

**Norwalk Museum Restructuring Committee
Minutes of Meeting/Tuesday, June 26, 2012**

Attendance: Patsy Brescia; James Clark; Judith Bacal; Mary-Alice Fitzgerald; Jim Brown; David Westmoreland, co-chair; David Park, acting secretary; Scott Wands.

Guests: Ralph Bloom, city historian; Peter Bondi, chairman of Norwalk Historical Commission.

David Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.

**Mary-Alice Fitzgerald moved to approve the minutes of June 12, 2012. Motion APPROVED.
Scott Wands abstained.**

David Westmoreland introduced Peter Bondi. Peter Bondi discussed his own written proposal for managing the Norwalk Museum archives and collections. Peter Bondi discussed that the archives need to be kept intact with the collections and that he has spoken to Common Council members on an individual basis and he claims they would never approve the archives being moved somewhere else other than the Norwalk Museum. Peter Bondi has spoken to the finance director, Tom Hamilton, on negotiating a lease for smaller space at the Norwalk Museum and his proposal has been presented to the Land Use Committee of the Common Council. David Westmoreland questioned what Tom Hamilton may be negotiating and will call him to confirm the details. Peter Bondi's proposal includes eliminating the gift shop area and basement storage but keeping the upstairs area including the archives and vault. Peter Bondi suggested that volunteers from local organizations could manage the archives and collections until a new organization is formed at a later date such as a 501 c 3 that could also raise funds. Peter Bondi believes that his proposal could be accomplished within the budget given by Tom Hamilton. Committee members questioned why they had never heard of this proposal before. Peter Bondi commented that the proposal is moving forward, first with the Norwalk Historical Commission and then with the Common Council. Committee members discussed the idea of moving the archives to the Norwalk Public Library. Peter Bondi does not think the library staff is qualified to manage the archives. James Clark commented to Peter Bondi that the committee has been charged with the responsibility of doing what is best for Norwalk regarding the staffing and management of collections and archives and housing the archives at the library would mean that the archives could be available to the public worldwide on the internet. Scott Wand commented to Peter Bondi that politics is not part of the process that the committee will consider in making recommendations to the city. Judith Bacal reiterated the responsibilities of the committee and suggested that the committee will need to make a good presentation with documentation when making recommendations to the city. Peter Bondi asked Ralph Bloom on his opinion of synergies between the archives and collections. Ralph Bloom disagreed that the archives and collections need to be kept together, they could be separate and there is one file in the office, not the archives, that should be kept with the collections. Ralph Bloom commented that the archives can exist on its' own and the Norwalk Library has the well qualified staff and longer open hours. Ralph Bloom commented that donations to the archives are not related to collections and exhibits. Ralph Bloom commented that the Norwalk Museum gift shop should remain open to raise needed funds. Ralph Bloom commented that the Norwalk Library has existing archives that can be merged with the museum archives and there is plenty of staff. Ralph Bloom recommends that if the museum is consolidated it should be to the ground floor only. Patsy Brescia is concerned at answering the question of who owns what property at the Norwalk Museum including items that may belong to the Friends group and this question will be asked again in the future by concerned individuals and groups. Peter Bondi repeated that his proposal is good and within budget and left the room. The committee thanked him for his input.

Jim Brown distributed a draft proposal for managing the archives at the Norwalk Library and discussed that the library director and board of trustees has seen the proposal and are supportive of it. The library

board had a discussion on the needed funding for the added responsibility of the archives at the library but voted to approve it without any qualifications. Operating and capital costs associated with the archives will need to be approximated for committees purposes.

Committee members discussed the site selection analysis that has been created by Judith Bacal. A new matrix has been created with the number of sites narrowed down after several sites have been eliminated as not practical for a variety of reasons. Input for the analysis should be sent to Judith Bacal.

Jim Brown discussed using smaller space at the museum for collections and exhibits. Committee members discussed the pros and cons of the Lockwood House and Norwalk Museum building. Jim Brown will get more budget numbers for library operating and capital costs including any needed renovations and the possibility of hiring a cataloging company.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 10 at 5:30 PM.

Other Business: Patsy Brescia commented the the Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum board of trustees have approved displaying an art exhibit at the mansion from Norwalk Museum artwork. Patsy Brescia will send an addendum to the June 12 minutes to Erin Halsey for inclusion at the next meeting. Patsy Brescia has suggested that Frank Zullo address the committee. David Park has suggested that a representative of the Western Connecticut Convention & Visitors Bureau address the committee to help and advise with marketing.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

David W. Park
acting secretary