lose money by joining together.”
* “The journalistic issue is a real issue because there is stuff that you would never find in the PA newsletter that is so staid by comparison and I want to see them both.”
* “It seems to be really important that the journalistic integrity of HC be maintained and that its independence is paramount.”

**Tours are a natural point of collaboration between the two groups.**

* “I think HC and the PA tours could really go together, to keep encouraging participatory things. That’s in my case, I’ve been a member for a long time with PA but I don’t participate much or go on tours, but with HC tours, I don’t miss one. There’s real synergy there. HC has done a great job.”
* “Sounds like there are a lot of opportunities for partnering on tours, at events, economies of scale, whether it’s accounting or bookkeeping, but that there remain a fundamental separation of powers if you will.”
* “Tours are great but times and dates are hard to fit with my schedule and I might want to take a self-guided tour.”
* “It’s very affordable and I assume if you have volunteers you can keep it that way, and if you have professionals, you have to pay more and that may make it less desirable.”
* “The tours would have to be changed dramatically. The people who do the tours for HC are deeply involved in the organization, the building, or whatever they are giving a tour of. They are really involved and have a real stake in the tour; whereas some of the PA tours I’ve been on have been conducted by people from Penn or by Preservation historians and were excellent, but on others I thought ‘did they get that info by reading something the week beforehand and are trying to turn it into a tour?’, they’re just different.”
* “Quality control is going to be the problem.”

**Preservation Alliance should remain politically minded and advocacy focused.**

* “What the PA brings to the table is if I’m in a neighborhood and I want them to save a building.”
* “When I need to deal with the real zoning and laws and council members, all those nuts and bolts, I’d talk to PA.”
* “PA has to work through the system and the historic commission and make sure the politicians are on your side and not unhappy, and all sorts of murky things.”

**There were many comments about the differences between the organizations and concerns that the “essence “ of each might be lost in a merger.**

* “I’m afraid if there was a merger you would lose some of the current members and supporters of HC because aren’t into the big clunky political, more rigid traditional organization, which I’m not criticizing, but it just is that way.”
* “What the PA brings to the table is if I’m in a neighborhood and I want them to save a building, yes I could get HC to write an article and be a rabble rouser, but when I need to deal with the real zoning and laws and council members, all those nuts and bolts, I’d talk to PA; there is such a strong need for both still.”
* “Unfortunately PA has to work through the system and the historic commission and make sure the politicians are on your side and not unhappy, and all sorts of murky things. Everyone wants the structured bureaucratic stuff to be done but it’s so hard to actually do it.”
* “I think it would be tough to have the organizations all in one room and coexist because it could impact each other’s missions.”
* “You’re talking about two different demographic groups too. Maybe an older person would be less likely to tour an abandoned building but would be more likely to take a walking tour of Society Hill.”
* “It’s almost like HC offers cultural entertainment in a way; not to belittle what they do, that’s just kind of how I see them.”
* “Especially when I’m wearing my CDC hat, the PA is more like ‘we have historic buildings in our neighborhood, how do we deal with the nuts and bolts?’ and they seem to have more experience and resources on that, rather than wanting to go play in an old building, which is very much a HC thing.”
* “PA is traditional conservative historic preservation and do practical things workshops and nominations and the like, where HC is urban exploration and creative and exciting. They are both really necessary and I would fear that that creative side would get lost if HC were to be tucked into PA.”
* “I too see PA as much more traditional preservationists and HC as much more surprising; and as a result, those other 550 in HC people might be learning about preservation backwards, not self-identifying, but being brought into the fold subversively. But they find themselves in that historic building and think ‘wow this is cool;’ it’s a wonderful subversive way to introduce preservation to new groups. I would worry that the distinction, what each organization does would get lost. That this is kind of their mom and dads’ PA alliance. I wonder if the hipster coalition of HC wouldn’t like that.”
* “I think the PA organization should exist and I want to help keep their lights on whereas HC I really go to the events and I feel like I’m getting more from my membership and I really love the newsletter and the writing is exciting and the voices diverse. I would hate to see that in any way adulterated or compromised.”
* “HC is more entertaining for sure, but definitely not meant to be entertainment. I think their photos and media have really moved the needle and convinced a lot of people to get involved and be interested in historic preservation which is really important. People who didn’t have a stake in it now do. It’s subtle, and I’m really concerned that HC would lose that. As a contributor, I’m not in favor of a merger.”
* “I do agree with that, my fear is that HC would lose its edge because of bureaucracy and approval and all the things that come with being in a bigger organization.”

**There were many suggestions about some kind of a joint membership between the two groups.**

* “Promotion by both organizations for the other can be done without any structural change or expenditure of money.”
* I’m saying each still has full memberships, but there is an opportunity to be a member of both orgs with a little bit of a discount. What you’re doing is PA is promoting HC which will get more members and vice versa. It’s a classic business model that is done every day.”
* “There is the possibility of doing a discounted version and one that is actually more expensive but gets you significantly more.”
* “A joint membership would be persuasive to me. For me PA, seems sort of optional, but HC is mandatory.”
* “I think a lot of the value that I contribute in membership just supports what PA and HC does. I support them because I believe in the work, so I give them money. I am emotionally committed.”

Section 3.

Appendix A Preservation Alliance Focus Group Complete Raw Sorted Notes

Appendix B Hidden City Focus Group Complete Raw Sorted Notes

Appendix C Members of Both Focus Group Complete Raw Sorted Notes

Appendix D List of Focus Group Attendees by Group

Appendix E Focus Group Script

 Credits

**Appendix A: Preservation Alliance Focus Group Complete Sorted Raw Notes**

 Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together

Preservation Alliance Only Focus Group

The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants, no comments have been eliminated.

Are you a…. Out of 11 people and 2 interns

* A member of the Preservation Alliance 9
* Contribute to Advocacy or Annual Appeal? 4 Annual appeal 5
* Attend the Annual Awards Reception ? 5
* Get the paper newsletter? read it? 9 and they all read it
* Get eNews? read it? 7 and they all read it
* Are you a Friend of the Preservation Alliance on Facebook? 3
* Visit Alliance website to get information? 6
* Attend annual Neighborhood Preservation Conference? 1
* Attend Old House Fair? 3
* Attend Homeowner repair workshops? 2
* Attend Alliance walking tours? which ones? 2 Queen Village and Wayne Junction
* Call Alliance staff for assistance of advocacy issue or for information? 2
* Respond to an Alliance Advocacy Alert to contact a politician or attend an event? 5

**PA Printed Newsletter**

* I’m a big fan of the printed newsletter
* I think it’s one of the best that I get.
* I think it has a really great visual aesthetic
* It’s well put together.
* I skim the newsletter

**PA Electronic Newsletter**

* I would put in a vote for the electronic one
* I actually used it as an example for my staff of what I hoped for for electronic communications.

**PA Awards’ New Format**

* New awards format was nice
* The ability to network, which is a large reason why 500+ come, is much improved this year change for the better

**PA Programs’ Relevancy**

* If we attend it we think it’s relevant, and if we don’t attend it (awards ceremony) we don’t think so, isn’t that often how it goes?
* Are these all still relevant though?
* They’re forms of outreach that are important to do, hard because of time and some of them aren’t the right ones for interests and whatnot, but for the right audience with the right kind of time, yeah, all valuable
* Keep throwing things at the wall and see what sticks
* Sometimes it boils down to making MORE events and “oh I’m free that evening and I can go”

**PA Tours’ Relevancy**

* Agree – the tours are really valuable and great
* I think the tours are fabulous but I haven’t gone to one in years, but I promote them all the time.

**Old House Fair**

* Can I ask a question on Old House Fair? How interactive should this be?
* The Old House Fair question really piqued my interest.
* My clients tell me that the Old House Fair and Workshops are relevant
* For personal reasons I’m looking at the Old House Fair and you say it’s not your market (to another Focus Group member), what would be your market as a preservation architect?
* What would it need to do to make it your market?
* Doesn’t know quickly the answer to that – doubts would get clients from it and in terms of personal learning opportunities, as is more commercial and institutional.
* Partner with APT international or something and partner with their conference when it’s here – up at that level
* Would it help to get AIA credits? No, lots of other opportunities for AIA that’s not an issue
* I’m a realtor and have gone to the Old House Fair for many years and a lot of people go because they’re interested in maintaining their house in its original way and want to find professionals who can help them do that and they have found architects there – and they have the Preservation Alliance homeowner awards there that I think is important.

**Homeowner Repair Workshops**

* I haven’t gone, but I know clients who have
* I think they’re apples and oranges, but do they have to be? I think they have to be.
* Because of the level of expertise, where you might want to learn the latest synthetic to replicate or stabilize brownstone where someone else might want to learn something more basic. It’s such a broad spectrum, so someone who just bought a house and wanted to fix something, they would be lost in the Sweets catalogue.

**HC Journalistic Integrity**

* Hard, then, to say how the journalistic integrity would be hampered, but it WOULD be with a merger. The perception is there – the question is does that matter?
* Some of this is inside baseball. The way the world is now, I always assume that this is connected to this etc. I don’t think it’s a problem that people won’t read HC anymore because they are associated with PA.
* I don’t know how journalistic integrity could be compromised, if we have the same goal.
* Doesn’t think that people will go “oh now they have an agenda because they’re in PA, so I won’t read them” – no more like, they’ll just be bigger.
* This speaks to the journalism issue too. As someone versed to know the PA, the first time I went to PA lunch, I was really shocked at the level of presence from the community of developers because in my mind, PA is an advocacy organization and they’re the enemy - what are they doing here?
* We keep them (developers) close. Sometimes they do good.
* So when I think about it, an entity (PA) that gets a lot of financial support from that sector (developers), creates a lot of realities that a group like HC may have issues with dealing the gap between opposing the development and support they give.
* They are able to do their entire daily newsletter without sponsors. And we aren’t able to do it monthly without being underwritten by our sponsors. Do you know how they do that?

