

**CITY OF NORWALK  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 25, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: David Westmoreland, Chair; Holly Cuzzone; Thom Dunlap;  
Bruce Kimmel; Kathryn Martino; Charles Yost;  
Suzanne Betts (7:14 p.m.)

OTHERS: Christina James, SCSU student

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES** – August 28, 2013 Regular Commission Meeting

- \*\* MR. KIMMEL MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED
- \*\* MR. DUNLAP SECONDED
- \*\* MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MS. CUZZONE AND MR. YOST)

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ms. James said that she was covering the meeting for her Journalism class.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** – David Westmoreland

Mr. Westmoreland provided the following report, dated September 25, 2013:

Commissioner Betts and I attended the official “grand opening” of the Norwalk History Room at the Norwalk Public Library on Belden Avenue. The operation there is going well and they have begun indexing items and putting them online. The archives are now available six days per week, including Wednesday evenings. Laura McCarthy continues to work on integrating the digital photographs with the inventory records into PastPerfect to complete the searchable collections inventory database.

The fire department moved out of the Lockwood House last week and I received the keys today. The lease extension for the CCP is being finalized and we are waiting for the Legal department to complete the lease extension for the Lockwood House.

## Reports – Boards

### B. Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum – Patsy Brescia

Mr. Westmoreland reviewed the following report provided by Ms. Brescia and Ms. Gilgore:

Dear Commissioners:

On Sept. 18, 2013, LMMM Chairman Patsy Brescia, Norwalk Historical Commission Chairman, David Westmoreland, Gerald Foley and David Scott Parker Architects led a walkthrough for several roofers to go over the leaks at the Mansion. Hopefully, there will be a bid in a few weeks and the work will commence in early November. As for Phase II of construction, Gerald Foley is currently preparing bid documents and construction is planned to begin in January 2014.

The Norwalk Historical Society will be loaning artwork for an exhibit in the Billiards Room featuring artwork by **Augustus and Richard Smith Daggy**. It will be co-curated by Leigh Grant and Trustee Gail Ingis-Claus. There will be a reception on December 6, 2013, 6 – 8 p. m. The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum is also organizing several events for the Fall Season and among them is a lecture entitled, “**Chromolithography and the Golden Age of Board Games**” on October 9<sup>th</sup> and a two-week long Halloween program *featuring Ghostly Tours, Haunted Mansion Basement tours* and a *Victorian Villains Halloween Party* held on October 26. The Museum will be partnering with the Norwalk Historical Society’s *A Haunting at Mill Hill* lantern tour through the graveyard at Mill Hill Historic Park.

We appreciate all of your help and look forward to more exciting events as well as restoration projects commencing in the coming season.

Respectfully submitted,

Patsy R. Brescia, Chairman  
Susan Gilgore, Executive Director

Mr. Kimmel asked about the scope of work. Mr. Westmoreland explained that it is a reduced scope. The estimated total for the project was over \$400,000, but they have a

\$100,000 budget. He said that the bids are due back on Tuesday and thought it would be too late to put on the Land Use and Building Management agenda, but Mr. Lo said that he would put it on the agenda. Mr. Westmoreland said that he is going to ask to suspend the rules so the Commission can vote on this.

Mr. Kimmel asked Mr. Westmoreland if he had spoken to Mr. Hempstead about holding the next Common Council meeting at Mill Hill. Mr. Westmoreland said that the site is available, but reminded Mr. Hempstead that it is not ADA accessible. Mr. Kimmel said that the next Common Council meeting date is the exact date when Norwalk became incorporated 100 years ago.

Ms. Betts joined the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

## REPORTS

### A. Buildings – David Westmoreland

Mr. Westmoreland provided the following report, dated September 25, 2013:

Tony has been working on various small repairs at the Gate Lodge and Mill Hill. He replaced the broken vent grate with a window in the Town House cellar. He did injure his knee when stepping out of a trailer containing the remains of the Rogers-Ritch Merritt House and was off for a week. We are expecting delivery of the new windows for the front of the Smith Street Jail to be delivered the second week of October. Tony will begin installing these as soon as they are received.

Spinnaker contacted us and asked us to move the trailers containing what's left of the Rogers-Ritch Merritt House from their property. Alan Lo, Tony and I opened the trailers last week. Raccoons have nested in one of the trailers and rats in the other. Much of the wood is rotted. We also have determined that the trailers are no longer road-worthy and may fall apart if they are moved. I have an estimate from Lajoie's salvage company to remove the trailers and dispose of the wood not to exceed \$4,900. I am looking for someone who has interest in salvaging some of the old timbers, though many appear to have dry rot, versus throwing them away.

