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Connecticut Preservation Awards

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Court Blocks Demolition in Wallingford

The Town of Wallingford may not demolish a house in an historic district, according to a ruling by Superior Court Judge Robert Berdon on February 22.

The house, a Queen Anne structure built about 1890, is located on South Main Street, in the Wallingford National Register district and facing the town's Parade. Known as the American Legion Building for its long-time occupants, it was bought by the town in 1995, so that its land could be used for parking for the town hall, located next door.

Since 2002, town officials have tried to tear down the house. The town has no need for the building, they argued, but might want the land in case town hall needed to be expanded.

At the request of the Connecticut Historical Commission (predecessor to the Commission on Culture & Tourism, the state's historic preservation agency), the State filed suit to prevent the demolition, acting under the Connecticut

Environmental Protection Act (CEPA), which allows any citizen to sue to prevent the unreasonable demolition of natural or historic resources. The Connecticut Trust and the National Trust for Historic Preservation joined the suit as friends of the court.

In cases under this law, once the plaintiff demonstrates that property in question possesses historical significance and has potential to be restored, rehabilitated or redeveloped, the burden shifts to the defendant to show either that the building has no historic integrity or that reuse is not feasible.

The judge found that the Wallingford house still possesses historic character and that any disrepair was the town's fault:

...there is a public trust in state resources and it is within the public interest to [protect] such resources from unreasonable destruction.

—Judge Robert Berdon

“The evidence indicates that the defendant allowed the Building to fall into disrepair after its purchase. There is significant damage to the exterior of the building. However, the Building retains many of its original and unique features.”

(continued on page 15)

From the Executive Director

The Trust's annual meeting and awards ceremony, held on April 7 in the magnificent Old Judiciary Committee Room of the State Capitol, was a joyous celebration of preservation successes across the state. I hope you'll read about the honorees, beginning on page 4.

At the meeting we also said good-bye to three trustees, each of whom in his and her way made significant contributions to our work.

Bill Crosskey served on the board from 2005-2011, as Vice Chairman in 2010-2011 and Chairman of the Historic Buildings and Easements Committee from 2005-2011. Bill, as an architect and generous volunteer, was a true leader helping us move forward our Eli Whitney Boardinghouse restoration and energy project.

Theresa Kidd joined the board in 2005 and served as Chairman of the Development Committee from 2006-2011. She led us through initiatives to increase our major donor pool and, as a final task, coordinated recent work we have been doing with a fund raising consultant.

Ralph Knighton came on the board in 2005 and first served on the committee that set up and then evaluated our Historic Buildings Financing Fund. From 2008 to 2011, Ralph was a valued reviewer of our grants; his insights were invaluable. Ralph has also been the volunteer project director for the rehabilitation of North-West School in Hartford, future home of the John E. Rogers African American Community Center, a project that the Connecticut Trust has been funding.

Two other trustees resigned from the board this spring: **Jim Blansfield**, from Danbury, who served on our Historic Building and Easement Committee and



Scott Bates, from Stonington, who served on the Legislative Policy Committee.

We welcomed six new trustees at our annual meeting. Please read about them on page 3.

Mayo Crowe, LLC, attorneys in Hartford, underwrote the annual meeting. We thank Advisory Council member **Bill Crowe** for his continued generous donation to the Trust for this annual event.

—Helen Higgins



For two weeks in April, hundreds of people passing between the Capitol and the Legislative Office Building saw a display of success stories from the Community Investment Act. The act, which provides funding for historic preservation, farmland protection, affordable housing, and open space acquisition through a filing fee on real estate transfers, was written and sponsored by Sen. Donald Williams, seen here with Christopher Wigren of the Trust.

The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit statewide membership organization established by a special act of the State Legislature in 1975. Working with local preservation groups and individuals as well as statewide organizations, it encourages, advocates and facilitates historic preservation throughout Connecticut.

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Connecticut Preservation News

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Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism

Upcoming Meetings of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

June 1, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.
July 6, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.

State Historic Preservation Board

June 9, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.

All meetings take place at the Commission on Culture and Tourism Main Conference Room
1 Constitution Plaza

For more information call (860) 256-2800

New Trustees Join the Board

Six new Trustees were elected to the Trust's board at the Annual Meeting on April 7. They begin their terms on May 1, along with a new slate of officers: Ed Schmidt, chairman; Charlie Janson, vice-chairman; Edith Pestana, secretary; Ed Munster, treasurer; and Walter Fiederowicz, assistant treasurer.