**PA HC Overlaps**

* And we overlap, we both perceive ourselves as watchdog organizations.
* Design – and one of the things we struggle with is that we keep ourselves out there, we do it to ourselves, and we fight as a specialty field to make sure there is a preservationist at every table, and the challenge now is to try and bring it and integrate it with the larger field of design.
* Enormous amount of overlap between the two organizations.
* I am surprised that there were less than 50 membership overlaps, I thought there would be far more.
* I think it makes sense because the content of the HC website is often about historic properties and it seems to be a natural tie to the PA. Complement, educate and advocate.
* In general a collaboration like this seems symbiotic and if that collaboration gets to be more aware of what’s going on in the city that can’t be anything but good so that’s all good.
* Interesting, I would have thought they had different operational models.
* They pillage members from the other’s mailing lists – who got them first, etc., hard to tell
* HC does good tours – who does the good parties?
* Depends on very different experiences, depends on what you want!
* HC has thrown a couple of good parties – and PA throws parties too.
* We are all in the same club, how do we capture that?
* We share the passion and our outcome is the same.
* I think HC is revealing something that PA has been doing for so long which is not isolating ourselves. They are making us more relevant, mixing contemporary art and music with old buildings. I do think their articles have saved buildings by getting it to the forefront. In many ways, they are preservationists; they’re just not calling themselves that. They can get articles in places and be so effective and do things none of us can do we share the outcome and the passion.

**PA HC Differences**

* With the easement program, the PA is obligated to maintain and defend those easements and it has to maintain their 501c3 status. If it ever wants to get an easement again it has to be able to defend that it can support the easement which is nice and stuffy but it may create a difference between the nimbleness of HC and the responsibility of monitoring and enforcing those easements. Can it be bridged? Sure, but it has to be fully thought out.
* What I’m hearing and from my own experience, is that PA, being a more established group with fairly extensive membership and events that cost money to get into, is at one end here and the other is at HC where you can go to the event for free like the town hall in Germantown. But it’s so easy to go to and cheap when you have to pay and it’s a fun event. They are just different kinds of establishments. So if the two got together with respect to their goals it could be a good thing - it might bring the extremes together better.
* There are several trust funds that the PA monitors that are hard to reconcile with an online group. The maintenance of William Penn. How do you reconcile it being responsible for the annual maintenance of William Penn and doing free events? It becomes huge doesn’t it?

**HC Brand Identity Importance**

* On a branding level, I think it’s possible. We’ve seen that all the time with Newsweek and Daily Beast. I think it can be done. If HC doesn’t want to lose brand identity… I think you could use some smart branding.
* Nate Silvers blog in the NYT has its own identity – he think sit CAN be done if HC doesn’t want to lose the brand identity of their paper, that’s okay, workable
* I don’t know enough about Hidden City to make any comments.

**Rebranding?**

* Maybe a merger is us thinking about us wanting to rebrand ourselves as well.
* Maybe if we have a younger group and they don’t use the word preservation – if this younger group doesn’t call it that, what is the label now? Should we be doing that, too?

**PA Identity**

* Looking at the histories of both organizations. When PA became PA, it was a merger of two organizations that went very smoothly until the funding groups that suggested they merge shifted focus and decided pull the merger.
* Advocacy is the PA more important impact. With new staff, the tone is more positive. More fact based, less emotional.
* Not quite right, but distillation distillation. PA has a long history of merger stabilization destabilization, merger, absorbing groups, stuff like that, creating groups like Partners for Sacred Places – partially because of its history and the challenges of funding and infrastructure given its mission and the trust and all the things that come along with it. It’s very difficult to sustain. So they have looked over the source of time how to get that done. Some decisions have been wiser than others at PA.
* When you grow up you join PA.
* And we (PA) have so many restricted line items in the budget.
* The PA has had its financial struggles for years. I don’t know much about HC. But it is hard to offer an opinion one way or the other. I am all for any creative exploration to share costs, services or resources, such as writing, marketing or fundraising. It takes time and energy to do administrative things, if they can do them together then that is going to help activate the movement. The old days of business as usual is over. These discussions if they help make preservation more relevant or more financially sound are all good.
* At the PA we create an annual budget and from that budget we work backwards. The amount of spending we have dictates what kind of office we have, the number of conferences that Caroline can go to.
* Maybe there is more synergy by joining together? Both offer similar messages, maybe it can energize the base more?
* PA struggles to be identified, to be in the public eye.
* We (PA) tend to pick our battles with more ammunition. Whereas they (HC) just shoot and say it’d be a real shame. We say it shouldn’t be destroyed because it has this easement and that district and this covenant and so is protected in this way, etc.
* PA is worried about the building itself.
* PA needed to be putting itself into this context {HC style] ten years ago to make themselves relevant.
* PA approaches it in a different way as a way to keep the building preserved.
* PA goes on about how it must be preserved and stuff and HC stuffs it in your face.
* PA has been said to care more about buildings than about people
* PA it’s just the building. I think that’s a stark difference.

**HC Identity**

* HC maybe ‘consciously” don’t seem themselves as preservation as there’s a lack of that word in their publications.
* Are most of HC members young? We’re assuming younger than 40, but isn’t known for certain, as that is not what we have asked although we are going to do the traditional demographic questions on a survey.
* You look at the Hidden City daily and once and a while I’ll go to the Plan Philly blog and it will take me to HC, but there is a definite irreverent tone that I don’t know if meshes with the PA tone, especially for corporate donors. In HC, you can find articles that are taking pot shots at the very people who are supporting the PA. This would have to be reconciled.
* HC is a fun way to see why historic preservation is important.
* Like HC is almost a gateway to PA.
* When you want to remember why preservation was cool you go to a HC events.
* HC has a way of making things seem sexy, whether its access or a different way of seeing a streetscape, and make cities more accessible to people who previously had no awareness of the built environment – not about like ooh lets save this façade – but it’s about quirky weird things like a gateway drug that gets you high on the experience and the ideas of say the high line in Philly like New York’s high line and all that. They make things easy to do. It hooks them.
* The writing is really good, the background history of the things you see all the time and that are just there and awesome and you never knew the story of
* They talk about threatened buildings or streetscapes. They discuss issues that might be below the PA’s radar.
* HC raises the profile, shows it off to people, and raises a broader awareness of preservation, where PA has the power to legally maintain a building and the tools to do so. And it’s actually their job to do so.
* HC is able to help advocate without using the same tools
* Like, if you’re not willing to get arrested but someone else is willing to…
* My sense is that their sense of preservation is events within these spaces, the architecture of the space as the background for whatever is going on
* Let me give you an example, Germantown Town Hall. Last year, HC had it on its tour and it was the first time I got into that town hall and I’ve lived there since the 1970s and it was fun and they brought up the issues of what is happening to this building
* HC enlivens preservation. The way they present the building it’s very people-centered. They show people in the buildings and in the pictures relating to the buildings, inside and experiencing the building and the landscape and the like.
* Technology, that’s what HC has. What young people do with technology is so simple, all so intuitive, they engage people and get people into it with Twitter and stuff. We (PA) don’t have it. The way our (PA) organization has been put together, we haven’t been put together with a basis of technology. They (HC) started based on that and with the facility to do that.

**Assumptions of HC and relationship by PA**

* But I assume they’re (HC) program heavy.
* They have to meet restrictions from their granting foundations. But they’re (HC) budget is about 1/3 and less employees and the vast majority of their writers are volunteers.
* The issue is imposing something more restrictive or cumbersome than they’re (HC) used to, or that they can sustain. Like filling out timesheets.
* Everyone seems interested in a sense of place these days. Perhaps through the tours we can reach more people?
* Or on the other hand, the PA having to be so mindful of stewardship and fiscal obligations, it could be they're inheriting problems from an organization (HC) that is loosey goosey, with fewer responsibilities and hasn’t had the kind of strong financial policies and procedures that the PA would require.
* Do we know this for sure? Or we’re assuming?
* I fear that HC is too young, kind of like a startup, doesn’t have responsibilities, financial management concerns
* Do they have a budget? (YES) Do they work their budget in the same way? If they are program-based, what are their operations? If the merger comes, what are they bringing to the table in terms of assets and obligations? What are they bringing? Seems like they are nimble and don’t cost that much.
* What do we know about the members currently?
* We have an intuitive idea of their profiles but we have not yet boiled it down, hence the need for surveys and interviews.

