

**CITY OF NORWALK  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MAY 26, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** David Park, Chair; Peter Bondi; Eric Chandler; Thom Dunlap;  
Kathryn Martino; Clyde Mount; Latanya Langley (7:37 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Chris Cooke, Sheldon Gerarden, Port Draper, Lockwood Mathews  
Mansion Museum; Douglas Hempstead, Councilmember; Susan  
Sweitzer, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**- April 28, 2010

The following correction was made to the minutes:

Page 1 – correct the spelling of Erik to Eric

**\*\* MR. BONDI MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED  
\*\* MS. MARTINO SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**A. Discussion Of Project #2849 Architectural / Engineering Services For Building  
Infrastructure Improvements To The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum.**

Mr. Park explained that he had concerns which he outlined in a document. He said that he received the closing binder agreement for the grant between the state and Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum and that he and Mr. Foley had concerns about the document. Mr. Park said that he sent an e-mail to the Department of Economic and Community Development outlining the issues regarding the language in the document. He said that Mr. Andrew replied that he was correct.

Mr. Park said that the other concern was that the three low bidders were not interviewed. He said that there is a difference of \$150,000 between the low bidder and David Scott Parker. Mr. Park read an e-mail from Silver-Petrecelli expressing their concern that the three lower firms were not interviewed.

Mr. Park said that Mr. Foley requires that the funds be in place before a contract can be issued. He said that the State is guaranteeing the funds. He suggested that the

Commission suggest to the Selection Committee that they interview the three low bidders.

Mr. Chandler asked if the letter from the State was a statement of policy or a letter of intent. Mr. Park handed the letter to Mr. Chandler who reviewed it.

Mr. Park said that he has concerns, especially in these economic times, explaining how David Scott Parker became the exceptional bidder and why the three lowest bidders were not interviewed.

**\*\* MR. BONDI MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE LOCKWOOD MATHEWS MANSION MUSEUM BUILDING SELECTION COMMITTEE THAT THEY INTERVIEW THE FOLLOWING THREE LOWEST BIDDERS:**

- SILVER-PETRECELLI ASSOCIATES \$152,700
- BIANCO GIOLITTO WESTON \$266,000
- FULLER D'ANGELO ARCHITECTS & PLANNING \$297,500

**\*\* MR. CHANDLER SECONDED**

There were members of the public who wished to address this item. The Commission discussed allowing them to speak about this item.

Mr. Mount said that spending \$150,000 more than the next lowest bidder has to be justified to the Common Council, otherwise he said that they are not spending the tax payers money correctly. He said that he supports this motion.

Ms. Sweitzer said that having been on the Selection Committee, that was not a bidding process. The evaluation of the firms was based on their qualifications. She told the Commission that they could request what they want, but that they are doing a disservice to the firms. She said that the firm that was selected was the lowest bidder of the four selected. She said that if they want to bring the three back based on cost, then they have to bring all of them back. Ms. Sweitzer said that they are exposing themselves to a lot of legal issues in the process. She said that this was a systematic process.

Mr. Park said that the Commission had concerns and that they want to be fair to all of the firms. Mr. Mount said that it is a lot of money and it will be difficult to justify that on the Council floor. He said that he was nervous about how the choice was made.

Mr. Mount said that if all of the four firms were close to equal, he would have thought the numbers would have been closer. Mr. Park said that Mr. Foley said that it is not uncommon for a Commission to send a recommendation.

Mr. Hempstead said that he has had 16 years experience in this and said that they have to take the lowest responsible bidder. Most of the times, the lowest bidder is not taken. Qualification is the first priority and price is the second. Mr. Hempstead said that sometimes familiarity breeds better scores. He said that it is not about the lowest bidder; that is not why you pick someone. Mr. Park said that if there are doubts, then that is a good reason to have the interviews.

Mr. Chandler asked for a specific score for David Scott Parker. Mr. Park said that they did not provide that information in the proposal.

Mr. Cooke said that the RFP Committee did their work openly and fairly. The three lowest bidders did not make the cut to the final presentation phase. David Scott Parker won the scoring battle. He said that the \$150,000 discrepancy can be significant, but there are reasons that the low bidders did not make it to the final phase. Mr. Mount asked what those reasons were. Mr. Cooke said that he did not have the minutes of those discussions with him. He said that Ms. Findly would have the notes as to why they did not make the cut.

Mr. Draper said that he was on the Committee and asked if everyone saw the sheet with the scores. He said that they received extensive written information from the bidders. He said that to interview them again, they would come in with the same information. Mr. Draper said that they did not choose the finalists lightly; they were very careful. He said that this is an opportunity for Norwalk to take a responsible position on an important project.

Mr. Mount said that they have no idea what Silver-Petrecelli can do.

Mr. Gerarden told the Commissioners that they have a difficult choice. He said that all of the information requested was provided. He said that each person on the Selection Committee went through a long arduous process. He said that they looked at everything to move this process forward so that it adheres to certain criteria. The process was all 10 people; each one was individually scored. Mr. Foley provided the top four. Mr. Gerarden said that no one at that point said that they had to go with the three lowest bidders. He said that they were looking for the experience that could bring forth the best project going forward. He said that the funds are in place and to go back would be a repeat performance. Mr. Gerarden said that they have spent hour upon hour discussing every aspect of this.

Ms. Langley joined the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MR. DUNLAP AND MS. LANGLEY)**

Mr. Park will send a letter to the Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum Selection Committee and to Mr. Foley notifying them of this action.

Mr. Dunlap asked if when the three groups come in, will it be on the same proposal. Mr. Park said that it would be.

Mr. Mount said that it is hard to ask the Commission to approve this when they have not been provided with the information. As an elected official, he said that he is asked to watch the taxpayers' money. He said that he can't spend that extra money without knowing all of the information. He said that he is not armed with that information and needs help to be able to support the extra money.