Denise Best, of Hartford, is the Coordinator for Comprehensive Community Development for the Christian Activities Council, a faith-based social action organization. A graduate of Lesley University and Trinity College, she has also worked for Trinity College, the Urban League of Greater Hartford, the University of Connecticut, and as a teacher. Ms. Best is active in Hartford's Upper Albany community and served as chair of the board of Upper Albany Main Street.

Michael J. H. Blair lives in Stonington but was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and attended the University of Ulster before immigrating to the United States. He is a residential and commercial real estate agent with Hunter More & Stearns. Public and community service has been a cornerstone of Mr. Blair's life; he served as Warden of Stonington Borough and chief of staff for U.S. Congressman Rob Simmons and has managed numerous political campaigns.

Jeanné Chesanow, of Cheshire, holds degrees from the University of Massachusetts and Washington University in Saint Louis and has taught at levels ranging from first grade to university to adult education. In Cheshire, Ms. Chesanow has served as president of the Cheshire Land Trust, and chaired the historic district study committee and the historic district commission. Her play, "Walk Back in Time," was performed for Preservation Week in 2004 and is set in Cheshire during the Civil War.

Laura Dillman, of Suffield, has been a management and marketing consultant; she also worked at MP2 Communications, General Foods, Western New England College, and MassMutual. Ms. Dillman holds degrees from Cornell University and Western New England College and is a Master Gardener. She was a co-founder and president of Friends of the Farm at Hilltop. During her tenure, the non-profit successfully nominated the farm to the National Register and utilized a \$500,000 state grant for renovation work on the main barn.

Thomas W. Nissley, of New Canaan, has been a pastor, educator, a clinical psychotherapist, a writer, an events manager, and a tour leader. He works now as a preservationist focusing on antique houses and classic mid-century moderns and as a realtor with Connecticut Prudential Realty. He also is a director of the USA Transactional Analysis Association, served on the New Canaan Conservation Commission, and is currently co-curator for the New Canaan Historical Society's Gores Pavilion, displaying the history of the New Canaan moderns.

Caroline Sloat, of Thompson, is director of scholarly publications at the American Antiquarian Society, in Worcester,



Denise Best Hartford



Michael Blair, Stonington



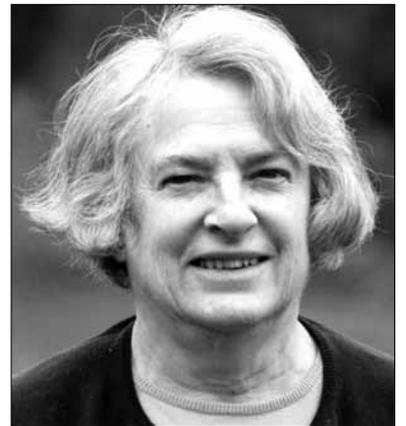
Jeanné Chesanow, Cheshire



Laura Dillman, Suffield



Thomas Nissley, New Canaan



Carolyn Sloat, Thompson

after a long career in research and publications at Old Sturbridge Village. She holds degrees from Mount Holyoke and the University of Connecticut and also is an active volunteer with her church, the Mount Holyoke Alumnae Association, and the Connecticut Trails Council of the Girl Scouts.

In addition to these new Trustees, Kelvin Roldán, of Hartford, Richard Wies, of Branford, and Hiram Williams, of South Kent, were elected to second terms.

Legislators Receive Harlan H. Griswold Award

On April 7, the Connecticut Trust and the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism presented the Harlan H. Griswold award to Senator Bob Duff and Representative Larry Cafero, both of Norwalk, who brokered a deal ending one of Connecticut's bitterest preservation disputes and ensuring the preservation of the Grumman-Saint John house.

In 2001, the owners of the Norwalk Inn announced plans to demolish the house—built about 1780 and located in the Norwalk Green National Register district—in order to expand the inn. Local preservationists opposed the plan, and in 2006 the Norwalk Preservation Trust sued to block the demolition under the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, which allows lawsuits to prevent the unreasonable destruction of natural or historic resources. In February, 2008, they won a temporary injunction protecting the house, but the parties continued to battle over maintaining the structure.

T. Levine



Sen. Bob Duff and Rep. Larry Cafero, the 2011 recipients of the Harlan Griswold Award, with Helen Higgins, of the Connecticut Trust, and Kip Bergstrom, of the Commission on Culture & Tourism

Concerned that the legal stalemate and the crumbling house were harming the surrounding district, Rep. Cafero and Sen. Duff brought the parties together in August, 2009, to try to reach a settlement. Even getting everyone to meet together was almost impossible, but eventually the legislators helped the parties to reach a solution.

Under the agreement, the Inn will renovate the Grumman-Saint John house

as extended-stay suites and restore its exterior in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. In addition, the Inn's existing building will be expanded, its parking lot reconfigured, and the entire property relandscaped.