**What is the point of the merger?**

* Second question, from projects done previously and what’s identified, the collaboration seems to be project based not operational. Is that purposeful and is it limited to projects?
* We are looking to see what are the opportunities, where the collaboration can exist
* Looking for the broader group of people to engage in the programs
* Get the younger people in on it
* If a merger was to occur it would be very important to keep the HC identity – it could be like “the x studio within y firm”, or something, like they do in architecture
* But the goal is primarily to expand impact and audience, not necessarily to increase optimum efficiency, reduce redundancy of staff?
* The fourth option is not to merge, which is not stated clearly here.
* If there are really clear reasons why these two organizations have no business doing projects together then no, there will be no merge kind of thing
* Why does HC want to merge with PA? Is it all about money? Is it so PA can pay for stuff for HC?
* So they (HC) want something that we’ve (PA) got.
* On other hand, because they (HC) are small and young, they are perceived as more nimble operationally, so that’s a virtue that might be lost or hampered in doing a merger with PA.
* The collaboration then makes a lot of sense to bring the people together
* Hidden Cities and Cultureworks are all about operational efficiency and collaboration so it has that mindset already – brings it to the conversation anyway.
* PA gets HC’s cool factor, the HC gets the PA editorial know-how – PA gets also the younger members, HC gets the deeper benefit in the sense that there’s a longstanding organization with longstanding relationship with city officials and staff that’s been there for decades and the like.
* Might I add they just did that in a case I was just involved with, so they do on occasion. I guess there may be certain areas where the two groups may not be able to align. But you figure out the areas that have symbiosis and ways they can work together on different projects. And I think there are places where both organizations will want to maintain a certain autonomy on things they want to work on.
* Partners, compatibility and cost factor for merger issues
* I have been working with Adrien Scott Fine the LA Conservancy. I think they embody what HC and what PA do, they are rabble-rousers that are effective. I think if you don’t merge, something needs to be done to engage. Young Friends is a great thing, but I feel like something needs to be done to be more engaging. Getting them to be aware of the issues or care enough about it to participate or write politicians or do something.
* There is enough difference in focus and spirit that you do not want to lose either one. I would be nervous that a full merger would sort of sap the spirit out of them (HC). They (HC) could feed off of each other in some ways but we should work hard to maintain it.
* From a public perspective, say you merge, where are the funding priorities?
* In my mind, HC will always be the group that gets into cool places you can’t normally get into, kind of voyeuristic, not preservation and advocacy. For me PA is about preservation. They are on different ends of the spectrum.
* Would they be audited in similar ways? There are lots of 501c3 that fly by the seat of their pants. The PA has a proper audit. If you don’t have the type of restrictions and all of your expenditures are really program oriented, it really doesn’t matter if you get a little sloppy in your book keeping if it’s not going to anyone’s pocket or a consultant. So it’s a different cost standard for an accounting professional to say everything you did is consistent with your 501c3 status. Where for the PA is has to be on a more formal basis. Yes because of the easements and because of the trust and large personal contributions.
* Maybe this isn’t a merger but maintaining their own identity and partnering for events and stuff - cross promote and cross fertilize and get the crowds to go back and forth, but not become the same space.
* Is one of those categories we can rent space from each other?
* Because they do the newsletters way better than we do. Affiliation of projects and learning from one another?
* We all know there is a spectrum of mergers out there. It sounds like you are searching for that sweet spot within the range.
* There could be a structural relationship between the two organizations, just not a merger. Which would be something to explore first. Because there are such great differences and so many common interests, perhaps they could just be approached by different directions. Just because there are ultimate differences that would keep the entire thing from being one organization, it doesn’t mean that both organizations can’t overlap with a known agreement so that in every publication of the alliance, there’s a box area for HC and vice versa.
* Just to put this on the table, no organization is coming to this with a big cash flow on the table.
* And different stability.
* But are they coming with debt? What are their obligations? If there is a debt balance for an organization, that calculates things differently is hard to evaluate

**What do we still need to do to decide to/not to collaborate?**

* The last comment prompted a question on my part, have you developed a profile of the various constituencies of PA vs. a profile and demographics of Hidden City Member?
* Do we know the demographics of each group? What are the 3 sentences we are using to describe both groups?
* Like here’s our mission statement etc?
* They have different profiles based on age and some on income, but more on age.

**Young Preservationists/friends**

* At the award ceremony we discussed that there are no young PAs, and they discussed starting a Young Preservationist group.
* I went, it’s a huge organization. It’s new, within the last year.
* It seems to me that the young friends of PA and HC have much more in common than us “older” friends. Have you spoken to Young Friends of PA are most of them members of HC?

**Membership**

* I would ask that you add a question about how likely they would be to renew their membership. Renewal and retention is hard to do especially in the first or second year of a group. Sometimes if they join because they get a discount to go to a program they might not be inclined to renew to support the mission of the organization. Is there a deep loyalty and commitment to the organization or are people more compelled to join because they want to participate in a particular project and then go away. So is it financial stability?
* A reflection of age too – younger people are more nimble and one group today one group tomorrow whatever.
* That’s a function of being young. When I was young I was a member of Young Friends of the Art Museum. There was a constant conflict between the old friends and the young friends and it was because of age and income. Most of our members joined to go to a party, which gets bodies and enthusiasm to the site, and we didn’t raise a lot of money. Back then, in the 1990s we raised $25k and we thought it was huge. You can’t buy a print for that now. Then we aged out around 40 but weren’t quite ready to join the old friends. I think age and income are huge.
* At the AFAM museum, we had a similar experience with young friends. It was designed to do what young friends were to do but it became a party vehicle. People were not necessarily invested in the museum, but liked the parties.

**HC Events and Website**

* HC has been putting on events for a while, in very interesting places and topics and sites well set up and all that, with the sites always set up so you could see how many seats were left. You could get a ticket and a discount on membership.
* HC’s organization and all that, web presence and way of engaging is leaps and bounds above PA – feel like you are getting secret access to things you never get access to
* I had a tour with HC and it was great, an underground track looking at graffiti and looking at ways to develop the idea and look at significance and all that, and it was great – and Facebook was the way found it.
* When HC had the speakers series in April of 2013 our chapter was one of the sponsors and our name was on their T-shirt and the sponsorship was $250 which was easy to sponsor and I thought was the right price.

**Appendix B: Hidden City Focus Group Complete Sorted Raw Notes**

**Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together**

**Hidden City Only Focus Group**

The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants, no comments have been eliminated.

Are you a….

* A paid member of Hidden City? 4
* Employee of Hidden City? 3
* Contribute to Indigo go appeal last year? 8
* Get the Hidden City Daily? Read it most of the time? Some of the time? 8, and all are most of the time readers
* Get the Hidden City digest weekly? Read it most of the time? Some of the time? 6, all most of the time readers
* Write for (or have ever written for) Hidden City? 3
* Friend of Hidden City on Facebook? 11
* Visit the Hidden City website to get information? 13
* Attended the 2009 Hidden City Festival? 6
* Attended the 2013 Hidden City Festival? 8
* Attended any Hidden City organized tours? which ones? 6 Parkway tour, Reading Viaduct, Navy Yard, Girard College/Mother Bethel, Fine Arts

Other things

* Gave tours? 1, the Ben Franklin Parkway
* Call Hidden City staff for information or with story ideas? 7
* Volunteering at festivals
* Nathaniel was a speaker – a Drexel class in historic preservation
* Worked on media sponsorship – they were a sponsor (x2 people)
* Partner for grant application (x2) (not successful)
* Liaison between camera club members and an event
* Connected to important oral history people for oral history truck
* Photos of one were exhibited
* Print collaborations AND column every month with a picture
* Use the archive
* Collaborate on blog – divvying up coverage to bring best non-redundant info – bring tips and stuff, rely on them for information and history and the like – 2 (for radio features and the like, trading tips and the like, informal collaboration)

**HC Website**

* I think the quality of the website has improved dramatically in the past year, from when Brad Mall started working for them. It’s his talent. He didn’t live in the area before, so when he came back it’s gotten so much better and more consistent and the like.
* The coverage has been noticeably more consistent over the last year for sure; the quality but also the number of stories and fresh content on a more regular basis. I remember when it first launched you’d go to the site and there might not be as much change from day to day.
* I think Brad learned his lessons at Philly Skyline, really took them to heart and and brought them to HC.Brad really knows what he’s doing and the site has changed and improved with that.
* There was a separate website for the festival which seemed like a good idea but it pulled people away from the regular site and that might not work well

**HC Events**

* In general, for me, HC has shown me a city I didn’t know. Even if the art or the performance was not as successful, it just opened up what the city is for me.
* I agree with that – things either you didn’t know existed or things you really would have liked to know more about. There are so many riches in the city and it leaves you in awe.
* One person was talking about creating the message around the community as well, whose sensibilities may not be the same as the visitors like us who just want to get into the building and look at the art and “ooh and ahh”; that’s not necessarily resonating for the community, so how do you make that more interesting and relevant for people in the community. Not just for us people who want to zoom in and out.

**HC Festival**

* I think the festival offers so much to people and there’s an incongruity between how great the content is and the ability to promote the greatness. Not enough people I feel are aware of how amazing it is that you can get into these buildings like Germantown Hall, I just wanted to stop everyone on the street and say you don’t understand NO ONE has been in here in thirty five years!
* At the same time, the installation that accompanied the piece was largely forgettable. I wished the artistic installation had been more involved (or up to par with architect)! – sometimes a disconnect between visiting the festival site and the quality of the installation or activity that is being placed in it.
* The art pieces are better or worse than the building or what?
* Maybe that's the problem, that they’re competing. I found the installation to detract from the building and not tell me more about the building which is what I would like to have learned more about.
* A lot of the site specific art in the first festival one was right on, but second one was inconsistent.
* Sometimes it works really really well – like the synagogue in south Philly.
* It got a lot of response at WHYY [radio station] and really involved city with tradition and what’s going on and it was really part of the HIDDEN city - even the neighbors only barely knew it was there. Some of the others were just not as successful, like the Hawthorne Hall on Lancaster – more about beauty of the building than the event.
* I remember the first festival was kind of a bit rag tag; you heard through word of mouth where and when things were going on. The second festival had more promotional presence and web marketing and the like, but I still thought not enough yet. I would have thought they would have improved on the ticketing part of it and the first time they were barely ticketed and unstaffed locations, with people sneaking in and the like. It was totally confusing. This time too, I noticed people didn’t have to buy tickets and some events were free. They were trying to figure out the website on the fly but during the day of the festival.
* I have two Ivy degrees and I couldn’t figure it out--ticketing
* I do remember the deck of cards from the first HC, which was really cool, a great take away. I still have that from the first one. That made me always remember who they were. I wanted to find out what was next. I was a little unsure about how community engagement would go. A lot of neighborhoods have not necessarily seen the buildings as anything other than blight. I did see some of the installations as almost inappropriate for local residents, and that was a concern how that will be taken by the broader population. But I do think it’s been a cool way to get into buildings. There are so many building geeks in the city.
* That’s how I felt about the Navy Yard.
* And that’s how people first got into Eastern State Penitentiary too, you don’t necessarily have to over program it.
* A lot of people didn’t know about the church and you have a lot of people who don’t usually go to traditional churches and it was a Black church. But the pastor of the church felt like after the festival was over, there was no continuity either on their part or on the part of HC. They felt it was like a bunch of white folks came to see the church to see the thing and never came back. I think going forward there might be a conversation about it, maybe a missed opportunity. Maybe it has to do with funding and meeting of nontraditional spaces, lived in places not abandoned one. They need to figure out how to continue momentum, from discovery to regular use. That was very interesting to observe.
* Girard College did follow up.
* Festival should stay HC and not get included with PA
* PA could step in after festival site was selected and celebrated, to give tools to preserve the building to bring in potential funders or a Community Design Collaborative Grant.

