

**CITY OF NORWALK
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 20, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: David Westmoreland, Chair; Suzanne Betts, Eric Chandler,
Holly Cuzzone, Tom Dunlap, Katharyn Martino; Glenn Iannaccone.

OTHER: Lockwood Mathews Mansion: Patsy Brescia, Susan Gilgore.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m. and stated that the above members were in attendance, and a quorum was present.

Public Hearing

Mr. Westmoreland stated the first part of the meeting was to receive comments from the public on 1 Logan Place. The public comments are as follows:

1. Mr. Todd Bryant, 23 Morgan Avenue, President of Norwalk Preservation Trust, spoke about the delay in demolition filed by the NPT. He stated that the property is owned by Frank Raymond, Rowayton Historian, and is an important property in town as the architecture is vernacular and part of Oysterman's Row. He added that this is part of the Historic District which is now on the National Register. Mr. Bryant explained that there was discussion with the owner several years ago regarding potential demolition and nothing happened. He added that the builder claims there are no final plans and there is no contact information for the owner. In addition there may be flooding issues but it is unknown at this point.
2. Burt Shatz, 8 Harstrom Place, stated he is a neighbor of the house in question and the current owner is in England and thinks the property is in foreclosure. There is no updated information in the Assessor's office and no signs are on the property recently (which is a possible violation of ordinance).

Mr. Westmoreland asked Mr. Bryant to take a photograph of the property for possible use with ordinance compliance and if not, he will forward to the Building Inspector. Mr. Bryant stated he would like to at least document the house before demolition. Mr. Westmoreland stated he wants to work with the Building Department to allow the Commission to decide if documentation is needed before demolition.

Mr. Shatz asked if there was any historical value, and Mr. Bryant replied that there is Rowayton Historical plaque, so it can be researched, plus it is part of the historical district. Mr. Westmoreland added that it contributes to the overall designation of Oysterman's Row.

There were no further comments, and Mr. Westmoreland closed the public comments portion of the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes – October 23, 2013.

It was noted that the wrong set of minutes was sent out and the acceptance of minutes from October 23, 2013 was tabled until the next meeting.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Westmoreland thanked Mr. Bruce Kimmel for his service on the Commission as the Council Representative and he will be replaced with Glenn Iannaccone. Charlie Yost may be leaving to serve on the Fire Commission.

It was noted that a date needs to be set for the next meeting, as the regular schedule falls on Christmas. It was agreed to hold the meeting on December 18. (It was noted later in the meeting that this conflicts with the Mansion's Holiday Season event, and it was suggested to hold a brief meeting prior to the reception at Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum.

Mr. Westmoreland then read his written report and submitted it for the record, as follows:

We continue to be busy with moving the various RFP's through the process. I am pleased to report that the contract with Domus for the LMM Roof Repairs has been signed and work will begin shortly, the contract for the Bell Tower restoration has been signed, though I will be meeting to discuss start dates with the contractor next week as the project involves painting. This may have to wait until spring. The council approved the Aegis bid for tombstone work at Pine Island which will begin in the spring.

The Smith Street Barn bids are due back next week. We had a lot of contractors at the walk-through and several said that our budget seemed adequate, so hopefully we will receive a number of bids. I have been working with the Purchasing Director, Gerald Foley and Bill Ireland, the building inspector to treat this project as an emergency repair once the bids are received. As an emergency repair, we will be able to bypass much of the lengthy approval process to get the work done, though I may need to call a special meeting of the Commission to approve a bid.

I have a company interested in taking the Roger's Ritch Merritt building. They are a restoration company who is in the business of doing this. They would store the materials at their yard, where they have other similar buildings in storage. Upon sale of the building parts, they would make a donation back to the City. If any one else has any ideas they want to pursue, please let me know as soon as possible. Otherwise, I'm moving forward with this. If an agreement is not reached and no other solution is found, the trailers and the building parts will be disposed of.

Chairman's Report – continued

I have put the Gate Lodge Porch restoration project on hold. We continue to have moisture problems in the same wall we repaired a leaking pipe in over the summer. The source of the leak could be in the bathroom above, which would require extensive demolition and repair, or in the flashing at the roofline.

Apparently, when the roof was replaced several years ago as an emergency repair, we did not have them replace the old flashing, which is clearly deteriorated. We may have to fix one or both of these in order to stop the moisture infiltration. This may use all of our funding for the porch project.

We will be working over the next couple of weeks to put our operating and capital budgets together for Fiscal Year 2014/15, as these are due in early December.

I will be pushing legal to complete the Lockwood House Lease Agreement with the Historical Society in December, as well as put together a draft of the Museum Collections agreement for the Commission to review at next month's meeting.

Finally, we received two bids for the LMMM Elevator/Bathrooms/Basement Egress project. It appears that we can only afford to do the Elevator and Bathrooms and we will need to re-appropriate money in order to fully fund that portion of the project. This project has been underway in some form or another since 2001 and myself and David Park before me, have been involved for over four years. Because of the complexity of this project, i.e. multiple funding sources, National Historic Landmark, etc. I believe we need to do whatever is necessary to push this project through.