"It wouldn't have happened without Bob Duff and Larry Cafero, who took on what seemed an impossible situation and persisted until a solution was worked out,"

(continued on page 15)

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courtesy of the Norwalk Inn



Plans for restoring the Grumman-Saint John house and renovating the Norwalk Inn.

Jan Cunningham Receives Janet Jainschigg Award

Jan Cunningham received the Trust's Janet Jainschigg Award of Excellence on April 7. As local historian, executive director of the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, and principal of Cunningham Preservation Associates, she has worked for more than thirty years to document, recognize, and preserve historic places in every corner of Connecticut.

In dozens of towns, Jan has carried out surveys to identify and evaluate historic resources—the crucial first step in preservation. Building on these surveys, she has prepared nominations to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. For the National Register alone, her work has resulted in the designation of approximately 9,000 resources in nominations for 77 districts and 91 individual sites (a few still await approval). And, she wrote nominations for five National Historic Landmarks, the highest level of historic designation.

Jan's surveys and nominations make clear her delight in really digging into a subject. She has tackled topics ranging from the China trade to the development of house museums, various industrial processes and the dissemination of Modernist architecture. In particular, Jan has prepared nominations for big historic districts, some of them containing hundreds of buildings. Her clear analyses of the significance of these complex places helped transform the

T. Levine



Jan Cunningham, of Middletown: 2011 recipient of the Janet Jainschigg Award of Excellence.

preservation movement from a small-scale focus on individual buildings to the larger scale of historic clusters, neighborhoods, and communities.

Getting this information to the public

resulted in an impressive list of publications. For the state historic preservation office, Jan prepared two context guides—studies of regions within the state which provide historical background for preservation efforts. For the Connecticut Trust she wrote “The Truth about Vinyl Siding,” the best local source on why vinyl siding can be inappropriate, and even harmful, for historic buildings and what the alternatives to vinyl are. Three of her published surveys received awards for local history.

The goal of Jan's research and writing was always to foster the maintenance, restoration, and ongoing use of historic buildings, and she has done this as well. In At the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, she oversaw mixed-use historic rehabilitation of prominent local buildings. Her consulting work also included oversight of certified rehabilitation projects, community preservation planning, historic structures reports, and municipal historic enhancement projects—all aimed at furthering the preservation of Connecticut's heritage.

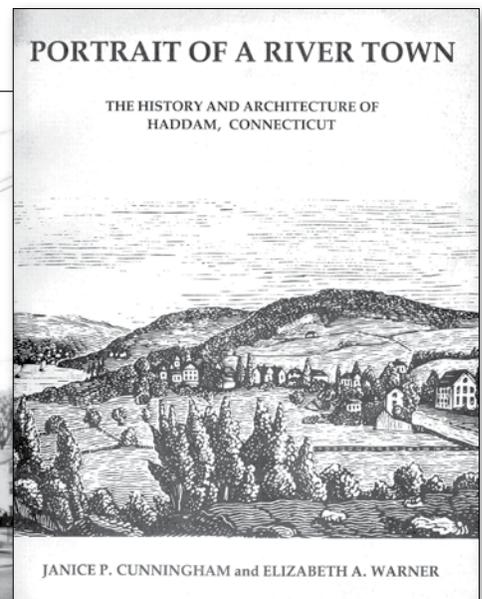
The Jainschigg award commemorates Janet G. Jainschigg, a founder and benefactor of the Connecticut Trust. She was a mentor and inspiration to many and,

(continued on page 15)

This survey of the history and architecture of Haddam received an award from American Association for State and Local History.

Jan Cunningham's National Register nominations for large districts, like the Prospect Hill district, in Willimantic, helped change the face of the preservation movement.

J. Cunningham



Connecticut Preservation Awards, 2011

This year, the Trust's awards recognized preservation projects that focused on elements of the historic built environment, not as ends in themselves but rather as parts of the larger project of building vital community life. While private preservation efforts can contribute significantly to the public realm, these awards honored not only owners, architects and teams of builders, but entire communities that have rallied around a significant effort to embrace and build upon their own heritage as a way of moving toward a richer, more vibrant future.

The first three awards honor three cities where the Connecticut Trust was able, thanks to funding from the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT), to make grants for Community Cultural Planning (see CPN, January/February 2011). Unlike other awards that represent completed work, these awards are for plans that have yet to be realized. The awards recognize the importance of good and careful planning, and the Trust hopes they will encourage these cities to make their plans a reality.

Award of Merit for Community Vision: City of New London.