**HC Journalistic Integrity/Independence**

* They need to be able to maintain journalistic integrity.
* I wouldn’t want to lose the somewhat irreverent hip quality of HC; not only as a journalist or a citizen of Philly. Even the name of PA is boring. I don’t know if I would join it; even if they do the same thing. HC sounds exciting and they make you want to be a part of it even it is doing the same thing as PA. This union, to be happy, would have to respect each other’s autonomy, independence, and hipness. Because I think HC might lose something in converting into respectability – and then PA becomes “the man”/the establishment.
* I think HC has much younger membership and the PA is older and there is this perception that PA is the senior preservation organization in town and then there’s HC and some one-offs, but to me one of the things that was really appealing as a partnership is .
* I would hate to see HC moving from its journalism to advocacy because one of the things I think that is so great is it's journalistic independence. Honestly, HC can get away with saying things the PA couldn’t get away with saying. I think at times PA is more muted and unable to speak as freely because they are not journalists, they are an advocacy organization and promoting an agenda. The possibility of a partnership is really interesting.
* Does the journalism have symbiosis?
* Yes – but journalistic integrity must be maintained
* Anything that muddies the water should not be done. Journalistic integrity should be maintained, editorial integrity, the products that are sent to people during the visit should be very clear as to what is done by whom, contextual parts, etc. Don’t mix them up, as there should be some sort of clear thing of what is journalistic and what is advocacy, which is tough!
* Especially with the fights that the PA put on and could or could not be covered etc.

**Combining Print HC and PA**

* Given the people who are actually involved in the day to day with each organization, Pete, Ben Caroline, Brad, these are people with strong personalities, tenacious people who aren’t going to give up their editorial independence and what not. I think these two groups would be able to navigate these conflicts we’re worried about very well.
* I’m a little confused by the idea of having a printed publication, which seems against the tide of what’s happening now.
* Print is really big.
* Inserting that element does that become such a thing in and of itself very time consuming and involved
* Unless they partner with Red Flag - PA does publish their thing
* But the PA does print its quarterly newsletter.
* It could be a lot better. ! If we’re talking about folding some communications in to a keepsake and whatnot, I think it would be better. We would lend our contacts and expertise, etc. The main hindrance is going to be the ad sales and all that.
* It would be great to partner with them; I would love to see this happen, I could hook them up. The biggest thing would be the ad sales.
* I think with the print, I see that as a potential great application for a foundation, but that brings to mind the same issues of sustainability that they’re already facing. Ok grant for 3-5 years for the publication, but once that’s gone that’s gone. Not to say it shouldn’t be done.
* I don’t think there is any foundation that will pay for a print or an application for a book.

**HC PA Collaboration**

* Yes, I was a little surprised to learn about the past collaborative projects and new ones being planned.
* I didn’t know about the tours. I’ve taken the PA tours, I found them interesting, but being a marketer, my mind was thinking about how to do things better or worse. The Alliance to me, really has potential, to really amp up the interest level of the Alliance tours to a new level.
* It would also help make HC more mission-oriented. The PA has real concrete goals to save very specific buildings and the like, and maybe HC could be a lot more about advocacy, moving beyond just being a journalistic organization.
* HC has a very small staff, only one full time employee, and PA has a larger staff, so I think they could be strengthened by their capacity.
* There’s a similar number of people who pay to be members between the two – less than 50 people overlap – a generational thing is the bet by everyone here.
* The idea here is about the amazing number of people in the collaboration.
* I think at the same time, the PA would greatly benefit from having better communications. How they tell their own story. I mentioned the magazine earlier that I got on the street that someone handed to me in front of Boyd, and it was the only thing I’d ever seen from PA. If they want to reach a greater audience, telling their story either online or in print and telling it in a more journalistic way, not just a business organization style would make a big difference for them.
* I think further talks would be a really good thing. They’re both really strong organizations.
* I think that question of roles is a good point. I think demographically, the combination could really double the size but also the engagement level of the audience because if you think about the kick-off of the festival 2013, being under the viaduct with some Indy rock band and everyone is like “I’m having a beer.” –And then I went to the PA awards at the Union League and I was reporting on it and thinking maybe I’ll report on the number of bow ties.
* They are such radically different organizations but with exactly the same interests. You can create advocates out of readers and readers out of advocates.
* I think it’s a match made in heaven.
* I think the HC brand is great and if you put out a product, that should be front and center. I would imagine PA having pages devoted to what they’re doing or since they’re simpatico enough, they should be able to communicate and get things out there. I love this partnership idea.
* The PA does national register nominations and the like. If HC could be a voice to educate people in preservation or history, to get people interested in preservation or in being Philadelphians, it would really be great because there would be a lot of education about what PA is already doing through the voice of the brand. Get the young people excited and give them the “how to” kits.
* I was just thinking about in terms of if HC wants to think about ways they can be subversive and advocates for PA, it’s not just about writing but tour sites and where they’re selected. Pete and Nathaniel are really great at finding sites, but if they were open to PA offering suggestions and let ideas come from neighborhoods and not just their brains that’s where community outreach starts.
* I think they need to separate from the parent organization, but if they are so similar, they could share a lot of the back-end management that is needed to keep both of the organizations functioning successfully. That is probably really expensive for each organization to do on their own. There would be a way to combine them maybe
* Both are at risk. Both are in jeopardy. I know that because I’m friends with people in both.
* Both organizations are great. If people that read HC know this happens, they’re not suddenly going to think they’ll lose their edge. It's not about that.
* HC has done an immense amount of educating people who haven’t read a history book and took one walking tour and are suddenly learning about something they never knew before and PA is working with lawyers and developers and the like, and why ought they to butt heads?
* I don’t think their missions would collide, and they know and like each other and don’t talk smack about each other behind their backs.
* Programs – partner? – though opinions differ