I am continuing to spend a fair amount of time working on getting bids for our various capital projects. I am still going back and forth between Purchasing, the architects (if involved) and myself in finalizing the specifications for the Gate Lodge Porch replacement and the brick repair and mortar replacement at the

Smith Street Jail. This past Monday I submitted the specifications for the repairs to the Smith Street Barn to Purchasing and am hoping to move this through fairly quickly in order to complete the repairs prior to any heavy winter snows. The LMMM roof repairs project was sent out to bid again and we had the contractors pre-bid conference last week. Bids are due on Tuesday so we may be able to get this onto next Tuesday's Land Use agenda if we add it to our agenda tonight to approve. Phase II of the LMM Master Plan project (elevator, ADA and bathrooms) was submitted to Purchasing, but I have not seen a bid schedule yet. The good news is that at this point, for all of our capital funding, all of the projects are in some stage of the process to get the work awarded and done. The bad news is that the Mill Hill ADA project bids were opened today and all came back too high, so we will have to reduce the scope and put it out for bid again. This will likely delay construction of the project until next summer at the earliest.

I supervised significant tree work at Mill Hill Historical Park and Pine Island Cemetery. A number of trees that were either dead, sick and dying or located too close to our buildings were removed, while a number of trees were also pruned.

Last Saturday I supervised another Eagle Scout candidate project at Pine Island where the two entrance paths were mulched and 24 tombstones were reset.

- \*\* MR. KIMMEL APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE NOT TO EXCEED \$20,000 FOR RESTORATION OF THE BELL TOWER ON THE TOWN HOUSE LOCATED AT MILL HILL FUNDED FROM CAPITAL ACCOUNT C0374 09146310 5777**
- \*\* MS. CUZZONE SECONDED**

Mr. Westmoreland explained the item. He said that he received three bids. He said that Scholar Painting is the low bidder and he is checking their references. They are licensed to work in Connecticut, but have not done any work in Norwalk.

- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. Cemeteries – Holly Cuzzone

Ms. Cuzzone said that she owes Mr. Westmoreland a lot of thanks for working with the Eagle Scouts. Mr. Westmoreland said that Saturday was the first time in all the years he has been at Pine Island Cemetery that he was able to envision it being finished.

Charlie Fallon wants to re-plant trees. He had to cut the only pine tree in Pine Island Cemetery because it was dying. They came up with a plan to plant 9 Red Oak trees along the Crescent Street wall. The trees will provide some screening, but will not create a security issue. In addition, they also located 8 spots for cherry trees. The project is scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kimmel asked why they were not planting pine trees. Mr. Westmoreland said that they could not find a good location. The problem with pine trees is that they grow big and when they fall, they create a lot of damage. Mr. Kimmel asked, if possible, that they plant one pine tree there.

Ms. Cuzzone said that the name of Pine Island Cemetery came from an island that was located in the river off the coast of what is now Pine Street. She said that the Cemetery was also called Over River Cemetery.

Mr. Westmoreland said that the next project is to do interpretive signage at the cemeteries.

The Committee discussed the history of the people buried at Pine Island Cemetery.

**\*\* MS. CUZZONE MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000 FOR TOMBSTONE REPAIRS AT PINE ISLAND CEMETERY FUNDED FROM CAPITAL ACCOUNT C0294 09146310 5777**

**AND TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE NOT TO EXCEED \$4,000 TO PURCHASE TREES FOR PINE ISLAND CEMETERY FROM CAPITAL ACCOUNT C0501 09146310 5777. TREES TO BE PLANTED BY EAGLE SCOUT CANDIDATE CHARLIE FALLON AND TROOP 2**

**\*\* MR. DUNLAP SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

A. Norwalk Historical Society – Suzanne Betts

Ms. Betts said that there was not a lot to report this month. They are looking forward to their October events. Their Evening of Historical Proportions will take place on December 15<sup>th</sup>. This is their annual fundraiser.

C. Finance – Suzanne Betts

Ms. Betts said that she is trying to work with the Finance Department to re-allocate funding from the Rogers-Ritch Merritt House to Mill Hill.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business discussed this evening.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- \*\* MR. KIMMEL MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA**
- \*\* MS. BETTS SECONDED**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
  
- \*\* MS. BETTS MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000 FOR ROOF LEAK REPAIRS AT LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION TO BE FUNDED FROM ACCOUNT C0186 0913610**
- \*\* MS. CUZZONE SECONDED**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Kimmel asked about plans for the Lockwood House. Mr. Westmoreland said that ultimately, the plan is to turn it into a museum. The space is being used by the Tax Assessor until the end of the year.

Mr. Westmoreland said that they do not have a lease agreement with the Historical Society or a budget. They probably won't have a good plan in place for a month or so. He said that he would like to get it open by the end of next year. The Commission would be responsible for the capital improvements and the Historical Society would be responsible for the exhibits. The Commission would have an office in the basement and then the other two rooms, which include a vault, would be used for the curator and collection manager. The first project will be to process un-processed donations.

Mr. Westmoreland said that they will have to review how the collections policy is and make it very specific.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* MR. KIMMEL MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- \*\* MR. DUNLAP SECONDED**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi  
Telesco Secretarial Services