

**City of Norwalk  
Historical Commission  
Regular Meeting  
February 3, 2021**

**ATTENDANCE:** Diana Laird, Chair; Judith Bacal, Barry Belardinelli, Eric Chandler, Barbara Cuzzone, Elizabeth Golden, Lisa Wilson Grant, Mark Jackson, Tom Livingston, Iliana Zuniga

**OTHERS:** Diane Jellerette, Norwalk Historical Society and Susan Gilgore, Lockwood Mathews Mansion; Patsy Brescia, David Westermore, Craig Flaherty, Anthony Gaglio, Ken Bronson, Rob Obchino

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Laird called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. A quorum was present.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM 7/22/2020**

**\*\*MR. CHANDLER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES  
\*\*MS. CUZZONE SECONDED THE MOTION  
\*\*MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**REPORTS; BOARDS**

**A. Norwalk Historical Society; Diane Jellerette**

This time last year was the last in person event. They learned to go virtual very very quickly. They have done about 7 virtual events in 2020. The Halloween event was made into a movie. She wants to skip 2020, but the elevator project began in the fall in the museum. It's been going really smoothly. Putting in a new kitchen at the same time. People can come into the museum by appointment only. It is creating a lot of dust. They are COVID ready for when they can open. Most events will be virtual. They did have an event in January. There is a Black History month event in February. Next month they will have someone who wrote/photographed oystering in Norwalk. In March there will also be an event about witching. The school programs went virtual and will continue virtually this year. Looking to create short videos on the history of Norwalk. They received a \$35,000 grant to assist with some of the projects. The jail exhibit will be sometime next year.

## **B. Lockwood Mathews Mansion; Susan Gilore**

Ms. Brescia presented. The Mansion is in big time construction right now which was originally discussed in 2008, with the Trustees raising money. They are trying to make the mansion a year round facility. They are in the design phase currently. It is a \$7,500,000 project. They received \$5,000,000 from the state and the other \$2,500,000 from the City of Norwalk. It means moving out of the building for two years and operating outside of the building. They are working on a program about a pandemic a century ago. Lockwood Mathews Mansion came in #5 from the USA Today top holiday exhibits in the country. They beat out Mt. Vernon and Newport .It shows the significance of Norwalk history. They open up in April again for the season. They need volunteers to help move items out of the mansion. They need to take pictures and catalog everything and figure out what type of storage they need. They need working space for the staff. They accomplished a national CAP this year. There was a 100 page report done on how they can preserve the items and the building. Maybe the architects can do a virtual presentation. They are getting lights, heat, fire protection, all mechanical.

## **REPORTS**

### **A. Buildings**

Mr. Westmore spoke on this. He oversees all of the buildings and all of the budgeting. Elevator project going well. Met with the DOT and they are going to restore the original fencing on West Avenue by the Lockwood Mathews Mansion. This is one of many mitigation projects stemming from the Walk Bridge. It is looking really really good. Hopefully it will be done by the end of March. This is a \$3,000,000 project being paid for by the DOT. The signs for Lockwood Mathews Mansion will get installed this year. The other big thing is the Redevelopment Commission and the Historical Commission is developing a Master Plan for Mathews Park. The Historical Commission kicked in \$10,000. They located a vendor – Heritage Resources. They are the leading firm in the world for historical work.

On the capital budget side. They submitted \$550,000 of capital expenses. The finance department cut the \$255,000. The biggest project is the restoration of the jail and he was asking for \$100,000 but is only getting \$25,000. So this will hold up the project by probably another year. They asked for \$180,000 for projects in Mathews Park some of that is moving expenses. Also the restoration of the carriage house. Then he recommended \$50,000 for Mill Hill Park and that was approved.

Ms. Brescia made a comment about the fencing. That originally belonged to Mathews Mansion and they gifted it to the City. It's how the process works.

**B. Cemeteries; Ms. Cuzzone**

Ms. Cuzzone is not aware of anything, but is sure something will need to be done with the weather pattern we are having.

**C. Finance**

They actually don't have anyone for finance but Mr. Westermore said he already went over the capital budget. He hasn't heard anything yet on the operating budget. Should be fine the budget is next to nothing anyway.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no new business to be discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. 3 East Wall Street; Viking Construction**

Mr. Flaherty presented on this with the sharing of his screen. The owner of the property is Anthony Gaglio, and he is on the call as well. Showed other pictures of other properties, similar to the thinking for 3 East Wall Street. They preserve the history. They would like to use the same process as they did for the 3 Elmcrest Terrace project.

The Morgan- Lockwood House. This house was built around 1870. They provided a history of the house. The house was changed into the way it looks like today, not the way it was originally built. Behind the house there is a stable/carriage house. This building isn't even mentioned in any fashion.

There are four books that have been identified as color schemes for Victorian Houses. They want to make it as close to the original color as possible.

Anthony Gaglio went through what they are planning to do to restore the property. Ken Borison the architect went through the project. They evaluated the carriage house. They are looking to remove it, based on the condition.

The new building will be 28 apartments, studios, for the zoning regulations for that part of town. Much more economical with a smaller foot print.

Mr. Flaherty went through the fine print of what is required to keep it has a historical property. A comment was made is to why they would add more density in the historical part of town. The front of the house is about \$800,000 in restoration. They have two applications currently in front of the Zoning Department. They are asking for the Commission's support with this project.

**\*\*MR. CHANDLER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION  
\*\*MS. CUZZONE SECONDED THE MOTION  
\*\*MOTION PASSES (5 FOR, 1 AGAINST MR. JACKSON, 1 ABSTENCION MS.  
GOLDEN)**

**B. Workforce Partners; Plans for 138 Flax Hill & 35 Clay Street**

Mr. Obchino presented. They own three properties on Flax Hill. 2 of the 3 properties have been added to the historical register. They are D zone properties. They are looking for support for the tax leverage to decrease the square footage from 12,000 square feet to 9,000 square feet. They want to make façade improvements, no additions. A letter was sent to Ms. Laird a couple of weeks ago. There are about 20 properties in Norwalk that can take advantage of this. He then shared to letter to be sent to the Zoning Department.

**\*\*MR. CHANDLER MAKES A MOTION TO HAVE DISCUSSION AND TAKE ACTION  
\*\*MS. CUZZONE SECONDED**

Mr. Chandler thinks the proposal is too broad. It needs more to it. They would like to see it on a case by case basis. They would like to see plans. A clarification was given. All of the properties on the list is where we want density in Norwalk.

**\*\*MOTION PASSES (6 FOR, 0 AGAINST, 1 ABSTENSION)**

**C. Lockwood-Mathews Mansion; Grant Allocation**

Mr. Westermore presented. This is an agreement between the mansion and the City on how the reimbursement is going to take effect. Nothing needs to be done with it, they just need to be aware of it. \$5,000,000 is a grant to the mansion. The \$2,500,000 is from the City. Mr. Westermore read the language to the Commission.

The City is getting a partial staff person to have going forward for the Historical Commission.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\*MR. JACKSON MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN  
\*\*MR. CHANDLER SECONDED THE MOTION  
\*\*MOTION PASSED UNANIMIOUSLY**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Bromark  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk  
Historical Commission  
February 3, 2021  
Page 4 of 4