**Collaboration Challenges**

* Festival should stay HC and not get included with PA
* Having talked with PA about potentially doing magazine with them, some of the obstacles are the newsletter they have is to please their donors, good for pleasing donors but not so great for reading. The content is the list of who’s who and who donated and whatnot and they do it more than once a year and the thing HC has is a brand, they are exciting and they are cool. If they’re to do it, PA has to take a big step back and let HC really run the show. Rebranding would be hard and HC should be the brand of the magazine – this magazine should be branded HC and PA should be part of the editor of the mix but it should ALL go through the HC filter and not be impeded by the work.
* I don’t know what the donor number is of the alliance, and the demographic is older, so as younger people become donor of the PA, they’re going to have more of the sensibility of the younger generation even if from different social strata. They’re going to have more of a young today mindset. I think the PA would want to start to morph into that – where else are they going to get their funds from ten years from now? I’m not saying they change their brand so drastically. They have to have this conversation and accept the fact that people are changing and moving on and moving in and those moving in great up in a different world.
* In line with that, it occurs to me that PA has five paid professional staff members which is a big number for an organization like that in this city when there are so many non-profits vying for limited funds. It brings to mind my thought that unfortunately, the professionalization of preservation is a double edged sword– it’s good for jobs for the kids coming out of school and stuff and once upon a time there was no preservation in school. PA needs to support those professional staff members – maybe HC and PA need to somehow share the funding base somehow or whatever, as there’s limited money there!
* Both applying for grants to few foundations and whatnot and somehow they need to take recognition that there is limited money and maybe they don’t need so many professional paid members
* Part of what is coming is the idea of new money and new income stream with the new demographic
* Consolidation
* How do you divvy up the programs for substance and the like?
* My concern as a young public historian who works with HC is that my own interpretation of what HC does is communicate and interpret what is happening with preservation news and these old sites. I think PA is not doing the interpreting; they’re doing the actually trying to preserve the sites.
* I’m concerned HC will become a mouth piece of an organization. There is a distinct political line that I don’t think HC can cross in certain ways. For example if there is something that PA is doing that HC doesn’t agree with, there needs to be the freedom to speak out. For example the Boyd, whereas PA would say every article needs to save the building.
* Boyd Theater is a great example of this.
* I won’t go “ridiculously bad idea”, but I think there are some real possible problems. The strength of the PA is as a lobbying force, which is great when you agree with them, but nuance is not their goal, and in some cases they need to get nuance completely out of the picture, which can hurt them in certain circumstances.
* I think the beauty of HC is the nuance and the ambiguities and they choose sites, romantic, ruined sites that do have a lot of ambiguity in them. That’s not to say I think the idea of a merger is ridiculous, but it is something that has to be addressed because there is tension here.
* It’s clear to me that HC has to do something though. As its functioning now, it’s not sustainable because of funding. Like many nonprofits the volume of extremely low paid and free, unpaid work and whatnot for website in particular is huge.
* You have to figure out funding and mergers that bring organizations together to keep them sustainable.
* As a journalist, there are any number of great journalism outlets online that have to close. As friends of people who work at HC, I say if this can bring them some money, just do it! HC is in real jeopardy of dying
* They are both in jeopardy.
* If you’re talking about making HC more sustainable, if a merger with PA would do that, then they should just do it.
* The PA, to the great extent is the way it is because of the 5 people and the budget it gets. They have to raise money but whatever, they do it.
* If HC can be leaner, require less money and bring in more volunteers, and I think that would distinguish and differentiate the two organizations.
* One is big money and the other is little money. It can be done. I don’t know the power structure of HC, are they open to other people like you and me doing the work? Stuff papers etc.? That way you reduce the burdensome costs and financial debts. I’m contrasting the two.
* Anyone heard the saying “the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing?” I feel both of these entities are fulfilling roles that no one else can in the city can fulfill. And since both are under stress to survive as non-profits, there needs to be a very clear and honest conversation about what expectations are, about who provides what for who and how that will impact them and what they’re doing currently as standalones.
* There’s a lot of potential but if it compromises what either side is doing they need to be warned and careful.
* What they are each doing is so important.
* I think it (merger) can be a dangerous thing.
* We are worrying a lot about the integrity of HC but we maybe are selling PA a little short. They have done good work. We have big problems with preservation in this city and the PA is fighting the good fight and the people who work for them and who volunteer are trying really hard. I think it would be a shame to do discount them. A lot of people just don’t know PA or what they’re doing - if they got a hip spin being associated with HC and got in to the social media and whatnot, that might help
* No one is stopping PA from doing that themselves, and being a little more engaging in their discussions. They have a passion in their meetings but it does not come along at all in their writings. Maybe they need an editor to ask, “why should I know about this why do I care not because I’m in PA but because as a citizen here I have a vested interest in this city.” Explain why I should love this and defend the Boyd and the like. PA has not done enough of this.
* I disagree a little bit with you on which brand should pop forward; I think there is a benefit to both brands.
* There’s a lot of value of having both voices be really present – Hidden City is really accessible and it’s more engaging and exciting and has more passion readily apparent but PA has more legitimacy and capacity and ability to DO things to make preservation happen. They actually do things about preserving buildings, and they don’t Have to write passionately to get things to happen. For a toolkit yeah maybe they need a better vocab but they have a lot of resources HC doesn’t know where to get, making it more available to grassroots effort. There is a lot of value in providing them content. We don’t know what to do, what resources are available, and there’s something to be said about them making some of the information they have more readily available.
* I think there is a way that PA has a relationship with developers and government -there’s no way that anyone in 1515 Arch would think that PA is “the man”. They are the people knocking down the doors at the historic preservation commission. I think there is a way to use their (PA) legitimacy and have that advocacy that HC doesn’t have because they’re journalists.
* As long as it doesn’t get completely tied together so you don’t know who is saying what.
* I am excited about this because this could be a legacy for PA by picking up HC; so many organizations wish they could add HC to them. Especially for grants, PA actually helps the grant applications as they have the heft it needs for applying. And you’ll hear about it because there’s a number of people who will read this. The PA never wrote about what they did because they’re doing the work, they’re behind the scenes. I don’t know if HC should really report on that. I just see this being a match that could be great.
* In terms of funding, would both organizations be able to request special funding for projects that one of them is interested in and the other is not?
* I don’t know what the joint fund raising would be.
* Probably but they will have to work that out – some things are logical to do together.

**HC/PA Overlaps**

* They have their own history. They intersect at points. PA has been here a little longer and honestly it’s more difficult to do what they do. But HC has in a very short time established its own identity and a focus of interest just as the city is attracting a younger population and older people are moving back to it and becoming more interested in it. People who used to live in the suburbs are now becoming more interested in the history of the city, whereas before, they only viewed it through the eyes of a commuter. There’s a new, vested interest in where we live and what does it have to offer us.
* That is so true, the whole reason my friends and I took the PA tours is that we’re Philly natives who moved to the suburbs and so we came back and wanted to explore. We were ignited by HC. We took the PA tours which we discovered through HC and were embarrassed at what we didn’t know, going on right there. Revelations of our city.
* Tours would be a natural point of collaboration.

**HC’s Character**

* If I sent Pete an email about just about anything I got a real human response, a connection, it was great. After taking a couple of PA tours last summer, I was excited by them so I sent an email, and never got a response. If they’re the same in size and depth and breadth in employees and whatnot, HC seems more personal and willing to be personal.
* I think HC helps make the preservation conversation more nuanced, broad and accessible.

**PA’s Character**

* That goes to the point of this discussion in that the PA has staff that is in the community, they have an advocacy director and the like, they have people that could follow up. It’s not necessarily HC’s strength to follow up, but PA has staff that could do that and stay on top of it.
* Considering PA is the main advocacy group in city, relative to size of city and number of sites, they really don’t have enough money either.
* You need someone to go up against “the man” in town
* I just want to make sure that we are looking fully. I think the Alliance gets a lot of criticism for being stodgy and the like, “what do you mean they’re having their event at the Union League”, but at the same token, they have to play in that arena, and it’s unfair to characterize them as stodgy. They have to make money because they have a lot of overhead relative to financial resources of the city. I’m one of the stodgy members.
* They (PA) have to make money because they have a lot of overhead relative to financial sources of the city. I’ve been a member for many years and I’m in favor of it.
* Hidden City needs to be something else or somehow allied financially or whatever.

**Things that should not be merged**

* PA awards should not be merged– that’s their big fundraiser and isn’t really necessary for HC. John started that years ago and the last one did really well, raised a lot of money and that’s his take, would jeopardize HC journalistic integrity. HC covered it as they cover a lot of PA stuff, and they should still, but not be included.
* PA sues people and take them to court – they should keep that to themselves
* They (PA) also manage façade easements and the like – so legal stuff generally should stay with PA

**What do we still need to do?**

* The Alliance started because there were two separate organizations competing for funds that joined because they asked for funds. Then all these organizations sprung up and now we’re like there’s too many so we have to join again.
* In some ways I see this as being driven by the foundations, we don’t want to give money to you, we want to give it something new but then they’re not giving there. It’s all part of the same circle. I’m curious, would the foundations think this is a good thing; would it help both organizations get more foundation grants?
* The preservation conversation in Philadelphia is much more nuanced than we give it credit for
* It’s really important to capture people.
* The overreliance on foundations for nonprofits is annoying. The way organizations have been funded has dramatically changed in Philly.
* There’s lots of synergy between these things. The Old House fair could be reinvigorated potentially by the collaboration with HC. This is being done a little unconventionally, which is part of the reason for the focus groups.
* How are these decisions within the two organizations to be made? Who will make them?
* Will they consult the membership?
* My instinct is perhaps this should be aired in a joint meeting where members of both are invited. That’s what I think would help. Regardless, it should be aired before the total membership. In the long run, there’ll be more money coming in, more enthusiasm, and passion. When you have insular boards that make decisions on high, organizations can dissipate.
* When would it be appropriate to have that meeting? Is it meant to introduce the concept or vote on the concept?
* I think listing a meeting where all are invited to speak, just to hear from them. To gather them in.
* Why wouldn’t the survey do that?
* It’s better to get them all together in person. CCRA does that. Little non-profits become so totalitarian in some sense and then they keep asking for money. They would just be independent meetings. The people who support the organizations with their money, they are the ones who should be listened to.
* Is there a fear that one group would intimidate the other?
* Not really – the money givers just should be listened to.
* The groups should continue to talk about joint partnerships
* Yes, they should continue conversations.
* How do the foundations feel about this? Has that been tested at all?

**Appendix C: Members of Both Focus Group Complete Sorted Raw Notes**

Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together

Members of Both Focus Group

The bulleted lists under each topic heading are actual comments made by participants, no comments have been eliminated.

**For the Preservation Alliance**

Are you a….

* A member of the Preservation Alliance 9
* Contribute to Advocacy 3 Annual Appeal 1
* Attend the Annual Awards Luncheon? 4
* Get paper newsletter? read it? 8 and all do
* Get eNews? read it? 8 and all do
* Friend of Preservation Alliance on Facebook? 6
* Visit Alliance website to get information? 7
* Attend annual Neighborhood Preservation Conference? 1
* Attend Old House Fair? 0
* Attend Homeowner repair workshops? 2
* Attend Alliance walking tours? which ones? 2 - Northern Liberties, Church tours, Sacred Sites of Old City and Society Hill, a couple of neighborhood tours
* Call Alliance staff for assistance of advocacy issue or for information? 5
* Respond to an Alliance Advocacy Alert to contact a politician or attend an event? 4
* WHAT ELSE GOES ON THIS LIST?
* Call for Action: Historic commission and advocacy stuff, most recently the Boyd Theater, where you show up at the property
* Training citizens to be advocates – to train young preservation leaders to take places on boards and other preservation things to take a greater role in the organizations – Young Preservationists
* Young Friends – 2 involved and have been to events – Wayne Junction event (1)

**For Hidden City**

Are you a….

