

**CITY OF NORWALK
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 26, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Peter Bondi, Chair; John Kurtzman; Kathryn Martino;
David Westmoreland; Charles Yost (7:27 p.m.)

OTHERS: Patsy Brescia, Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum;
Jim Whitney and Irene Dixon, Western CT Convention and
Visitors Bureau

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bondi called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES – August 1, 2012

**** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS
PRESENTED**

**** MR. KURTZMAN SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Bondi reported that he and Mr. Westmoreland attended the Silvermine Homeowners Association's recent exhibit and house tour. He said that the Silvermine Homeowner's Association had a Charles Reiffel painting restored by Chris Naples. Mr. Reiffel was a Silvermine artist. In addition, Ms. Grant and other donors paid for the \$1,200 frame. The painting was appraised at \$50,000 before being conserved.

REPORTS – BOARDS

NORWALK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr. Westmoreland reviewed his written report as follows:

1. Our Civil War Barbecue held on August 18th was an unqualified success with over 500 attendees. Eight local restaurants provided barbecue tastings and dessert. A Civil War encampment with re-enactors was on-site during the event (Company A of the 11th Regiment Connecticut Volunteer Infantry).
2. On September 16th we held a lecture on the Connecticut 17th Regiment, by historian Keith Millar, with a focus on Norwalk members and the battles they participated in during the Civil War.
3. On October 26th and 27th we will again present our "Haunted Halloween Lantern Ghost Tour" of the Burying Ground at Mill Hill. Re-enactors will present a mix of "Norwalk Ghost Stories" and true tales of former Norwalk citizens. The

Norwalk Paranormal Research Group will present their evidence of possible paranormal incidents that were found in the Town House earlier this year. "Ghostly Grounds" will sell coffee and other refreshments from their hearse parked in the lot, and other refreshments will be served in the Schoolhouse. Admission is free to those who show their advanced purchase tickets to Lockwood Mathews Haunted Halloween Costume party!

4. Madeleine Eckert will present "Lincoln and Norwalk: Some Interesting Connections" in conjunction with the Norwalk Community College's exhibit on Lincoln. The lecture is at 2 p.m. on November 11th at the Town House.
5. Our annual "Evening of Historic Proportions" fundraiser will be a holiday theme this year and will be held at the Town House on Thursday, December 6th.
6. Our executive director, Diane Jellerette, will participate in the Norwalk Leadership Institute's program sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce beginning next week and ending in December.

Thank you for your continued support of the Norwalk Historical society

Respectfully submitted,
David Westmoreland, President

LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION MUSEUM

Ms. Brescia reviewed her written report as follows:

Dear Commissioners:

- We reported last month that LMMM was preparing an application to the state Historic Preservation Office for a \$200,000 construction grant which will be used to complete the next phase of our mechanical upgrades and will include an ADA access to the mansion's basement. We are completing the application for a late October deadline. The necessary City agencies have been contacted and the resolutions are in place.
- The City and LMMM have also awarded the first phase, which is the electrical contracts, to Electric Systems Corp. of Southington, CT. Base contract of \$182,800. The City's Law Department is executing the contracts. We expect work to commence shortly.
- Last Sunday we held our annual flea market. Once again it was a major success for LMMM.
- The Recreation and Parks Department have finished the grading and elimination of the driveway to the east of the Mansion. Parking continues to be an issue in the Park.
- It is our understanding that David Scott Parker Architects are completing the specification for the roof/leak repair work. We are all hoping that this project will be completed as soon as possible so as not to incur any additional damage to the building. We hope the Commission will continue to focus on this need.
- We have several functions planned for the fall/winter season as follows:

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Annual Antiques weekend: October 20th and 21st
First Halloween event: Saturday, October 27th
Holiday exhibit: opening November 23rd
Lecture series
Art show: Opening October 17th
Reception on November 1st
Holiday Open House on December 16th

Respectfully submitted,
Patsy Brescia, LMMM Chairman

REPORTS

BUILDINGS

PROPOSED BY THE WESTERN CT CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU TO SHARE SPACE AT THE GATE HOUSE WITH THE CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Mr. Whitney reported that they had the Visitor's Center staffed during the busy season. A part time person was hired to coordinate the volunteers. They have been working to find a way to occupy the building and defray utility costs and came up with an agreement with the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County. He said that the lease with the City of Norwalk permits this use.

Mr. Westmoreland asked Mr. Whitney if the Cultural Alliance will have a problem with visitors looking for information during the winter when the Visitor's Center is not staffed. Mr. Whitney said that they will continue to staff the Visitor's Center.

Mr. Yost joined the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Mr. Westmoreland asked if there were any plans to restore the porch and remove the addition because it is historically inaccurate. He said that doing this would move them back into the original building. Mr. Whitney said that he would have to find out how doing that would impact their plans.

