

**CITY OF NORWALK
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MAY 22, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: David Westmoreland, Chair; Holly Cuzzone, Vice
Chair;
Suzanne Betts; Eric Chandler; Thom Dunlap; Bruce Kimmel;
Charles Yost (7:07 p.m.)

OTHERS: Laura McCarthy, Norwalk Museum Collection Manager;
Patsy Brescia, LMMM; Timothy Sheehan,
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency; John Wazuluski, David
Scott Parker

CALL TO ORDER

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

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

March 27, 2013

The following correction was made to the March 27, 2013 minutes:

Isabel Bullan should be corrected to: Isabel Ballen

**** MR. CHANDLER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF MARCH 27,
2013 AS CORRECTED
** MS. CUZZONE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

April 24, 2013

The following correction was made to the April 24, 2013 minutes:

Correct date in the footer from March 27, 2013 to April 24, 2013

**** MS. CUZZONE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF APRIL 24,
2013 AS CORRECTED
** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present this evening.

REPORTS

A. BUILDINGS

REVIEW AND APPROVE PHASE II CONSTRUCTION PLAN FOR ADA ACCESS, ELEVATOR AND BATHROOM RENOVATIONS AT LMMM. REFER TO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE AND CITY OF NORWALK PURCHASING

Mr. Wazuluski reviewed the Phase II construction plan for ADA access, elevator and bathroom renovations.

Mr. Yost joined the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Mr. Wazuluski presented the three components of the plan. The estimated total is \$548,000 with a contingency of 15%. Mr. Kimmel asked about the 15% contingency. Mr. Wazuluski said that they anticipate the project will come in lower; however, once they get inside the building, they do not know what they will find. He reviewed the construction schedule and said that they expect to commence construction in January 2014.

Mr. Wazuluski talked about the limited access elevator. It can hold 1,400 lbs and is 4 ft. x 4 ft. Ms. Brescia said that the funding is in place; the money for the elevator has been in a CD for 10 years. She said that they spent a long time deciding where to put the elevator. The location chosen is the least intrusive.

Mr. Westmoreland said that he sat on the Facilities Committee and the plan is compliant with the Master Plan.

**** MS. BETTS MOVED TO APPROVE THE PHASE II CONSTRUCTION PLAN FOR ADA ACCESS, ELEVATOR AND BATHROOM RENOVATIONS AT LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION MUSEUM AND TO REFER THIS ITEM TO THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE AND TO THE CITY OF NORWALK PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**
**** MR. KIMMEL SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Westmoreland's report, dated May 22, 2013 is as follows:

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Work continues on the move of the Norwalk Museum collection. The inventory and move of the paintings and other framed art collection has been completed, along with the "Lockwood Library books." Packing and moving the textile, china, and pottery collections has begun.

The "gift shop" inventory has been boxed and moved to the Lockwood House, along with a large quantity of office supplies.

I completed cleaning out the two rooms of the former curator's office. Hundreds of collection and archive items were found in the piles and boxes of paper, along with several more un-cashed donation checks dating as far back as 2003. Additionally, hundreds of "to be accessioned" donations were found. Approximately 90% of the donations have no documentation with them, which really compromises the objects historical value. Many other un-accessioned donation items were also found in the second floor conference room as well as in the archive vault. It is clear that control has been lost, given the high number of un-accessioned donations as well as the boxes and boxes of items pulled from the archives and not re-filed.

I have completed separating museum records from historical Commission records. The Historical Commission records and files have been moved to the room in the basement of the Lockwood House that will be used as the Commission's office going forward. The museum reference library books have been boxed and moved, with the exception of one cabinet that is blocked by the pottery shards.

We have begun to move non-collection office furniture items as well. All letter size file cabinets, non-collection typewriters and some of the office furniture is being placed in the City's next surplus sale.

A number of loaned items have been found and we are working to contact the owners regarding return. Unfortunately, there has been no sign so far of the Oyster industry related items loaned by Don Bell, though the area outside of the former Curator's office has yet to be sorted.

Finally, a note of thanks to a tremendous volunteer: Lew Marino, who originally contacted us about concern over times that were donated by the Laurel Athletic Club, has been working with us several days a week, assisting me with packing and moving non-collection items.

REPORTS - BOARDS

A. NORWALK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ms. Betts report, dated May 22, 2013 is as follows:

The Norwalk Historical Society's Little Red Schoolhouse program is well underway, with a full schedule of 3rd grade classes coming to Mill Hill. In addition to the participation by the Norwalk 3rd graders, we are very pleased to have two classes from Bridgeport participate in this year's program. The LRS program runs through June 14th.

Our upcoming events for June include a wine tasting on Thursday, June 6th (postponed from an earlier date), featuring speaker Mark Ancona and wines from Fountainhead Wines. Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door.

The Society is also hosting our first-ever juried art show, Secret Norwalk, beginning June 20th. We have over sixty entries from across a variety of media. The opening reception for Secret Norwalk will be held at the Town House on Friday, June 21st from 6 -8 p.m.

