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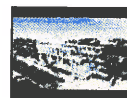
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Boynton Woman's Club on road to restoration, but still far from goal

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New

By [Alexandra Seltzer](#) - Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

BOYNTON BEACH – The amount of money needed to restore the historic Boynton Woman's Club building on Federal Highway is more than the women first thought.

Just months ago, [they said they thought they needed at least \\$300,000](#). Now, it could be as much as half a million dollars.

But it looks like the women's efforts to land donations and raise money are paying off. If they are awarded a \$140,000 grant from the state, the club – with other donations and grants – could be almost halfway to the \$500,000.

And to them, that's a big deal.

"We are delighted by the support we're getting," said Barbara Erlichman, the club's publicity chairwoman. "We're delighted that people are taking such an interest in our building. It's a beautiful building. It would be awful if it falls apart, and we're doing our best."

The pinkish-colored building has been on Federal Highway just north of Woolbright Road since 1925. It is the only building in Palm Beach County that was built by Addison Mizner and is open to the public. Its purpose was to serve as a memorial to Maj. Nathan Smith Boynton, the founder of the city. The two-story building has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1979. In October, the women celebrated the club's 105th anniversary.

A rush to restoration started when the women found out they had a leak in the building. Someone noticed that a picture in the library room

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was curling, and after its removal, the women saw the wall discolored and damaged.

"That was a real wake-up call. We didn't realize the problems that were building up. Suddenly we got to see the problems firsthand," Erlichman said.

In June, the [Boynton Community Redevelopment Agency](#) awarded the club a \$15,000 grant. The money, and \$15,000 from the club, was used to replace three French doors upstairs. An opening formed in one of the doors, causing the leak. The wall will be re-plastered and painted in the coming weeks.

The women have always worried that not enough people know the significance of the building and the club, and they hoped a place on the local register or historic places could help that. In October, the City Commission approved it.

Warren Adams, the city's historic planner, said the building deserved to be on the list and join other historic places, including The Oscar Magnuson house and the old high school.

"This is one of the most significant sites in the city," Adams said. "It's significant both for its architecture and its social history."

A local designation means the building will be a part of historic tours and also on a smart phone application Adams is working on of historic places.

In addition to the doors already fixed, the building has about 40 openings between windows and doors that need to be repaired. The women have laid out a list of other repairs to be done during the next five years: the wood floors, the windows, the walls, refurbish the furniture and the elevator.

The women are hoping to get the \$140,000 grant from the state's Division of Historical Resources. If they get that grant, they'll be given \$50,000 from the Boynton Community Redevelopment Agency and the club will use \$10,000 of its own money. Also, the club has raised \$17,000 and members will donate 1,000 volunteer hours to the restoration project, said Barbara Wineberg, the club's treasurer. In total, they'll have about \$217,000.

They will continue their fund-raising efforts and will hold events including a fashion show and a gala. They also offer the building for events.

"We're doing our best and we're an all-volunteer organization, so it's not as though we're here every day checking it out. That's the problem," Erlichman said.

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