

**CITY OF NORWALK
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
JANUARY 28, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: David Westmoreland; Holly Cuzzone; Suzanne Betts;
Lisa Wilson Grant; Glenn Iannaccone; Charles Yost

OTHERS: Patsy Brescia, Lockwood Mathews Mansion;
Tod Bryant, Norwalk Preservation Trust;
Michael Cleary, Eagle Scout;
Diane Jellerette, Norwalk Historical Society;

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Cuzzone called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

October 22, 2014 – Regular Meeting

The first sentence of Mr. Westmoreland’s report should read as follows:

Now that the 15/16 budget process has kicked off.....

January 14, 2015 – Special Meeting

- ** **MR. IANNACCONO MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF
OCTOBER 22, 2014 AS CORRECTED AND JANUARY 14, 2015 AS
SUBMITTED**
- ** **MS. CUZZONE SECONDED**
- ** **MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. YOST)**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present this evening who wished to speak.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT – Commissioner Westmoreland

Mr. Westmoreland’s report dated January 28, 2015 is as follows:

The 2015/2016 operating and capital budget reviews are underway. I am spending much of my time working on renovations to the new Museum and working with the Historical Society to get the exhibits ready. I need someone to

go through the City website and clean up all references to the Norwalk Museum. Ms. Betts volunteered.

REPORTS – BOARDS

A. Norwalk Historical Society – Diane Jellerette

Ms. Jellerette's report dated January 28, 2015 is as follows:

Mill Hill Historic Park

A new efficient furnace, on demand hot water and air conditioning was installed in the Town House. There are now two zones to control heating and cooling in the office and main meeting room.

Curatorial

The curatorial team has made excellent progress organizing the City of Norwalk's collection. Each object is photographed and documented in the PastPerfect database before being stored away. For the winter, they are working on the Norwalk Historical Society collection at Mill Hill.

New Museum

We have been meeting with the exhibit teams on planning and design. Looking to have three to four exhibit themes completed by early summer, 2015. The Lockwood House renovations started in December 2014. The office/conference room wing has been painted. Received estimates from several vendors to refinish the hardwood floors. Next, is painting the main house.

2014 Events

The Halloween Event held 10/24 and 10/25 were totally sold out for the 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. tours. Over 350 people attended. We will do this again in 2015.

Upcoming Events

Civil War Exhibit – This year marks the end of the commemoration of the 160th Anniversary of the Civil War. We found Civil War era objects in the Norwalk Historical Society and City of Norwalk's collection that have not been displayed before. We will have this up in April, 2015.

Spring Opening of Mill Hill Historic Park!

B. Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum – Patsy Brescia

Ms. Brescia's report dated January 28, 2015 is as follows:

Dear Commission Members:

Please find attached a summary of expenses reflecting the operating costs for maintaining the Lockwood Mathews Mansion for the calendar year of 2014, which includes utilities, minor repairs and insurance costs as reported in our operating budget. The total for the calendar year is \$63,374.95.

In addition to the operating costs, we have overseen major improvements to the building during 2014 and the past few years. The Phase I and II construction projects which included increased electric service from West Avenue to the building and the installation of an elevator and restoration of the public restrooms are now complete, but for a short list of outstanding punch list items. Once these items are addressed, we will receive the State approval for the elevator.

The Museum raised approximately \$700,000 in state grants to accomplish these projects which were added to the City's funding. We have recently begun planning for grant applications for the completion of the exterior portions of the Phase II project, which had to be postponed due to insufficient funding.

In addition to the funds for the Phase I and II projects, the Museum has raised and expended approximately \$1,000,000 in capital improvements since 2003 to restore and protect this National Historic Treasure. These sums are exclusive of the City of Norwalk's investment in this City owned building. We are grateful that the City has funded repairs to the roof, porch corbeles, as well as matching funds for the Phase II project.

All of this important work has been accomplished with the collaborative efforts of the City of Norwalk and the Museum Board of Trustees and benefactors.

During the latest construction project, it was discovered that the sewer line from the building to the main line is in question. This issue will need to be addressed and resolved. There is additional roof repair needed to complete this phase City project. We are hopeful this will be completed with funding in the next City budget.

The Board of Trustees is very appreciative of the cooperation and efforts of all who are involved in maintaining and restoring this landmark.

The Museum will be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary in 2016 and the Board of Trustees is planning a major event to highlight this National Historic Landmark's significance and importance to the heritage of Norwalk. The Board of Trustees' goals are to continue programming that creates a cultural center for our community as well as protecting and restoring the Mansion.

As you are aware, 2014 was a most challenging year for the Museum; we had to adjust to the major construction project by cancelling and or rescheduling events, elimination of programs and loss of income. Once we begin our season in early April, we look forward to an active and prosperous 2015.