* A member of Hidden City? 8
* 5 Contribute to Indigo go appeal last year? 5
* (you can get it through the website too) Get the Hidden City Daily? Read it most of the time? Some of the time? 7 and most of the time
* Get the Hidden City digest weekly? Read it most of the time? Some of the time? 5 and mostly read it too
* Write for Hidden City? 4
* Friend of Hidden City on Facebook? 7
* Visit the Hidden City website to get information? 10
* Attended the 2009 Hidden City Festival? 5
* Attended the 2013 Hidden City Festival? 7
* Attended any Hidden City organized tours? which ones? 1 led one the 19th street Baptist church tour and 1 also led one Hawthorn Hall in West Philly, 1 is leading one this week on music history and 1 will be going on Broad Street, so really 4
* Call Hidden City staff for information or with story ideas? 4 “I bombard them”
* OTHER THINGS TO ADD HERE?
* Bought the hidden city calendar and gave as gifts (2)
* They have occasional workshops – one on strategic planning, one Ben Leech ran on nominations for Philadelphia’s register, (he does it for PA and for HC and better attendance when its HC), there was an overview of preservation and the like, also with Ben,
* Anniversary event for Boathouse Row

**PA Awards**

* I’ve attended luncheons before and they can be boring.
* Format for the awards was much better this year
* I wasn’t able to attend this year but have attended the lunches in the past and they can be long
* Infinitely better this year this format is than pervious programs – it used to be interminable, like four hours
* Part of the awards was not too long and there was lot of opportunity for socializing and networking – they used to have a cocktail hour long time ago but this year really brought that feel back with time to talk and network which is MUCH improved
* I think there was one at the Lits building but it wasn’t a dinner, it was a cocktail and awards. But long time ago.
* Crystal tea room, Wanamaker building, the like
* I heard this year was nicer and I did go when it was a luncheon, but it was too expensive. It’s still expensive.
* What would be affordable?
* It should be $50 or less, really a little less – tickets SO hard to secure so a lot of people who’re nominated structures for awards couldn’t come and that’s silly.
* Some people have paid $100 for awards like that and here there’s not even a real meal for $150 and that seems overly expensive – younger or limited means might have an issue getting there. Maybe fair for the cause and what you get?
* The hors d’oeuvres were first class. For me I thought it was really good, but I could afford it. If you’re of limited means or young, maybe you can’t afford it.
* But it’s also a fundraiser. It’s the most lucrative one they’ve had in years, a lot of it is because of the format. People wanted the two to schmooze.
* There were a couple reasons I didn’t go; one was the price, the other was that I’ve been to the Union League before but there are so many other places in the city that deserve the attention of something like this. Like the Rotunda in West Philly or the Baptist Church and using the PA awards ceremony as a way to bring attention to a particular space would be a good idea.
* But isn’t that kind of what the HC festival does?
* But the other thing is cost. Union League is very price competitive not that we have to be there every time but it works. To do a catering event offsite is much more expensive than a place that has a catering place. But good idea, whether it’s that event or not, we need to mix it up.
* Also location, and where people are coming from. Center City might be good for accessibility, but someplace else might not.
* Does the alliance have a caterer that they work with regularly?
* PA has stepped up earned income through awards ceremony, it was very lucrative.
* How would it go if we introduced the voice of HC into it?
* I think it’s also aimed at different ages. HC is aimed at young people. When you have an awards ceremony with tickets for $150, that’s not for young people.

**PA Tours**

* What about the tours or programs that PA does? Are they quality or interesting?
* I have enjoyed every one of them
* I was actually not impressed with the one I went on, it was a volunteer guide. I’m very thankful that she volunteered her time, but she wasn’t a very good speaker and was constantly reading from her notes so I was actually unimpressed. It’s very affordable and I assume if you have volunteers you can keep it that way, and if you have professionals, you have to pay more and that may make it less desirable.

**HC Festival**

* The 2013 Festival was fantastic; as a newbie to the area it was a phenomenal introduction to the area.
* I bought an all access pass for me and my husband and we must have gone to a dozen sites. It was terrific.
* All access pass is a really great way to do it and spread it out.
* I remember not being able to go to the 2009 HC festival and wishing I could, so I was determined to go to something in 2013. So I went to three sites. I was at the Germantown Town Hall quite a bit and I participated in it playing music. It has nice acoustics.
* Sometimes at the sites you’d have a lot of great information about a building, but sometimes there was only background on the art in it and not a lot about the building. It would be nice to have a mix.
* It’s great to go into the Metropolitan but there’s wasn’t enough about the building, whereas town hall in Germantown, there were a lot of things going on.
* The festival sites consistency is usually pretty good, sometimes they’re heavy on art and not on the building and sometimes vice versa.
* I think I went to all of them in 2013, I’m not sure about 2009, but there was a hand out at the locations. Some were just right with the perfect amount of information provided to know what you were looking at and refresh your memory with pictures. Others had really very little.
* I do remember the ticketing process online was a little confusing to me, with a few extra steps. It could have been me, but I just remember it wasn’t just “I want to go to this, *boom* I’m going to take it.”
* Wasn’t the reservation something you had to do in advance? Yeah that was confusing too.
* I remember at the Little Shul there were tickets but also a performance and you needed different tickets.
* You’re right, because sometimes there were performance related things that would break up the time you needed to visit different sites. But you’re right you have that thing where you’re already in that section of the city.
* Or you’re buying a ticket, do I also have to buy a reservation? That was also confusing too.
* You sort of pick and choose as you go. The performances, it would have been better to bill as a walk in.
* The online experience was inconsistent across locations. The videos for some were great; you knew what to expect, whereas, there were others where the coverage was really minimum. Hawthorne had a really robust online presence and Fort Mifflin the opposite.
* I volunteer for Open House of NY where they have over 400 places to see in a weekend, but they have a map indicating where all the sites are located that is made available prior to the weekend so participants can plan where they’ll go and what they’ll see so they don’t have to go all over creation. Unless you know the city really well, you’d be a bit lost, and that would be helpful to know where things are.

**HC Journalistic Integrity**

* All HC articles would have to have disclaimers that ‘this doesn’t represent the views of PA.’
* There already enough articles out there that would offend enough people politically. And PA can’t do that.
* Idea of journalistic independence is a huge concern. I assume for most of us that’s an issue and there is general consent.
* Along the same lines, but specifically, I wouldn’t want to see the PA advocacy function impaired or HC’s journalistic independence compromised, or either group lose money by joining.
* And the journalistic issue is a real issue because there is stuff that you would never find in the PA newsletter that is so staid by comparison and I want to see them both.
* It seems to be really important that the journalistic integrity of HC be maintained and that its independence is paramount; and in any cooperation, we’d have to make sure that was maintained, but there are other ways of maintaining. In other ways, we can do mutually beneficial stuff.

**HC PA Collaboration Ideas**

* Two things: one, that you don’t have a lot of overlap between the two organizations is great because you’re not cannibalizing one another, so it could really benefit both causes significantly. The question I have is, is it a merger with HC under PA?
* Is this a merger of HC into PA or is this a merger? Personally think of PA as a lot of things and HC as very specific, and it could tuck very well into PA. I think HC is a great organization but it’s very focused on what it’s doing. I think it slides right into PA, but I didn’t know if it’s a merger of equals or how that structure will be.
* Which no one yet knows the answer to. More or less right now we are dating before engagement – that’s part of the reason for this process – each has unique strengths and weaknesses.
* What might that be?
* HC is very good on a participatory level, getting and keeping people interested. PA does tours and all that. I’ve been on the advocacy side so I’ve seen them hitting the hard issues on a particular issue and the tours I think are to keep members interested. I think HC and the PA tours could really go together, to keep encouraging participatory things. That’s in my case, I’ve been a member for a long time with PA but I don’t participate much or go on tours, but with HC tours, I don’t miss one. There’s real synergy there. HC has done a great job.
* The synergy could be something interesting, though some work might need to be done.
* Sounds like there are a lot of opportunities for partnering on tours, at events, economies of scale, whether it’s accounting or bookkeeping, but that there remain a fundamental separation of powers if you will.
* It does sound like PA has a lot more to gain that HC. HC is small and nimble and does what it does really well by itself.
* Yeah. I’m afraid if there was a merger you would lose some of the current members and supporters of HC because aren’t into the big clunky political, more rigid traditional organization, which I’m not criticizing, but it just is that way.
* But what the PA brings to the table is if I’m in a neighborhood and I want them to save a building, yes I could get HC to write an article and be a rabble rouser, but when I need to deal with the real zoning and laws and council members, all those nuts and bolts, I’d talk to PA; there is such a strong need for both still.
* Promotion by both organizations for the other can be done without any structural change or expenditure of money.
* I think it would be interesting to have the websites not merge necessarily, but integrate better. I think the Boyd thing really does illustrate cracks in the system, that there were a lot of people who did care about it and didn’t get embraced in the process of advocating. There was the Friends of the Boyd and some coverage in HC but not enough attention from PA or at least enough publicity, there was a chance to do more.
* I think we’ve learned a lot from the Boyd and things we’ll hopefully grow from. Particularly if HC gets beyond tours, that’s primarily what I think of them doing. If you want to become more of an advocate, I think that’s great – I could see them pursuing it more, maybe being something like the Philadelphia Inquirer, doing the journalistic stuff and stirring the soup a bit. Unfortunately PA has to work through the system and the historic commission and make sure the politicians are on your side and not unhappy, and all sorts of murky things. Everyone wants the structured bureaucratic stuff to be done but it’s so hard to actually do it. I think it would be tough to have the organizations all in one room and coexist because it could impact each other’s missions.
* Let’s face it, a lot of us started out in the city pretty young trying to rehab buildings. So if you’re part of HC and you’re rehabbing an old house, they could learn how to take care of windows, that is something that could be attractive to younger members.
* Or have the old house fair in a rehabbed warehouse and I might be more likely to go to that than at Germantown Friends school where it always is. Yes it’s free, but it’s hard to get to.
* I would like to see online based resources, things that are not time specific. I think PA has printed maps, but something online that isn’t date specific that I could do on my own or resources that are more catered to my schedule. As much resource material they could put on their site the better. If someone wants a primer on a nomination, put it there. Tours are great but times and dates are hard to fit with my schedule and I might want to take a self-guided tour.
* As much research material as they can put on the site the better. It would only benefit them.
* I think a kind of a partnership opportunity might be some more hands on programming – workshops on how to replane, or something, which could appeal to the maker crowd, which could be very exciting.
* I think it would be good to have some joint events where both sides educate the other about what they do. There might be a gap in understanding. A “meet and greet” of artists and journalists and those who work with the politicians and policy and the like. They could facilitate some kind of event where all the things come together around the built environment in the historic city.
* I think homeowners workshops are fantastic and interesting, but as a non-homeowner, I wouldn’t go. I love the topics, but they are not for me. If we could rebrand them slightly as “how to” and “hands on historic preservation” that’s not just directed at the home owner but more DIY type preservation focus.
* I would also really like alerts of volunteer opportunities. More of them would be great, but first we need to be aware of them.
* Rebranding is a big thing.
* I know some young folks who are super hipster who have bought houses and are trying to rehab them and they’d be very interested in something like that and they live in it while they build it or something and they’d love to see it .