Mr. Draper asked what he was supposed to say about the three lowest bidders. Mr. Chandler told him that he needs to be able to explain why David Scott Parker is better than the others.

**B. Review And Approve Committee Recommendation Of TKS Historic Resources Inc Of Babylon, NY To Prepare A Historic Resource Inventory RFP #2907 For A Contract Price Of \$38,500 Plus \$1,500 Change Order Allowance, Total NTE \$40,000**

Mr. Park explained that this is a joint project between the Norwalk Preservation Trust and the Historical Commission. He said that only one bid was received. He said that Mr. Foley said that since they went through their due diligence they can hire the one bidder.

Mr. Park said that TKS Historic Resources Inc. was interviewed and their three references checked out favorably.

- \*\* MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION OF TKS HISTORIC RESOURCES INC OF BABYLON, NY TO PREPARE A HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY RFP #2907 FOR A CONTRACT PRICE OF \$38,500 PLUS \$1,500 CHANGE ORDER ALLOWANCE, TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000**
- \*\* MR. MOUNT SECONDED**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**C. Discussion Of Western Connecticut Convention & Visitors Bureau Shared Office Space With Other Organization At The Gate House, 297 West Avenue. Report Will Follow.**

Mr. Park explained that this item was discussed at last month's meeting where the Commission approved the lease. In the lease there is a section regarding sharing the space with an appropriate organization. He said that he received an e-mail from Jackie Lighfield, the Chair of the Norwalk Arts Commission would said that they would like to pursue sharing office space. They would be sharing the cost of utilities. Mr. Park said

that he received an e-mail from Jim Whitney, from the Western Connecticut Convention and Visitors Bureau who said that he is in support of the proposal.

Mr. Dunlap asked how they were going to do performances there. Mr. Bondi said that they could not put anything on the walls, only have free-standing exhibits and could not put up signage. Mr. Park said that he will ask for clarification about performances. Mr. Bondi said that the space is small and should be used for a meeting space for the Arts Council.

**\*\* MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE WESTERN CONNECTICUT CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU AND THE NORWALK ARTS COUNCIL TO SHARE 50% OF THE UTILITIES, IN ADDITION THEY AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:**

- **NOTHING ON THE WALLS**
- **FREE STANDING EXHIBITS**
- **NO SIGNAGE**
- **CLARIFICATION ABOUT PERFORMANCES**

**FINAL APPROVAL IS CONTINGENT UPON A FORMAL AGREEMENT DOCUMENT FROM WESTERN CONNECTICUT CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU**

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

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **REPORTS – BOARDS**

Norwalk Historical Society – David Westmoreland

Mr. Park said that Mr. Westmoreland's report was provided in everyone's packets.

Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum – Chris Cooke

Mr. Park said that Mr. Cooke dropped off his written report.

## REPORTS - SUB COMMITTEES

### Buildings – Peter Bondi

#### **1. Discussion and approval of one year lease renewal for Leo Esposito at 35 Smith Street, Unit #1 for \$600 per month plus utilities.**

Mr. Bondi explained that Mr. Esposito has been there for a year. He said that the utilities are very expensive, and the electric company can't find a reason for that. There have been no problems with Mr. Esposito.

- \*\* MR. DUNLAP MOVED TO APPROVE THE ONE YEAR LEASE RENEWAL FOR LEO ESPOSITO AT 35 SMITH STREET, UNIT 1 FOR \$600.00 PER MONTH, PLUS UTILITIES**
- \*\* MR. CHANDLER SECONDED**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. BONDI)**

Mr. Bondi reported that due to the damage to the Gate Lodge from the March storm, he met with FEMA yesterday at the Gate Lodge. He said that he hopes to get the repairs done soon. He said that he sent Rick's Main Roofing to look at the flat roof at the Mansion to assess the damage. He said that the caulking failed.

Mr. Bondi said that Mr. Mauro is preparing the Little Red School house for painting. He is also working on other projects at the Mansion and at the Museum. The paint at the Mansion is peeling, mostly on the veranda posts and the corners of the conservatory. Mr. Bondi said that Mr. Gerarden will contact the painters to rectify the problem.

### Cemetery – David Park

Mr. Park reported that the grass at Pine Island Cemetery has been cut and branches removed. Flags have been placed at the graves of Veterans. Mr. Park said that he spoke with Mr. Westmoreland about the headstone restoration being done at Mill Hill. Today 10 were returned. He said that Mr. Westmoreland is very pleased with the work on the headstones.

### C. Finance- David Westmoreland

There was no report this evening.

### D. Norwalk Museum – Eric Chandler

Mr. Chandler said that most of the report is covered in Ms. Gunn-Bromley's report. He reported that they are getting signage at the Museum. There will be an open house in mid

June. Mr. Chandler requested that Mr. Mauro finish the partition in the gift shop area and also asked that he complete the installation of the Plexiglass.

**1. Discussion of Friends of the Norwalk Museums request for repossession of collection / property housed at the Norwalk Museum.**

Mr. Chandler requested that Ms. Gunn-Bromley investigate who donated what to whom. He said that he believes that Ms. Gunn-Bromley and Mr. Bondi are knowledgeable, but he is concerned about the process. Ms. Gunn-Bromley and Mr. Bondi will go through the list of items and research them.

**MUSEUM CURATOR'S AND ASSISTANT TO THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION REPORT**

Mr. Park said that the report was e-mailed to everyone a few days ago. Mr. Chandler said that the report speaks for itself.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

- \*\* **MR. CHANDLER MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- \*\* **MR. BONDI SECONDED**
- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi  
Telesco Secretarial Services