We thank you all for helping us manage 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Patsy Brescia
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Mr. Iannaccone asked about the sprinkler system. Ms. Brescia said that the project will cost between \$7 and \$10 million dollars and is included in Phase III. Mr. Westmoreland said that he spoke with Mr. Hamilton about breaking Phase III into projects, which will help their effort to seek funding from the National Historic Foundation and matching grants from the City.

REPORTS

A. Buildings – Commissioner Westmoreland

Mr. Westmoreland's building report dated January 28, 2015 is as follows:

Tony has spent his time on a variety of small projects. His number one priority at the moment is doing repairs and small electrical work at the new Museum building. Tony has had some issues that have impeded his ability to work, though he has made up most of the days lost so far.

Phases I and II of the Lockwood Mathews Mansion leak repair projects are almost complete. I expect to close out the project by the end of February. I will start pushing the architects to finish the specifications and bid package for the final phase, which should be funded in the 15/16 capital budget.

The elevator and ADA bathrooms project is finally completed at the Mansion. We are working with the stte to close out the \$179,000 grant.

Carjen Fence has completed all of the exterior ADA work at Mill Hill with the exception of installing the lights for the new flagpole, which has been backordered. The Historical Society has been working with the Garden Club to install a Colonial Herb garden, and we are also working on developing interpretive signage for the buildings and burying ground.

New England Masonry claims they are ready to go as soon as the weather breaks, hopefully in March, with the repointing of the Jail.

Custom Woods Replacements delivered the new windows for the Jail. However the mullions in four of the sashes were not straight and they are being remade. Tony will begin installing them when these are received and after he has completed most of the work at the new museum.

Tony installed the new windows in the new masonry wall on the back of the Barn. The Fitch Law Office exterior was painted.

The interior of the office wing and basement rooms was painted. We will be refinishing the floors in the office wing so that we can set up the conference room and the Historical Society can begin moving in. Work will begin on the exhibit rooms in February.

Gill & Gill Architects are working on the design for the new ADA compliant bathroom in the Town House. We believe the floor tiles are asbestos and will require abatement, the electrical panel will need to be moved and we will complete the rewiring of the office that was started in the early 2000s, the kitchenette must also be moved to accommodate the new bathroom and we will update the emergency lighting and alarm systems to current codes as part of the project. We will also refinish the wood floors in the main room as well as paint the entire interior of the building. Assuming funds are obtained in the 15/16 budget process, the Town House will close in mid-July for construction through the following winter.

Discuss the hiring of part-time project manager for building projects and other commission staff work.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that last year, Finance authorized hiring someone for one day a week. He said that he would like to hire a part time project manager for an hourly rate of \$30.00. He asked if anyone would like to volunteer to create specifications for this position.

B. Cemeteries – Commissioner Cuzzone

Eagle Scout Candidate Michael Cleary Project at Pine Island Cemetery

Michael Cleary said that his proposed project is to re-set the head stones at Pine Island Cemetery and cut the low hanging branches. He will work with his Troop and they plan to schedule the project for April 11th. Mr. Westmoreland said that if they work hard that day, they will be able to finish re-setting all of the headstones that can be done by volunteers.

- ** MS. BETTS MOVED TO APPROVE EAGLE SCOUT CANDIDATE
MICHAEL CLEARY'S PROJECT AT PINE ISLAND**
- ** MS. CUZZONE SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

C. Finance – Commissioner Betts

Operating and Capital Budget Submissions

Ms. Betts briefly reviewed the budgets. She said that she will meet with the Planning Commission to go over the capital requests. Currently available in the capital budget - \$378,763.59 and \$70,348.32 in the operating budget.

OLD BUSINESS

- ** MS. CUZZONE MOVED TO APPROVE AN ADDITIONAL \$5,600 FOR
THE FURNACE REPLACEMENT PROJECT TO ADD CENTRAL AIR
CONDITIONING TO THE TOWN HOUSE**
- ** MS. WILSON GRANT SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

NEW BUSINESS

A. Elect Chairman and Vice Chairman

Due to the cancellation of Tuesday's Common Council meeting, this item was not discussed.

- ** MR. YOST MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF NORWALK TO
PAY THE QUARTERLY GRANT TO THE NORWALK HISTORICAL
SOCIETY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MUSEUM AND
COLLECTION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$22,000**

**** MR. IANNACCONO SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. IANNACCONO MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE
NOT TO EXCEED \$9,000 FOR REPAIR AND REFINISHING THE
WOOD FLOORS AT THE LOCKWOOD HOUSE FROM ACCT.
#98146319 5777 C0533 MUSEUM**

**** MS. CUZZONE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Ms. Raven Samina and Ms. Laurie Wartz of Waypointe gave an overview of their project. They said that they plan to use the building as their office. Mr. Bryant said that the building was built in 1912 and was used as a straw hat factory. Mr. Iannaccone said that they were making ties the last time he was in that building. Mr. Westmoreland said that this is a great example of a developer caring about an historic building. Mr. Bryant said that the building is pretty typical for that era and that he and Mr. Westmorland walked through it. He added that it has nice brick work around the windows.

