

CITY OF NORWALK
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
JUNE 26, 2019
THE TOWN HOUSE
MILL HILL HISTORIC PARK
2 EAST WALL STREET
NORWALK, CT 06851

ATTENDANCE: Suzanne Betts, Chair; Eric Chandler; Lisa Wilson Grant; Carrie Salviano, Thomas Livingston, Holly Cuzzone.

STAFF: David Westmoreland; Diane Jellerette, Norwalk Historical Society; Susan Gilgore, Lockwood Mathews Mansion; Patsy Brescia, Lockwood Mathews Mansion; Liz Suchy

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Betts called meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and a quorum was present.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING : MAY 13, 2019

**** MR. CHANDLER MOVED TO APPROVE MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 13, 2019.**

**** MS. BETTS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Since Liz Suchy was attending the meeting as a guest, Ms. Betts moved the item number 7 up so that Ms. Suchy could follow up on the subject:

A. Addition of #3 and #5 Raymond Street to the local historic inventory

Mr. Westmoreland mentioned that actually it was number 3 only, once number 5 was vacant.

Mr. Westmoreland highlighted the following characteristics of the building located at number 3 Raymond Street:

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- The building is located in a redevelopment area; it has a small church next door and it's across the street from Ryan Park and South Norwalk Community Center. There are extensive residential development projects completed and/or under construction in the immediate area;

- The building has a large center overhead and another double door above on the second floor. It has also a construction date stone at top and central of front façade;

- An architectural importance is that this building was used as artist studio by noted Charles O. Perry (1929-2011) and also, most buildings of this type in South Norwalk have been demolished.

**** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE NUMBER 3 RAYMOND STREET APPLICATION INTO THE LOCAL HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY.**

**** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. REPORTS – BOARDS

A. Norwalk Historical Society- Diane Jellerette

Ms. Jellerette came forward and presented her report as follows:

Norwalk Historical Society Museum Phase II ADA access continues. Elevator project has through with potential bidders completed.

Planning meetings continue for the Norwalk Changing Communities Before 1835 exhibition in the Town House at Mill Hill.

Past Events:

- **“Jewish Participation the American Revolution: Red, White & Jewish”**. Sunday, May 19, 2019, 2:00-3:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park. Admission: \$8. Presenter: Eric Chandler.
- **“Secret Codes of Early America”**. Saturday, June 1, 2019, 2:00-3:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park. Admission: \$8. Presenter Richard Hubert.
- **“Caught in the Crosshairs: The Secret of the Norden Bombsight”**. Opening Reception, June 8, 2019, Noon-4:00pm at Norwalk Historical Society Museum, 141 East Avenue. Admission: Free. The Norden bombsight is a World War II era piece of military equipment. It was donated by Northrup Grumman Norden Systems in 2013. Also, on display, are items related to the Northrup Grumman Norden Systems company. They were a major employer in Norwalk, CT for over 50 years (1961-

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2013). Visitors included, former Mayor Alex, Knopp, Congressman Jim Himes and State Senator Bob Duff. We thank exhibition curator Judith Bacal, Fran DiMeglio, Norden Systems Retirees Club and Northrup Grumman Norden Systems.

- **“CT Open House Day”**: Noon-4:00pm, at Norwalk Historical Society Museum, 141 East Avenue. This was combined with the opening of the new exhibition “Caught in the Crosshairs: The Secret of Norden Bombsight” .
- **“Revolutionary Connecticut Beer & Cider Tasting”**. Thursday, June 20, 2019, 7:00-9:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park, 2 East Wall Street. Admission: \$45/\$50 after 6/18 & at the door, Tasting led by Gregg Glaser.
- **“Make Music Day Norwalk”**. Friday, June 21, 2019, 6:30-8:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park, 2 East Wall Street. International event and first year in Norwalk. Admission: Free. Presenter: Spirit of Black Rock Fife and Drum Corps. Over 35 venues around Norwalk participated. The Wall Street Neighborhood Association spearheaded the event with support from NorwalkNow.
- **“Battle and Burning of Norwalk, July 11, 1779” Lecture**, Sunday, June 23, 2019, 2:00-3:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park, 2 East Wall Street. Admission: \$8. Presenter: Ed Eckert.