Our only other funds available are the Mill Hill ADA project, which has not gone out to bid again. I'll reduce the scope of that project and re-bid it based on the remaining funds and we will request more funds in the 2014/15 capital budget in order to complete it. Unfortunately, there is a late wrinkle in the project that I will defer to Patsy Brescia to explain in her report.

Buildings Report

Tony has been working on various projects. He cleaned the gutters at the Mansion and Mill Hill and oversaw the replacement and repair of a number of leaking downspouts on the Mansion. He has also been investigated the roof leak problem at the Gate House. We have identified rotted wood on the Fitch Law Office and he has ordered the boards, which have to be custom made, to replace them. Additionally, we have done a walk-through of all of the buildings and I am putting together a priority list for him to work off of. I expect to finally receive delivery of the new windows for the jail tomorrow.

Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum

Ms. Patsy Brescia reported the following:

Commissioners are probably aware that the city received the bids for the Phase II of our mechanical systems upgrades. There were two bids received: Kronenberger & Sons Restoration, Inc., and AV Tuchy. No bids have been approved or accepted. It is most likely that additional funding will be required.

Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum – continued

In addition the State of CT Dept of Economic & Community Development is requiring that the project be rebid and a new Assistance Agreement document be submitted. We have started this progress with the assistance of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency. This of course will delay the start date for construction.

Ms. Brescia reported that fundraising events will be delayed until the fall, and this will have an impact on the budget. She outlined that the budget is approximately \$350,000 and is made up of fundraising events, except for \$45,000 from the City.

We would like to thank David Westmoreland and the Commission for their immediate attention to the Skylight and for ascertaining its condition, given that it had potential safety issues. We were greatly relieved to find that there was no such issue. The new Plexiglas allowed us to continue working on our events without disruption.

We need to interface with the Historical Commission to establish budget requests for both the operating and capital budget for the 2014-2015 budgets. Please advise with the submittal schedule.

Ms. Gilmore reported the following:

The Mansion is organizing several events for the Fall-Winter Season including:

- The exhibit, A Grand Display of Holiday Traditions: Victorian Era Presents and Decorations curated by Raechel Guest, which opens on November 29, right after Thanksgiving. Contemporary decorations will also be on display.
- Mini Tours and City of Norwalk's Tree Lighting on December 5, 5-8 p.m. and Dec. 6,5-8 (Tree Lighting on the 6th 5:45-7 p.m.) It was noted that the location has been moved from Washington Street to Mathews Park next to the Mansion which will enhance opportunities for mini-tours.
- A fundraising reception for its current exhibit entitled, "Two Connecticut Painters: From Impressionism to Regionalism." We thank the Norwalk Historical Commission for loaning many of the artworks. The reception will be held on December 8, 2013. 6-8 p.m.
- A lecture by Jennifer Carlquist an adjunct professor at SUNY New Paltz and former Winterthur Research Fellow on Setting the Table with Science: Victorian Silver and its Technologies at 11:00 am on December 11.
- Our Annual Holiday Open House where LMMM is partnering with the Norwalk Public Library and Matthew Surapine Studio to create a festive family event and several hours of entertainment on Dec. 15, from 12:00 noon to 4 p.m.
- The Mansion's Holiday Reception on December 18, where we will celebrate the Holiday Season with cocktails and music.

We thank you for all your support and look forward to seeing you at our December events to celebrate the Mansion's successful 2013 Season.

Mr. Dunlap asked about missing information on flyers regarding admission pricing and asked that this information be included in the future to avoid miscommunication. Ms. Gilmore explained that a flyer was released without her approval and explained that pricing is normally included as follows:

Exhibits: \$10 Adults/ \$8 Seniors / \$6 Children/Young Adults

Reception: \$20 in advance / 25 at the door

Lecture: \$35 in advance/\$30 at the Door (includes lunch)

Action Items: 6A. LMM ADA Improvements - Expenditure Request

6D. Re-appropriation Mill Hill ADA Improvements- LMM Phase II
Mr. Westmoreland noted that the above items were removed from the agenda.

Norwalk Historical Society

Ms. Betts reported that the Common Council approved the request for the Bell Tower Restoration Project at Mill Hill on consent without questions or comments.

Ms. Betts then provided an updated budget report and outlined expenditures to date and funds remaining.

Cemeteries

Ms. Cuzzone noted that Pine Island looks good.

Old Business

Mr. Westmoreland reported that the 8th grade Enrichment Program at Mill Hill on Halloween was very successful with over 200 students participating. He described the tours of the buildings and graveyard and it was well received by the teachers.

- ** **MS. BETTS MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL LITIGATION REGARDING PROPOSED MILL HILL/SMITH STREET LAND GIVE-AWAY BY THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY.**
- ** **MR. CHANDLER SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Iannaccone recused himself from the Executive Session because he was not sworn in. The meeting went into Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. and was reconvened back into public session at 8:48 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** **MR. DUNLAP MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** **MS. MARTINO SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services