

## **GeoPrax Business Plan**

Mission: GeoPrax unearths and articulates forgotten territory so businesses can build upon history. We do this through geocritical excavation in the humanities and empathic connection with residents, customers, and other stakeholders.

Vision: To create vibrant spaces where history is reconciled with humanity.

Geopraxis offers doctoral-level research into the history of spaces, buildings, and land. This work is of value to organizations undertaking land acknowledgement reports or any state-funded projects--capital and otherwise--which require a consultation with (and subsequent report for) the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC). We will perform this work through deep research--both qualitative and quantitative--into the spaces at hand. Cultural analysis, historical archives, and stakeholder testimony will inform our work for space-based organizations, developers, and collaboratives. Anyone or any organization interested in the history of their spaces will find our work valuable. We will conduct this work across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, with potential for expansion into northeastern Ohio and the Middle Atlantic. Geopraxis is founded and led by Michael A. Smith, PhD.

The problems and opportunities that can be addressed here are two fold. The Pennsylvania State History Code requires that “the commission [Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission] shall be consulted on the design and proposed location of any project, building or other undertaking financed in whole or in part by Commonwealth funds which may affect the preservation and development of a district, site or building listed on or eligible for the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Places.” Furthermore, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.) (NHPA), as Amended, requires that all federal agencies assess the effects of the use of federal funds/permitting on historic resources. Few developers and/or nonprofit organizations look forward to the intense humanities-based work required by the PHMC and the NHPA. It is laborious and detailed and messy. GeoPrax will inventory historic resources, prepare PHMC forms, research archival texts and documents, and help organizations determine the range of potential effects on their projects. Secondly, land acknowledgements are becoming increasingly common as ways to mark an organization’s understanding of the spaces in which they operate. Again, this work fits into a niche field and is best done with care and critical know-how, lest it seem insincere and tokenized. GeoPrax is an effective way to outsource this work and produce publishable materials on the discursive geography of space.