The following letter dated December 5, 2014 was sent to the Norwalk Zoning Commissioners:

Dear Commissioners:

25 Butler Street, LLC is the contract purchaser of 25 Butler Street. Upon transfer of ownership of 25 Butler Street, it is the intent of the contract purchaser to demolish the existing building and improve the parcel of land. The owners will work to move the historic brick building currently located at 3 Quincy Street to the site either in one piece, two sections or by dismantling the replicating using the original brick and design.

The land at 3 Quincy Street is planned to be developed as part of District Center at Waypointe. In order to complete District Center, the building at 3 Quincy Street needs to be removed. In an effort to save a portion of the 100 year old brick building, part of the building will be moved or saved and replicated at 25 Butler Street. The owners are investigating three approaches. The first involves taking a large section, approx. 108' x 40', of the existing 3 Quincy (brick section only) and move it to a newly constructed concrete slab and ground floor at 25 Butler Street. The second approach is to cut the building into two pieces, each 54' x 40', move each section and reattach to the new slab and first floor at 25 Butler Street. A third option, should the move prove unfeasible, is to dismantle the existing brick structure at 3 Quincy Street, and reuse the brick and other materials to replicate the historic building. This will involve removing the brick off 3 Quincy, cleaning it and then reinstalling at 25 Butler Street.

No matter which approach is ultimately used, the exterior appearance of the moved structure will be the same and the only difference will be to interior structural design.

Thank you for helping us save this piece of Norwalk history.

Sincerely
Paxton Kinol

- ** MR. IANNACONE MOVED TO APPROVE PROVIDING A LETTER OF SUPPORT AS OUTLINED IN THE ABOVE LETTER FOR BELPOINTE CAPITAL'S REQUESTED ZONING APPEAL THAT WILL SUPPORT MOVING PARTS OF THE HISTORIC STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 2 QUINCY STREET TO 25 BUTLER STREET. (ZONING APPROVAL FOR DEMOLISHING 2 QUINCY HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROVED.) AND TO REFER THE ABOVE RESULTS TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**
- ** MS. BETTS SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

REVIEW CHANGES REQUESTED TO CHAPTER 55 DEMOLITION DELAY ORDINANCE

Mr. Westmoreland explained that this item will be discussed at the February meeting of the Ordinance Committee. He said that there are a lot of buildings that do not have significant value at 50 years. If the building is older than 50 years, then a permit is needed for a demolition and a within 21 days, a resident can request a delay.

Mr. Westmorland feels that the ordinance should be consistent with the laws and is against changing the ordinance from 75 years to 50 years. He suggested that they could take each one on a case by case basis.

Mr. Bryant said that the 90 day demolition delay does not work. If they have 180 days, they can come before the Commission first to talk before it becomes an adversarial situation. Mr. Westmorland agreed and said that a six month delay is significant and provides enough time to help the applicant re-think their plan. He said that as a commission, they can determine if a home is significant and has the ability to exempt it.

Mr. Bryant said that the Connecticut Trust website has a model demolition delay ordinance. He distributed a copy to the Commissioners.

Mr. Westmoreland said that while Greenwich allows demolition of significant structures, they require photo documentation of the structures. He said that he is proposing something similar and feels that it is a reasonable request.

**** MS. BETTS MOVED TO OPPOSED CHANGING FROM 50 YEARS TO 75 YEARS**

**** MS. WILSON GRANT SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. IANNACONE MOVED TO APPROVE ALLOWING COMMISSION TO EXEMPT STRUCTURES THAT ARE 50 TO 75 YEARS OLD FROM DEMOLITION DELAY ORDINANCE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS**

**** MR. YOST SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. CUZZONE MOVED TO APPROVE EXTENDING THE DEMOLITION DELAY PERIOD FROM 90 DAYS TO 180 DAYS (OR X DAYS)**

**** MR. YOST SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. BETTS MOVED TO APPROVE ALLOWING THE COMMISSION TO REQUIRE PROPERTY OWNER TO FUND PHOTO DOCUMENTATION OF STRUCTURES THE COMMISSION DEEMS "HISTORIC" PRIOR TO THEIR DEMOLITION AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$2,000 BY A PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE COMMISSION'S CHOICE**

**** MS. CUZZONE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Refer above results to the Ordinance Committee of the Common Council.*

**** MR. YOST MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA**

**** MR. IANNACONE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. IANNACONE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CONSERVATION
WORK ON PORCELAIN IN THE COLLECTION, OWNED BY THE
LOCKWOOD FAMILY FOR AN AMOUNT UP TO \$4,000
** MS. CUZZONE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. IANNACONE MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MS. BETTS SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services