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Historic buildings program focus is green design before its time

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WORCESTER — Preservation Worcester will kick off its “Green Initiative” program this month with events that examine how sustainability and energy conservation factor into historic preservation projects.

Deborah Packard, PW’s executive director, said that data from the U.S. Energy Information Agency show that buildings built before 1920 are more energy-efficient because they have thick walls that reduce the amount of energy needed for heating and cooling.

She also said that designers of older buildings always sought to site structures to take advantage of the sun in winter.

The Green Initiative is partially funded by the Eastern Massachusetts Preservation Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

It begins Sunday with demonstrations from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on how old windows may be made more energy-efficient.

The demonstrations will take place at the stART on the Street festival on Park Avenue.

At 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Saxe Room of the Worcester Public Library at Salem Square, there will be a talk about why old buildings are inherently green and how sustainability and historic preservation can work hand in hand

Meanwhile, a window repair workshop will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 30 at the Preservation Worcester offices, 10 Cedar St.

A program on air sealing, window restoration and renewable energy options will be held at 7 p.m. Nov. 17 at the New England Dream Center, 5 Chestnut St.

Speakers will include Rebecca Williams from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Sally Zimmerman from Historic New England and Christopher Skelly from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Most of the events are free. The Oct. 30 program costs \$35. To register, call (508) 754-8760.

“Historic preservation has an important role to play in the current push for energy conservation and the sustainability of our environment,” said Susan Ceccacci, PW’s education director.