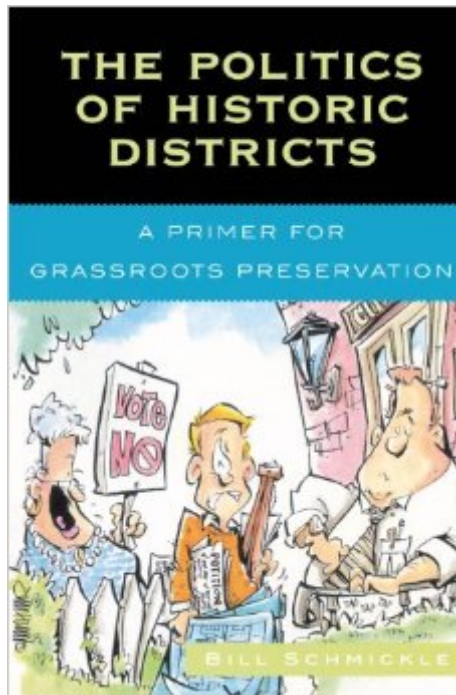


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The Politics Of Historic Districts: A Primer For Grassroots Preservation



Synopsis

The worst thing in politics is to be right and to lose. This how-to guide will give citizens who are fighting to designate a local historic district the political know-how to win the support of fellow residents and city hall. Everything is here: learning to think politically, mastering the political process; planning and strategy; campaign organizing and leadership; framing a practical vision; anticipating and handling the opposition; conducting community meetings; skirmishing with property rightists; managing issues, petitions, and public opinion; dealing with public officials; strategizing for public hearings; and winning the vote for district designation. The Politics of Historic Districts is an indispensable resource whose practical, hands-on lessons are informed by extensive research and the author's own experiences in winning a district designation, chairing a historic preservation commission, and teaching political science. By showing how and why communities make political decisions to designate historic districts, Bill Schmickle encourages preservationists to ignore the traditional tensions between preservation and political action and points the way to a fuller understanding of the politics that shape local historic districts.

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Customer Reviews

The Politics of Historic Districts: A Primer for Grassroots Preservation (Paperback) by William E. Schmickle (Author) was a suggested read for our Historic Preservation Commission. We all received copies from a benefactor. Every HPC should be so fortunate. The books are now marked in yellow marker pen and bristling with colored paper tabs. The book is full of diplomatic answers to the tough questions and challenges received when you're trying to create an historic district.

Many colleagues had recommended this book to me as a classic in preservation literature. I just finished it and they are right. This book gives enough information that can be generally applied to most any local preservation battle. What is new is that it gives preservationists a clear view about what elected officials respond to when pressed by competing interests. This is what makes this book valuable. It is not a book about how to write a historic district nomination. Rather it is how to get an historic district passed, so that local citizens can regulate their historic resources. The book is all about winning the battle, and acknowledges that compromises may have to be made. The chapters are short and informative. I say a cookbook, because if you follow Schmickle's written instructions, you can reproduce his successes in your own town.

This book is a great introduction to the world of politics of historic preservation, as well as historic districts. Much of the information within this book rings true, as experienced from this reader. The book will ready the reader for the road ahead when attempting to establish a historic district. Although the cover looks comical, the information contained within is very serious.

An entertaining and eye opening book for any local preservationist or activist.

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