

**CITY OF NORWALK
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
JUNE 27, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Peter Bondi, Chair; Suzanne Betts; Eric Chandler;
Holly Cuzzone; John Kurtzman; David Westmoreland;
Charles Yost

GUESTS: Patsy Brescia, Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum; Leigh
Grant, Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bondi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES - May 23, 2012

The following correction was made to the minutes:

Add Mr. Kimmel's name under attendance.

**** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS
CORRECTED
** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. YOST)**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Bondi reported that the Museum continues to be closed until further notice. He has had to go to the Museum for various reasons. Yesterday Ms. Gunn and Ms. Soltes were permitted to return to the Museum to retrieve their personal items. Work continues on coming up with a solution to keep the Museum alive.

REPORTS - BOARDS

A. Norwalk Historical Society

Mr. Westmoreland highlighted his written report dated June 27, 2012. He reported that the Norwalk Historical Society completed their 40th annual Little Red Schoolhouse Program for 3rd graders in Norwalk. This was their most fully attended program, with 800 children attending from Norwalk and surrounding areas.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that they received the final report regarding

restoration and interpretation for the first floor of the Smith Street Jail. He said that the report will be used as the basis for planning the restoration and developing the space for exhibits. The Norwalk Historical Society sponsored a **cemetery tour of St. Paul's Burying Ground on June 9th** as part of their 275th anniversary festival. Costumed re-enactors presented the stories of ten people buried in the graveyard.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that they opened their Norwalk and Civil War exhibit this past weekend. The exhibit presents new research regarding slave owners in Norwalk as well as African American soldiers from Norwalk.

Mr. Westmoreland said that there are several upcoming events over the summer and this fall.

B. Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum

Ms. Brescia reported that their Building Committee met. They are about to go out to bid on phase one. She said that phase one includes mechanical upgrades. She said that this item will go before the Common Council on August 14th. She said that they will start the second phase bid process about a month later which will include the elevator and restoration of the bathroom to make it ADA compliant. The elevator will be smaller and lighter which will result in a significant cost savings. The third phase will be a new entryway into the basement.

Ms. Brescia talked about the roof leak. Mr. Bondi said he will contact the roofer. Ms. Brescia asked him to keep Mr. Draper informed. Mr. Bondi said that he and Mr. Lo met with the roofer who is familiar with the roof.

Ms. Brescia said that a new issue is that there is a leak in the basement in the area of the restroom. Mr. Bondi said that he will ask Mr. Mauro to look at it.

Ms. Brescia reported that tourism is up; they are getting visitors from all over the United States, Canada and Europe. She said that she feels it is a result of the great publicity they have gotten for the Titanic exhibit and their partnership with Mystic Seaport.

Mr. Westmoreland talked about the lighting switch box and said that it will be **located behind the wall in Mathew's Park and will be paid for by the Department of Public Works.**

Mr. Westmoreland talked about the elevator at Lockwood Mathews Mansion and said that it was important to understand the complications about the elevator. He described the three options that were available and said that the one chosen was made so that the foundation would not be compromised.

Ms. Brescia said that Parks and Recreation have started restoring the great laws. She said that she is very concerned about traffic flow and noted that signing will be huge for traffic control. In a meeting with Stepping Stones Museum for Children, they indicated they plan to have a solar train go around the Park.

REPORTS

A. Buildings

Mr. Bondi provided an update of Mr. Mauro's projects. He noted that they were still dealing with damage at the Gate Lodge from Hurricane Irene. He said that he believes the City is waiting for the funding to come through from FEMA.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that the gutters were installed on the Town House and the Fitch Law Office. Once they are painted, they will blend in with the rest of the building. He said that he is working on getting quotes to design an ADA compliant bathroom at the Town House. He is also working on getting painting quotes for the Little Red Schoolhouse and for quotes to restore the porch on the Gate Lodge.

Mr. Bondi said that since there is not a staff person for the Commission, he will work with the City's Finance Department to create next year's capital budget.

B. Cemetery

Mr. Westmoreland reported that Ms. Laird selected 20 headstones at Pine Island Cemetery that need to be conserved. The report was sent to Mr. Foley so he can send out RFPs.

C. Finance

Mr. Bondi said that he has been collecting the bills and will have the mail switched to the Finance Department at City Hall.

D. Norwalk Museum

Discuss and Approve the Returning of Loaned Items

Mr. Bondi said that some people who have loaned items to the Museum would like their items returned. He said that items were returned to Ms. Soltes and to

Mr. Corrently. They each signed off on their items. He said that the biggest item they have now is the oyster exhibit. He said that Mr. Assodorian loaned the Museum, sherds, a stoneware crock with a wooden lid, a restored yellow and green pie plate and three buttons in a frame that he found on Pine Street and would like those returned. Mr. Westmoreland asked if the Museum has loan papers. Mr. Bondi said that he will have to consult with Ms. Gunn. He said that if the items were accepted, that would mean they were donated and not loaned. Ms. Grant said that she believes that the burden or proof lies with the person who wants the items returned.

Mr. Bondi said that he wanted the Commission to know that the oyster exhibit will be coming down and the items returned to the owners. He said that there are some sports trophies at the Museum and people have not picked them up. He said that Ms. Gunn contacted people multiple times to pick up their items.

Mr. Chandler suggested creating a general procedure and then dealing with specific issues as needed.

**** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO RETURN ITEMS TO OWNERS WITH VALID LOAN AGREEMENTS. HE WILL PROVIDE A MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COMMISSION.**
**** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. CHANDLER MOVED THAT EACH REQUEST TO RETURN AN ITEM WITHOUT DOCUMENTATION WILL BE BROUGHT TO THE COMMISSION FOR DISCUSSION. IF AN ITEM IS RETURNED IT WILL BE LISTED AND SIGNED OFF BY THE CHAIRMAN AND ONE OTHER COMMISSIONER AND PHOTOGRAPHED**
**** MR. WESTMORELAND SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Report on Mayor's Museum Restructuring Committee

Mr. Westmoreland reported that the Committee is continuing to do their due diligence. They have not reached any conclusions. Their next meeting is on July 10th at 5:30 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Grant requested that the Museum loan the Norwalk Association of Silvermine

Homeowners five paintings for an upcoming exhibit in September. She said that they have hired a professional crew to hang the paintings and the paintings will be guarded. Ms. Grant said that the Silvermine Art Guild is extending their insurance to cover the paintings. She also asked to be allowed to have a Charles Reiffel print conserved at the Naples Studio.

Ms. Grant talked about the cataloguing project she was working on at the Museum and said that she would like to continue, but said that she needs Ms. Gunn and Ms. Soltes to assist her. Mr. Bondi told Ms. Grant that he would love to have her continue the catalogue project. Mr. Westmoreland said that he will contact Mr. Hamilton to see if they can have access to the computers and the data base.

**** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO ALLOW MS. GRANT TO TAKE
THE CHARLES REIFFEL PRINT TO BE CONSERVED A THE NAPLES
STUDIOS**

**** MS. CUZZONE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO LOAN THE FOLLOWING
PAINTINGS TO THE NORWALK ASSOCIATION OF SILVERMINE
HOMEOWNERS FOR THEIR EXHIBIT ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2012
THROUGH SEPTEMBER 16, 2012 PENDING INSPECTION OF THE
FACILITY AND RECEIPT OF PROOF OF INSURANCE COVERAGE**

**HARRY TOWNSEND
PUTNAM BRINLEY
CHARLES REIFFEL
CLARA DAVIDSON
JOHNNY GRUELLE**

**** MS. BETTS SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services