Rehab Strategies for Vacant Properties
Cleveland Restoration Society

- Cleveland
- Inner-ring suburbs
- NEO
- Partner -- National Trust for Historic Preservation
Organization

- 45 Trustees
- 12 Staff Members
- $1.3 MM Operating Budget
- 1,000 + Members
- $1.45 MM Endowment
Core Programs

✓ Advocacy & Public Policy
✓ Education & Publications
✓ Heritage Home Program℠
✓ Preservation Services
✓ Historic Real Estate Activities
Historic Real Estate

- Significant structures
- Need for market intervention, but minimize risk
- Solve ownership issues – receivership, property donation
- Stabilize, convey for market rehab
The Plight of the Scofield Mansion

2441 Mapleside Road on hill overlooking Baldwin Reservoir
The Plight of the Scofield Mansion

- Built in 1898 as a single family home
- Sandstone house, magnificent sitting, huge front porch
- Conveyed to Catholic nuns for convent
- Nuns opened a nursing home
- Additional nursing home built at bottom of hill
- Hill cut away, porch removed, front addition constructed
- Conveyed to nursing home operator
- Abandoned approximately 1997
Scofield Mansion now a vacant hazard
House sitting vacant for more than 20 years
Could it be restored? Become a positive catalyst?
Levi Scofield Cleveland Architect

Historic significance indisputable

Renown architect of the:

• The Scofield Building
• Soldiers and Sailors Monument
CRS Coordinates with Cleveland’s Building Department Before Demolition

- Relationship development
- Series of meetings between entities to consider partnership
- Review condemned properties in historic districts
- Review other demo pipeline properties – such as Scofield Mansion
Opportunity to Connect and Expose Property

- Good timing!
- Connect the Dots on Scofield
- PR the “availability” of property
- OK – it was a stretch!
Scofield Family

- Early Cleveland Family
- Owned land E. 9th & Euclid
- Constructors of early Cleveland buildings
- Levi became a sculptor and architect
hope is a good thing maybe the best of good things and no good thing ever dies
Designed by architect Levi T. Scofield, the Ohio State Reformatory opened its doors in 1898 as a facility to rehabilitate young male offenders through hard work and education. A self-sufficient institution with its own power plant and working farm, the reformatory produced goods in its workshops for other state institutions and provided opportunities for inmates to learn trades. As social attitudes towards crime hardened in the mid-twentieth century, it became a maximum-security facility. The six-tier East Cell Block is the largest known structure of its kind. Considered substandard by the 1970s, the Ohio State Reformatory closed in 1990. It has served since as a setting for several major motion pictures. This Mansfield landmark was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

THE OHIO BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION
THE LONGABERGER COMPANY
THE MANSFIELD REFORMATORY PRESERVATION SOCIETY
THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2001
The Old Neighborhood

The DiGeronimo Family
CRS established a Task Force

- Tony and Joe DiGeronimo Precision Environmental
- Ron O’Leary, Mike McBride, Ayonna Donald City of Cleveland
- Steve Coon, Jim McCue and Zach Via Coon Restoration & Sealants
- Justin Fleming from Cleveland Neighborhood Progress
- Heather Best, Brian Potasiewicz, SecureView Clearboarding
- Doug Hoffman from Weber, Murphy, Fox Architects
- Tom Truelson, Ian Fess First Choice Roofing Company
- Jay Westbrook from Thriving Communities Institute
- Elwin Robison from Kent State School of Architecture
The Process – assessing condition

1. Stone walls stable
2. Walls plumb
3. Horizontal beams old wood
4. Roof stable
5. Gutters deteriorated
6. Downspouts gone
7. Windows gone
8. Interior walls crumbling
9. Plaster falling
10. Debris throughout
Scofield Mansion - Location
Site – 1.6 acres

Two buildings:
1. Scofield Mansion (on the hill)
2. Nursing home 1968 (bottom the hill)
Mansion

Nursing Home
Scofield Mansion

- Completed in 1898
- 6,000+ Square Feet
The Second Building – Nursing Home

- Built in 1968
- 17,500 Square Feet
Recruited Donations

**Coon Restoration** – Project management, wall stabilization, stone repair, installation of SecureView material

**Precision Environmental** – Removal of debris, check for asbestos, removal of hazardous materials, exterior clean-up

**SecureView** – polycarbonate window material

**1st Choice Roofing** – roof & gutter patching

Value = $180,000
Need for Site Control

Without Site Control -- any stabilization work would be:

1. Trespassing
2. Inure to the benefit of Ms. Lyons

Two paths to site control:

- Voluntary transfer from Ms. Lyons
- Receivership
Owner was Rosaline D. Lyons

✓ Purchased property in 2012 for $1,400 at a State forfeiture auction

✓ Intended to use the Nursing Home building as a school or pre-school

✓ Didn’t realized Scofield Mansion was part of purchase
Ownership has Problems

Rosaline D. Lyons

✓ Did not pay any taxes – owed $57,751
✓ Housing Court fined her $132,000
Cleveland Housing Court Action relating to Code Violations:

- Ms. Lyons pled no contest on August 11th
- Ms. Lyons was fined $132,000 on September 15th
- Follow-up hearing October 20th
- Ms. Lyons told the Court she would sell the property for $200,000
Voluntary Transfer

1. Ms. Lyons conveys to Land Bank

2. Ms. Lyons avoids jail, continuing problems

3. Indebtedness cleared from title

4. Agreement between Land Bank and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress for 18-24 month holding period

5. Stabilization occurs immediately
Alternative to Voluntary Transfer

1. CRS file Housing Receivership action
2. CRS appointed Receiver
3. CRS carries out approved stabilization plan
4. CRS forecloses on Receiver’s Lien
5. Property conveyed to CRS
6. CRS conveys to CNP or markets for resale with preservation covenant
Resolution

☑ Ms. Lyons agreed to transfer property to Land Bank

☑ Land Bank agreed to accept property for up to 24 months

☑ Cleveland Neighborhood Progress has agreed to take property after 24 months

☑ Stabilization can begin!
Stabilization Process Begins

- Structural analysis completed
- Wall support system installed by Coon
- Clearing out of debris completed by Precision
- CNP ordering protective construction fence to surround property
Scofield Mansion SNOOP!
Lessons Learned

- Teamwork on Task Force was essential
- Each player had a role – differing expertise
- Strong common goal – selfless motivation
- Essential role of land bank
- Essential role of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress
- Lack of fear, willingness to take a risk
- No known end user!
Future Steps

- Continued communication with the neighbors – they are thrilled!
- Continued stabilization required
- Protective fencing
- Evaluation of National Register potential – unlock tax credits
- CRS to continue to PR the opportunity the property presents
- Move toward a redevelopment plan