**Essential Differences**

* The fact that they really DO do separate things – would be concerned that if there was a combination the things I like best about both of them may be lost. For HC, it’s almost like they offer cultural entertainment in a way; not to belittle what they do, that’s just kind of how I see them. Especially when I’m wearing my CDC hat, the PA is more like ‘we have historic buildings in our neighborhood, how do we deal with the nuts and bolts?’ and they seem to have more experience and resources on that, rather than wanting to go play in an old building, which is very much a HC thing. Could going to concerts in old buildings be something a CDC could draw upon to help a neighborhood? Sure. I just don’t see HC doing that right now.
* What I see as the concern is that they have very very different; if they were to exist as people, they would be very different. PA is traditional conservative historic preservation and do practical things workshops and nominations and the like, where HC is urban exploration and creative and exciting. They are both really necessary and I would fear that that creative side would get lost if HC were to be tucked into PA.
* I was just thinking about the audiences and that HC does skew younger. That there is only a small number of overlap between the two organizations, only 38-50 which is SO small, and that just speaks to the different constituencies.
* I too see PA as much more traditional preservationists and HC as much more surprising; and as a result, those other 550 in HC people might be learning about preservation backwards, not self-identifying, but being brought into the fold subversively. But they find themselves in that historic building and think ‘wow this is cool;’ it’s a wonderful subversive way to introduce preservation to new groups. I would worry that the distinction, what each organization does would get lost. That this is kind of their mom and dads’ PA alliance. I wonder if the hipster coalition of HC wouldn’t like that.
* They both do really interesting things. Often PA works with government people and with the law and have to go through specific channels and other things, when sometimes it would be great to have something like HC to let them loose on a project. A parking garage was getting railroaded through, Fairmont park getting merged into Parks and Rec, etc. - so I got some advocacy going and forced a hearing at Horticultural Hall. We didn’t get all the things we wanted, but I would have loved to have some mothers with babies and baby carriages pushing in front of bulldozers if need be. I think sometimes working through the system works, other times its good to work outside of the system, just get someone on TV or something like that. If you’re too joined at the hip you, can’t do that. But if we had something like that, like at the Boyd, I think it would have had a huge impact.
* Boyd was a HUGE loss. If we’d known earlier, but the PA was going through legal hurdles and politics, and really we can’t just do it like that. The PA going through legal and political channels, we can do that. But if you have people who can push the limits that’s great. I think you’re right that you could potentially lose some interesting dynamics, but at the same time they’re working separately. I think something is missing, maybe something operationally, but how do you maintain that relationship? Or discretely make a phone call saying, ’we need some of your people, if you could really stir it up over here, we need one of your most incendiary writers,’ you need all of that at the table.

**Collaboration Issues**

* I’m a passive member of the PA, I’ll occasionally send an email to my congress person or sign a petition when something outrageous is about to happen, but I don’t go to their tours really or go to their stuff, so my membership is really because I think the organization should exist and I want to help keep their lights on whereas HC I really go to the events and I feel like I’m getting more from my membership and I really love the newsletter and the writing is exciting and the voices diverse. I would hate to see that in any way adulterated or compromised.
* And I’m exactly the same way, I don’t use the PA a lot but there have been a couple times when I’m saving a building or renovating a building like with the Boyd or fighting Sam Rappaport with the Victory Building years ago (boy was he a smug slumlord). That’s the thing, they are doing things that are important to do, but HC is the one I participate at because they’re doing interesting programs. I think each organization appreciates what the other does.

**HC Character**

* I echo the concerns that a couple of you have already voiced. I think HC is more entertaining for sure, but definitely not meant to be entertainment. I think their photos and media have really moved the needle and convinced a lot of people to get involved and be interested in historic preservation which is really important. People who didn’t have a stake in it now do. It’s subtle, and I’m really concerned that HC would lose that. As a contributor, I’m not in favor of a merger.
* I do agree with that, my fear is that HC would lose its edge because of bureaucracy and approval and all the things that come with being in a bigger organization.

**PA Character**

* The other thing with PA is they have resources for old houses and home owners. I’m not in this mode anymore, when I bought my first and second house and they were old houses and I wanted resources like what kind of mortar should I use or builder that would be sensitive to needs of old houses I went to the PA and they provided referrals. And it was always good for me. I think that is something they do; property owner and business owner education at the nuts and bolts level, I’d like to see more of that from them and the fact that they have them in relatively underserved neighborhoods too and is something I would never even think of going to HC for.

**HC PA Similarities**

* Membership is very similar: just under 600 for each, PA has five staff members mostly full time and a couple part time, HC has one full time several part time and LEGIONS of writers who get nominal might as well be free but something
*

**Young Friends**

* I didn’t even know anything about the Young Friends PA.
* I know this is the second iteration of Young Friends, I’m not sure why it didn’t work out the first time.
* This one has maybe like 200 people.
* This at least shows that someone at PA is interested in attracting younger people

**How do we merge programs/etc.?**

* The tours would have to be changed dramatically. The people who do the tours for HC are deeply involved in the organization, the building, or whatever they are giving a tour of. They are really involved and have a real stake in the tour; whereas some of the PA tours I’ve been on have been conducted by people from Penn or by Preservation historians and were excellent, but on others I thought ‘did they get that info by reading something the week beforehand and are trying to turn it into a tour?’, they’re just different.
* Quality control is going to be the problem.
* Then again, you’re talking about two different demographic groups too. Maybe an older person would be less likely to tour an abandoned building but would be more likely to take a walking tour of Society Hill.
* You have a better mix, for HC, a nice mix of older and younger, where PA is mostly older.

**Dual Membership**

* There isn’t a lot of cross-over for membership; I would promote a dual membership discount where both organizations talk each other up.
* Around this table, I think they’re both vitally important and if you could support them, why not do that. And in that way if you have a dual membership and get a little benefit out of it, you could either pay less annual dues or get into different events or tours or whatever; then each group benefits because you’re sharing your list. Overall, everybody benefits. You keep your organization, but you promote together and build each other up and hopefully through that if HC finds something they are advocating for or feel strongly about PA can lend a hand or vice versa maybe to keep journalistic integrity. I feel strongly about membership and wanting both organizations to be in business.
* I agree about sharing lists, that would be great, but in terms of sharing revenue, you’re almost automatically asking for trouble. Who gets what and for what?
* You cut it down the middle. Split it fifty fifty? Would one get significantly more revenue
* Love the idea but wouldn’t work quite that way. A lot of members would not want to do it and would prefer to be just HC or whatever
* But I don’t want to see a loss of revenue. I’d rather each get more money.
* You can have different levels of members with different benefits
* I’m saying each still has full memberships, but there is an opportunity to be a member of both orgs with a little bit of a discount. What you’re doing is PA is promoting HC which will get more members and vice versa. It’s a classic business model that is done every day. It’s a huge win. It doesn’t prevent anybody from throwing money there. I pay basic dues to each organization, but when there is an appeal, sometimes I write a check. Synergies are huge this way, sharing their lists and potentially gaining a huge membership increase and the money that goes along with this.
* They could strictly be a member of HC, but if you want to be a member of both, you may get more people from PA joining HC that don’t know about it.
* The possibility that is a discounted version and one that is actually more expensive but gets you significantly more.
* Different levels of membership possible. It is called “Upselling”
* Or that you have if you’re 30 or younger, you get a special deal and then ladder membership rates. And give benefits, just like joining one museum and you get a discount somewhere else. They’re upselling. Which is another possibility.
* A joint membership would be persuasive to me. Right now, I’m getting a lot of value out of HC and not from PA. I heard about PA because I went to an event at Ebenezer Mansion and thought that a membership would give me access to a lot of house museums, but the programming hasn’t been as exciting as I thought it would be. For me PA, seems sort of optional, but HC is mandatory.
* I’m not up on my PA membership and I’m not a member at HC, though I should be. So I like the idea of $90 for a joint membership a lot.
* I think a lot of the value that I contribute in membership just supports what PA and HC does, because I don’t really use the member benefits because I don’t have time to go to concerts etc. because of grad school. I support their because I believe in the work, so I give them money. I am emotionally committed.
* I love the way you said I’m not so much concerned about what I get from my membership but supporting them in doing what they do. I appreciate what they do. I love this.
* What about like a frequent attender card that works for both of them? Member discount tours that go both ways – crossover membership benefits and the like.
* Promote things to a wider audience.
* Sounds like so far as numbers each has around 600, with overlap of under 50, that means HC could get 550 new PA people and vice versa. Each organization can almost double their size with 100% buy in and it’s a really interesting numbers there – that’s a great thing here.