The Society looks forward to seeing the Commissioners at our upcoming events. Tickets and additional information are available on our website: <http://norwalkhistoricalsociety.org>.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne H. Betts
President
Norwalk Historical Society

B. LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION MUSEUM

Ms. Brescia's report dated May 22, 2013 is as follows:

Dear Commissioners:

The full season is upon us and we are experiencing increased tours for our current exhibit "What Is It". We hope you will have some time over the summer to view the exhibit. It is very impressive.

The recent restoration of the entrance foyer fireplace is now complete and is very noticeable. The work was done by Thomas Franks from Milan, Italy who also installed the "male" and "female" heads on both sides of the rotunda staircase archway. The rotunda side received the original heads and the inside elevation received replicas that the Trustees had created. It is very interesting to see the pieces come together as we are able to raise the funds to accomplish these projects. The fireplace restoration which cost approximately \$32,000 was financed by donations from our Trustees.

Phase I of our mechanical upgrade project has been completed and the new electrical service is connected to our building. The last piece of this phase is for CL&P to remove several poles along our driveway. The City has begun to prepare the bid documents for Phase II. We hope that the bidding process will be completed over the summer months and actual construction to commence when we close around the first of the year. The final plans for this work are on your agenda this evening. We appreciate your attention to this process.

I believe you are aware that we had an intrusion into the Mansion a couple of weeks ago. Our staff has been interviewing new security companies in order to prevent any further incidences. We have also met with Chief Kulhawik who is helping with this problem. Current estimates for a new security system are approximately \$25,000. We have made an application to the 1772 Foundation for a matching grant of \$15,000 to address this financial need. Of course this expense was not anticipated in our current budget; however, the Board of Trustees is focused on finding funds to resolve this concern. Your help would be most welcomed. The exterior lighting surrounding the building is also under review.

Thank you for moving the roof repair project forward. The bidders were at the Mansion last week for inspection of the project prior to bidding.

We would also like to bring to your attention that the driveway to the Mansion has several potholes that need to be addressed.

Also the elimination of our driveway access to the previous road that was in front of the Police Station is an issue that we need to address. Our driveway is now truncated at the new lawn area and not connected to the curb cut that is located at the new paved area which leads to the south parking lot. We have always used this driveway for events and for fire safety. The driveway needs to be connected to the curb cut.

Last evening the Mansion was the focus of an event at the Stamford Hilton Hotel attended by Governor Malloy and over 350 architects, designers and builders. The event was a kickoff venue for Connecticut Cottages & Gardens innovation in Design Awards Dinner. CC&C is instituting a program to highlight Connecticut Historic buildings called Iconic Cottages & Gardens which was inspired by the recent refurbishing of the Governor's mansion. The Lockwood Mathews Mansion is the first iconic property to be so honored. Proceeds from the event's raffle will be designated to the restoration of the music room. We are so grateful for this honor and support.

Respectfully submitted,

Patsy Brescia, Board Chair
Susan Gilgore, Executive Director

REPORTS - Continued

A. BUILDINGS

Mr. Westmoreland's report dated May 22, 2013 is as follows:

Tony has been busy with assisting with box building and rack assembly for the move and has completed several small repairs at the Gate Lodge and Mill Hill. He continues to work on fabricating the window frames for the jail. He replaced rotted floorboards in the entry of the Fitch and is replacing a small section of rotted wood next to the back door of the Fitch. While not historically correct, we have decided to install "sweeps" on the bottom of both Fitch doors to help keep out rainwater and leaves. They will not be visible from the exterior.

New exterior lights for the Town House, approved three years ago by the Commission, have been ordered and should be installed in a couple of weeks. Tony will be working to weather-strip the front doors of the Town House, as well as replacing the metal "grill" that covers an opening into the Town House office cellar with a window. A bathroom water pipe that is near the grill froze this past winter, and leaves and rain blow into the cellar through the window.

Finance has told us to proceed with the repair of the Smith Street Jail in advance of receiving the FEMA funds. I am contacting architects to obtain quotes to develop a specification in order to go out to bid for the repairs.

The Lockwood Mathews Mansion roof leak repair project has gone out to bid. While we have a \$100,000 budget, we are expecting to not be able to complete all the specified repairs within the \$100 k budget, but will at least know how much in additional funds will be required for next year's capital budget. Bids are due back on May 1st. We will need to hold a special meeting to select a bid next week prior to the next Land Use committee meeting. It is imperative that we get this project underway in order to complete as much work as possible prior to next winter.

During the walkthrough for the leak-repair bids, I noticed a small number of exterior repairs that need to be completed. I am working with Patsy and Susy to come up with a process to keep a list of needed repairs that can be assigned to Tony or put out to bid as we have the funds.

Gill & Gill is nearing completion of the construction drawings and specifications for the exterior ADA access plan for Mill Hill. I hope to have this out to bid in June.