Upcoming Events

- **“Independence Day Celebration”**, Thursday, July 4, 2019. Noon-4:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park, 2 East Wall Street. Admission : Free. Opening new exhibition “The History of Norwalk Schools 1650-1870” in the “Little Red Schoolhouse” c1826. A lesson with quill and ink. “Let Freedom Ring” Bell Ringing Ceremony & Reading of excerpt from the “Declaration of Independence”, “Heroes of the Battle of Norwalk”, mini-lectures presented by Madeleine Eckert. Self-guided tour of grounds and historic buildings. Schedule of events: norwalkhistoricalsociety.org/events/.
- **“240th Anniversary Battle and Burning of Norwalk, Living History Day”**. Saturday, July 13, 2019, 11:00am-4:00pm at Mill Hill Historic Park, 2 East Wall Street. Free event. Remembering the Battle against the British on July 11, 1779. Uniformed living historians from the Second Continental Light Dragoons, French Military Officer Chastelleux as well as British 9th and 23rd Regiments a Foot and Loyalists 1st New Jersey volunteers will participate in the Living History Day. Schedule of events: norwalkhistoricalsociety.org/events/ .
- **“Mill Hill Garden Party with Sheila & Leigh”**, Friday, August 2, 2019, 6:30-8:30pm at Mill Hill Historic Park, 2 East Wall Street. Featuring talented Norwalk natives Sheila Fabrizio on vocals and Leigh Richardson on guitar/vocals. All Historic buildings will be open for self-guided tours. Bring a lawn chair.

B. Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum – Susan Gilgore

Ms. Gilgore came forward and presented her report as follows:

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The water issue, which had created concerns for the Mansion throughout 2018 has been fully resolved. Now the Veranda is undergoing repairs and we thank the Norwalk Historical Commission as well as David Westmoreland for supporting and overseeing the project. The City's Department of Public Works is planning to repave the driveway on Tuesday.

The state has not released the contract documents for the \$5 million bond, and we are waiting for those documents to be released to proceed with Phase IV of the Master Plan and construction project. We understand 2.5 million in the Capital Budget has been approved but will not be paid until construction begins.

The 2019 Season is in full swing and programs have received great coverage in the media including LMMM's suffrage exhibit, *From Corsets to Suffrage: Victorian Women Trailblazers*, which was featured on the cover of the award-winning Norwalk High School newspaper, *Paw Print*. We were thrilled to host students from Norwalk High at the Opening on May 16 and see the results of their interest and enthusiasm for the exhibit. We also have approximately 8 interns scheduled to work with staff and volunteers this summer.

Congressman Jim Himes and State Representatives Gail Lavielle, Lucy Dathan, Terrie Wood came for a private tour of the new suffrage exhibit.

A lecture by Dr. Heather Prescott, titled, *Fashioning Women's Suffrage* was very well attended and the *Treasure Hunter's Adventure* in collaboration with the Center for Contemporary Printmaking and Stepping Stones Museum for Children was a big success. The event took place in Mathews Park, and participants used a faded map to unlock the escalating levels of the game at all three buildings, which came to its endgame with prizes inside the Mansion. We are organizing the Old Fashioned Flea Market on Sept. 15, and joined the Smithsonian once again for Museum Day, a national celebration of arts and culture on Sept. 21.

5. REPORTS

A. Buildings – David Westmoreland

Mr. Westmoreland mentioned that the water project was \$25,000 over budget , he said he is working on that and that he would rather not go for special appropriation.

Mr. Westmoreland said that he is working on the Mansion porch. He said that the porch ceiling has been taken off and the good thing was that its condition was better than expected. He said that one project will be to replace the roof part and another project will be for the new ceiling. He said that he has the budget for that and that he is just moving along to have both projects completed.

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Mr. Westmoreland commented on the elevators project. He said there were two bids for the project, but both unfeasible. He explained: the budget is \$300,000; one bid was for \$78,000 and the second bid for \$780,000. He said he's working on that.

B. Cemeteries - Commissioner Cuzzone

Mr. Westmoreland said that will have a crew cleaning up the stones in July.

C. Finance – Commissioner Betts

There was no discussion

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was a brief discussion about the proposed demolition of the Columbus School but nothing has been decided as of now by the Board of Education.

7. NEW BUSINESS

This item was discussed under item 3 – Public Participation

8. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. CHANDLER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. BETTS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marizete Venancio
Telesco Secretarial Services

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