Mr. Whitney said that their oil company lost their contract with the City and asked what to do. Mr. Westmoreland said that he will talk to Mr. Lo.

- ** MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL BY THE WESTERN CT CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU TO SHARE SPACE AT THE GATE HOUSE WITH THE CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY**
- ** MR. KURTZMAN SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DISCUSS AND APPROVE THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES FOR ADA

COMPLIANT ACCESSIBILITY TO MILL HILL

Mr. Westmoreland explained the project. He said that Faesy Smith Architects were the lowest bidder. They have done work for the City.

- ** **MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES OF FAESY-SMITH ARCHITECTS FOR ADA COMPLIANT ACCESSIBILITY TO MILL HILL AT A COST OF \$1,200 (ACCOUNT# 09116310 5777 C0374 MILL HILL BUILDINGS**
- ** **MR. YOST SECONDED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DISCUSS AND APPROVE THE GATE HOUSE PORCH PROJECT

Mr. Westmoreland explained the project. He said that Faesy-Smith Architects were the low bidder.

- ** **MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES OF FAESY-SMITH ARCHITECTS FOR THE GATE HOUSE PORCH PROJECT AT A COST OF \$4,200 (ACCOUNT # 09076310 5777 C0403 GATE LODGE)**
- ** **MS. MARTINO SECONDED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DISCUSS AND APPROVE THE WELL HOUSE, SCHOOL HOUSE, FITCH LAW OFFICE ROOF WORK

Mr. Westmoreland explained the project. The Commissioners reviewed the bids.

- ** **MR. WESTMORELAND MOVED TO APPROVE PHIL'S MAIN ROOFING FOR THE WELL HOUSE, SCHOOL HOUSE, AND FITCH LAW OFFICE ROOF WORK AT A COST OF \$5,810 (ACCOUNT # 09126310 5777 C0511 MILL HILL MATHEWS PARK REMEDIATION)**
- ** **MR. KURTZMAN SECONDED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

UPDATE ON THE SMITH STREET JAIL PROJECT

Mr. Bondi reported that Mr. Mauro will start working on the roof as soon as CL&P completes their work. He said that Mr. Mauro has also been working at Lockwood Mathews Mansion on window and fire door replacement. Mr. Westmoreland said that Don Eleck was hired to bring service from the street pole to the Jail.

DISCUSS THE GATE HOUSE PLASTER REPAIRS

Mr. Bondi reported that they were only able to get two quotes to repair the damage sustained following Hurricane Irene. He said that they need three quotes and hopes that Mr. Sgobbol will be able to help them write the specs. He said that it is very difficult to find people who can do decorative plaster work.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that Juliani completed their painting project at the Little Red Schoolhouse. He said that he is very happy with their work. He said that the water problem seems to be fixed as a result of gutters being put on the Fitch House and cutting some trees.

UPDATE ON THE LEAK REPAIR SPECIFICATIONS AT LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION

This was discussed in Ms. Brescia's report.

CEMETERY

UPDATE ON CEMETERY REPAIRS AT PINE ISLAND

Mr. Westmoreland reported that he met with the person from Ageis Restauro to identify stones. He said that they will start working on site next week for 10 days rather than bringing the stones to his laboratory. He said that he issued an RFP for exterior ADA work at Mill Hill.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that last week's storm knocked over two stones.

FINANCE

Mr. Westmoreland reported that this is the third month of the fiscal year. He said that Mr. Hamilton is working with him to fix the budget, because the rent on this building was not included in the budget.

NORWALK MUSEUM

DISCUSS AND APPROVE THE LOAN OF A PAINTING TO THE SILVERMINE ARTS GUILD FOR THEIR UPCOMING EXHIBIT

Mr. Bondi explained that the Director of the Silvermine Arts Guild as to use a Charles Reiffel painting in an exhibit. Mr. Bondi said that he will have to fill out loan forms and provide insurance. *Antique and Arts Weekly* plan to do a story on this painting, which was recently on loan to the Silvermine Neighborhood Association.

- ** MR. YOST MOVED TO APPROVE THE LOAN OF A PAINTING TO THE SILVERMINE ARTS GUILD FOR THEIR UPCOMING EXHIBIT**
- ** MR. WESTMORELAND SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Westmoreland said that Redevelopment met with the Planning Committee regarding land disposition for the Head of the Harbor project at the bottom of Mill Hill. He said that Mr. DiScala's design builds 35 spaces on Mill Hill property. He said he is ok with sharing the parking spaces as long as they are not dedicated to anyone. He said that Zoning has to give approval for both Mill Hill and DiScala to be able to count those spaces as part of their required parking.

Mr. Westmoreland said that he is going to try and engage Redevelopment and the Planning Committee and will write a letter from the Historical Commission to them. A discussion ensued.

The Commissioners discussed the status of this building.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. YOST MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** MR. KURTZMAN SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services