Faesey-Smith is also nearing completion of the drawings and specifications for the Town House ADA bathroom and the reconstruction of the Gate Lodge Porch. Note on the drawings that the trim detail of the porch to be reconstructed is different than the existing porch, which also appears to be historically correct from the photos we have.

We have decided at this time to not pursue the demolition of the addition that was used by the Visitor's Center. Recently uncovered historical photographs indicate there was an existing addition. The addition was expanded sometime in the past twenty or thirty years to accommodate the Visitor's Center. As the Fairfield County Cultural Alliance has occupied all of the Gate Lodge, and the Western Connecticut Visitor's Center is in the additional space, there would be nowhere for them to move to. Both are great tenants and assets to Norwalk. As time and funding allow, I may have Tony replace the T-111 siding with board and batten siding similar to the original addition, but the longer term solution requires additional thought.

B. CEMETERY

Mr. Westmoreland reported that another Eagle Scout would like to do a project at Pine Island Cemetery.

C. FINANCE

Ms. Betts said that she did not receive the financial report from the City in time .

D. NORWALK MUSEUM

Review and Approve Pottery Shards Study Collection and Shard Disposition Plan

The Commissioners moved into the Conference Room to view several containers filled with pottery shards. Ms. Cuzzone that she was able to document that there are six different pottery collections. She bagged and tagged the shards as best she could. She said that she found shards in every room of the Museum. The largest amounts were from the Smith Street Pottery site. She also found shards from 65 Water Street, Pine Street and West Avenue/Gardner Street. There was also a collection of oyster shells.

Ms. Cuzzone said that there are two pre-historic pots - they are at least 3,000 years old. She said that she will look for a conservator for the pots.

Ms. Cuzzone recommended keeping the collection of different ceramics from Smith Street, Water Street and Pine Street and discard the rest. She said that she believes an abatement company will need to be contacted. Ms. Betts said that there may be more information about the shards on the Norwalk Museum computers that were taken to City Hall. She said that she will check as soon as she gets the files.

**** MR. KIMMEL MOVED TO AUTHORIZE MS. CUZZONE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE POTTERY SHARD STUDY AND POTTERY SHARD DISPOSITION PLAN**
**** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW AND APPROVE APPLYING FOR CT PRESERVATION TRUST'S "VIBRANT COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE" PLANNING GRANT FOR \$50,000 TO BE USED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTRUCTION PLANS FOR THE MATHEWS PARK SECTION OF THE WEST AVENUE CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN AND PINE ISLAND PATHS. GRANT WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mr. Sheehan explained that the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency has been in the process of developing a master plan for the West Avenue corridor. He said this component came from concerns as to how the master plan addresses public parks. Mr. Sheehan said that five communities will be awarded grants.

Mr. Sheehan gave an overview of the plan. He said that the front of Lockwood Mathews Mansion is not clearly defined from the street and there are not a lot of amenities that draw attention to the Park. He said that without the grant, it would take longer to incorporate this plan into the master plan. He noted that this is a conceptual plan and there will be community involvement in terms of art going into the Park.

- ** MR. KIMMEL MOVED TO APPROVE APPLYING FOR CT PRESERVATION TRUST 'S "VIBRANT COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE " PLANNING GRANT FOR \$50,000 TO BE USED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTRUCTION PLANS FOR THE MATHEWS PARK SECTION OF THE WEST AVENUE CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN AND PINE ISLAND PATHS. GRANT WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
- ** MS. BETTS SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. REVIEW AND VOTE ON REQUEST FOR DEMOLITION HEARING FOR 12 CROCKET STREET FROM NORWALK PRESERVATION TRUST

This item was continued to the next meeting in order to obtain additional information from Mr. Bryant.

C. SET SPECIAL MEETING DATE FOR REVIEW AND SELECTION OF ROOF REPAIR BIDS FOR LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION LEAK REPAIR PROJECT

The special meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 4, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

- ** MR. CHANDLER MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA**
- ** MR. DUNLAP SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- ** MR. YOST MOVED TO CONSOLIDATE ALL FOUR NORWALK MUSEUM ACCOUNTS (NORWALK MUSEUM, GIFT SHOP, NORWALK CEMETERIES, AND ROGER RITCH MERRITT HOUSE)**

**INTO A SINGLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION SPECIAL REVENUE
FUND ACCOUNT WHICH WOULD HAVE A BALANCE OF \$3,416.36**
**** MR. CHANDLER SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DEMONSTRATION OF COLLECTIONS ARCHIVING AND MOVE
PROCEDURES

Mr. Westmoreland introduced Ms. McCarthy. Ms. McCarthy gave an overview of the collection archiving and move procedures. She thanked Mr. Westmoreland, Ms. Cuzzone and Ms. Betts and noted how incredibly hard they work.

Ms. McCarthy noted that a good inventory has not been done since 2004. She said that the Friends of the Norwalk Museum did a great job labeling items. She explained the process she is using to photograph, document and pack each item. Ms. McCarthy said that the goal is to make sure the right people find the right pieces.

ADJOURNMENT

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

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services