**Improvements to Encourage Membership**

* I think that’s not coming through for me in the literature from PA that I read. Like a $1 does this, $2 does this. I think they could do a better job showing me where my membership is going, bring it to life a bit more.
* It’s a very noble idea these are good groups and I want to support them but a LOT of other people are going to be like “WHAT AM I GETTING FOR MY MONEY”
* (you have to do both)
* Being able to say your 45 bucks will help us with our advocacy efforts over the X building this year or this will support our ten most endangered buildings or something or whatever
* Perhaps as a test, what each organization should do is reduce to writing, ‘this is what we do, and this is how you benefit from that.’ And then those lists could be used in a promotion for joint membership, as they’d have to have something like that anyway for promoting membership at a reduced for both – advocate that more than merger.
* It’s an opportunity for each of these organizations to refine the outline of their mission and to get them to people. From each side to the other. Let’s say you’re a member of the PA and you’re considering this HC, you have to give an elevator speech for why you should join both of us. And likewise for the HC. It makes an argument for why you should join both of the groups. Each one should do it and say it economically and powerfully and highlight the differences between the two.

**Cultureworks**

* What is HC relationship to Cultureworks?
* CW is the umbrella organization of three programs: cultural trust (where they’re trying to have CW be their back office space), HC, and this space. CultureWorks is the office space and does insurance and bookkeeping and the like.
* So when we talk about possible mergers, it’s the CW board?
* No it’s the HC board which is its own separate nonprofit, but they use CW as their fiscal agent. CW will have no say in this at all.

**Appendix D: List of Focus Group Attendees**

Preservation Alliance

1. Ms. Patricia Aden
2. Mr. John Carr
3. Mr. John Cluver
4. Ms. Cheryl Gaston
5. Ms. Janet Grace
6. Ms. Dominque Hawkins
7. Mr. Michael Norris
8. Ms. Betsy Manning
9. Mr. Bob Shusterman
10. Ms. Kimber VanSant
11. Ms. Lisa Witomski
12. Ms. Loretta Witt

Hidden City

1. Mr. Rob Armstrong
2. Ms. Erin Bernard
3. Ms. Kiki Bolender
4. Ms. Emaleigh Doley
5. Ms. Kathy Dowdell
6. Mr. Morris Levin
7. Ms. Beth Miller
8. Mr. Alex Mulcahey
9. Ms. Leah Murphy
10. Ms. Elisabeth Perez-Luna
11. Ms. Kate Ryan
12. Ms. Liz Spikol

Members of Both Organizations

1. Ms. Jennifer Carr
2. Ms. Kathleen A Foster
3. Mr. Harry Hauptfuhrer
4. Ms. Rachel Hilderbrandt
5. Mr. Jack McCarthy
6. Mr. Andy Trackman
7. Mr. David Traub
8. Ms. Ali Valin
9. Mr. Gerald Karl White
10. Mr. Aaron V. Wunsch

**Appendix E: Focus Group Script**

**Final script**

**Focus groups for Hidden City and Preservation Alliance: Managing Together**

**Welcome and introductions—5 minutes**

Thank you for your participation in these focus groups being undertaken by Hidden City and the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia for a Barra Foundation grant funded project to gather background information for the joint effort for both organizations to “Manage Together.”

My name is Donna Ann Harris and I will be facilitating our discussion today. Lindsey Uhl and Ariana Zeno are here to take notes of our conversations. Your comments will not be identified in any way in any of the written reports, all we will do is acknowledge that you participated. We want your candid comments.

In order for us to get all of the information from you today, we have some ground rules. Only one person may speak at any one time, so that the note takers can hear what you have to say. There are index cards on the table for you write down any thoughts you have while someone else is speaking, until you get a chance to speak. We want everyone to contribute to this conversation. We may ask you to clarify or give an example so we fully understand your point. If you do not wish to answer a question that is ok, too.

Housekeeping: The restrooms are located in this floor, next to the elevators; no keys are needed. The Women’s room is around the back of the elevator bank. The Men’s room is just before the elevator bank. Please give us your contact information on the sign in sheet going around— including address if you are representing someone else in your organization, so we can thank you for attending. Please help yourself to the snacks provided throughout our meeting. Can you please turn your cell phones off or put them on vibrate mode now. We will have about an hour and a half together.

**Introductions—10 minutes**

We would like to start by going around the table for introductions.

Please tell us your name, and the organization you represent (if any).

We know that all of you are members of both organizations, and we thank you for that. Please tell us, in one minute, your experience now or in the past with Hidden City or the Preservation Alliance.

**Current involvement with either Hidden City or the Preservation Alliance—25 minutes**

We would like to know about your involvement with Hidden City and the Preservation Alliance in the last five years.

I am going to read a list of programs of each organization. Please raise your hand if you participate in any of the following activities, we will count the number of hands raised

For the Preservation Alliance

Are you a….

* A member of the Preservation Alliance
* Contribute to Advocacy or Annual Appeal?
* Attend the Annual Awards Luncheon?
* Get paper newsletter? read it?
* Get eNews? read it?
* Friend of Preservation Alliance on Facebook?
* Visit Alliance website to get information?
* Attend annual Neighborhood Preservation Conference?
* Attend Old House Fair?
* Attend Homeowner repair workshops?
* Attend Alliance walking tours? which ones?
* Call Alliance staff for assistance of advocacy issue or for information?
* Respond to an Alliance Advocacy Alert to contact a politician or attend an event?

For Hidden City

Are you a….

* A member of Hidden City?
* Contribute to Indigo go appeal last year?
* Get the Hidden City Daily? Read it most of the time? Some of the time?
* Get the Hidden City digest weekly? Read it most of the time? Some of the time?
* Write for Hidden City?
* Friend of Hidden City on Facebook?
* Visit the Hidden City website to get information?
* Attended the 2009 Hidden City Festival?
* Attended the 2013 Hidden City Festival?
* Attended any Hidden City organized tours? which ones?
* Call Hidden City staff for information or with story ideas?

Do you participate in any other activities that the Preservation Alliance sponsors?

Do you have any comments about the quality of these events or activities?

Regarding the current activities of each organization, which are the three most important to you? WHY?

Of current programs of each organization, what could be dropped? WHY?

What value do you think Hidden City offers to the Philadelphia community? What is its impact?

How does this value and impact differ from that of the Preservation Alliance (if at all)?

Would a relationship between Hidden City and the Alliance in any way undermine the journalistic integrity or credibility of the Hidden City Daily?

**Managing Together Grant project –20 minutes**

We circulated the announcement about the Managing Together grant program in the invitation letter. This summary included a list of all the current collaborative projects that Hidden City and the Preservation Alliance have already done, and are planning to do in the near future.

Did everyone have a chance to review that piece? Yes/no

Was anyone surprised to learn about any of the past collaborative projects or the new ones being planned?

Do you have any specific questions about the further collaboration between these two organizations?

Do you have any specific concerns about the further collaboration between these two organizations?

What do you think would be some of the major stumbling blocks for this collaboration, such as specific risks or rewards?

**Potential Merger Issues –20 minutes**

If the “managing together” grant project is successful, the two organizations are considering various ways for them to formalize their relationship. We are considering a variety of options including: affiliation, joint venture, or outright merger.

Are there specific programs or activities of either organization that should NOT be merged? WHY?

Do you think that a merger would be successful or not?

Would some other relationship between the two organizations better serve the larger preservation and built environment community in Philadelphia?

Would you support a merger or other formal arrangement? WHY? Or WHY NOT?

**Conclusion 5 minutes**

Is there anything else you would like to add? Is there anything else you think we should know?

**Parking and Thank you**

If you paid for parking today in order to participate in the Focus Group, please sign this sheet and we will give you $20 towards that fee.

Thank you for your participation in our focus group today. If we do not have your email address please add it to the sign in sheet so we can add you to our shared data base.

Total 90 minutes

**Credits**

This report was written by Donna Ann Harris, principal of Heritage Consulting Inc. and R. Lindsey Uhl, an intern working with Heritage Consulting Inc. this summer.

**Donna Ann Harris** is the principal of Heritage Consulting Inc. a Philadelphia-based Women’s Business Enterprise (WBE) boutique consulting firm that provides assistance to non-profit organizations and government agencies nationwide in the following practice areas: downtown and commercial district revitalization, historic preservation, tourism product development, and non-profit organizational development.

Prior to starting her firm ten years ago, Ms. Harris was State Coordinator for the Illinois Main Street program for two years and the Manager of the Illinois suburban Main Street program for four years. During her tenure as State Coordinator, Ms. Harris served 56 Illinois Main Street communities, led a staff of 12, and managed a budget of over a million dollars.

Since 2004, Ms. Harris has worked with state, countywide and local Main Street programs in 23 states. She has spoken for the last ten years at the National Main Street Center annual conference, and at the International Downtown Association annual meetings in 2013, 2008 and 2009. Ms. Harris has published five feature articles in the National Main Street Center’s quarterly journal *Main Street News* on fundraising, business improvement districts and advocacy.

AltaMira Press published her book *New Solutions for House Museums: Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation of America’s Historic Houses* in 2007. For ten years Ms. Harris has been speaking about and consulting with historic house museums around the country about alternative uses and stewardship responsibilities. She has published five feature articles in The National Main Street Center’s quarterly journal *Main Street News,* and scholarly articles in the American Association for State and Local History’s *History News* and the National Trust’s *Forum Journal.* Preparing heritage tourism assessments, strategic plans and audience research studies have been a major focus of her practice for the last two years.

**R. Lindsey Uhl** earned a master’s degree in architecture from the University of Kansas, and is working on her master of science in historic preservation degree at the University of Pennsylvania Design School. Lindsey is a certified LEED Green Associate with three years of experience in the field of architecture working as an intern near Boston, MA. She is passionate about the intersection between people and design, and is exploring consultation as a method by which she can find their unity.

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