Bank Street, one of the city's key downtown streets, is part of a National Register district and a lively commercial district. New London hired Cecil Group, Inc., who identified ways to reinforce and build on that base and to integrate Bank Street more successfully with other parts of the city which have their own successes—places like the newly-redesigned Parade, in front of Union Station, as well nearby historic neighborhoods cut off from Bank Street by desolate parking lots. There already have been some results: a permanent committee to organize follow-through, and a developer with plans to rehab two key buildings.

Award of Merit for Community Vision: City of Danbury.

For many years the Palace Theater, a National Register listed entertainment venue on Main Street, has been targeted for renovation. Danbury commissioned an evaluation of the theater, coordinated by JCY Architecture, to analyze the theater's potential for new use, and outline steps to bring it back to life. The goal is to make the theater an anchor for a broader program of downtown revitalization.



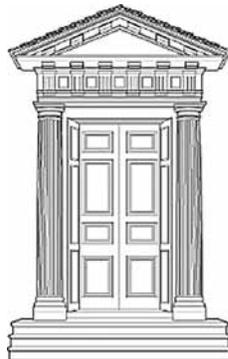
M. Scott

New London hopes to build on the success of Bank Street to revitalize other parts of its downtown.



G. Farmer

The Palace Theater is an important building on Danbury's Main Street. The City is planning the theater's rebirth as an anchor for downtown revitalization.



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New Britain's preservation plan will help to protect and enhance the city's historic neighborhoods and buildings, like the former post office.

B. Schide



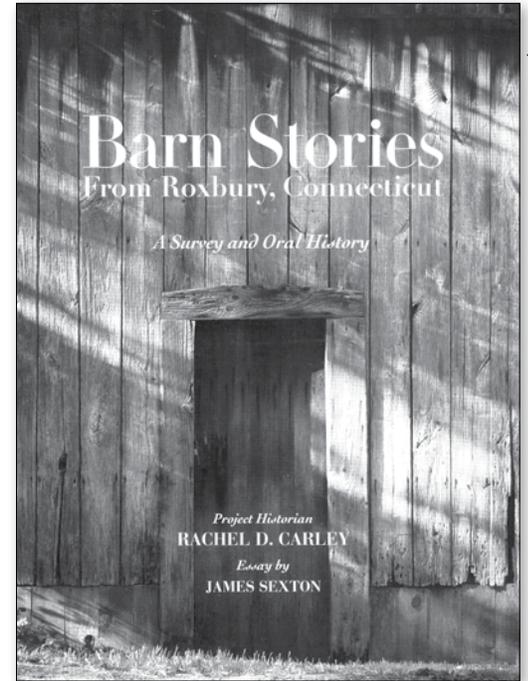
Award of Merit for Community Vision: City of New Britain.

New Britain has created an ambitious preservation plan to protect downtown historic resources and position them for redevelopment. Thomason and Associates prepared a plan that includes common preservation strategies such as National Register nominations and design guidelines for important neighborhoods. The plan also raises more innovative ideas, including a preservation ordinance and a combined preservation/ economic development position within the city government.

Award of Merit, Barn Preservation: "Barn Stories from Roxbury, Connecticut" Roxbury Historic District Commission.

After an historic barn was demolished without notice or permit, Roxbury launched a three-year project to survey historic agricultural buildings and collect historical information about farming in the town. The survey, carried out by historian Rachel Carley under a grant from the CCT, documented nearly 300 barns, privies, springhouses, hen houses, and other structures. At the same time, the Historic

This new book tells the story of farming in Roxbury and documents the town's historic agricultural buildings.



District Commission interviewed local farmers about their lives and work. Much of this material was collected into a book, *Barn Stories from Roxbury, Connecticut*. Now the town has shifted from study to preservation: the zoning commission has expressed interest in helping to encourage the preservation of agricultural structures, and the HDC has helped owners apply for grants to assess and stabilize barns. This townwide process provides a template for other communities seeking to engage their citizens in preserving important remnants of their agricultural past.

"I look forward to an America which will not be afraid of grace and beauty, which will protect the beauty of our natural environment, which will preserve the great old American houses and squares and parks of our national past, and which will build handsome and balanced cities for our future."

John F. Kennedy - October 26, 1963

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**Award of Merit, Community Service:
Norwalk Preservation Trust.**

Founded in 2003, the Norwalk Preservation Trust (NPT) quickly took a prominent role in preserving and enhancing the city's heritage. The group led efforts to save the Ernst house—an early 20th century Colonial Revival structure that was to be demolished for a parking lot. They also worked with city officials to enact a demolition delay ordinance, and provide ongoing public educational events. But the NPT has been most prominent in its first undertaking: it was organized to lead the battle for the Grumman-Saint John house, a long and difficult process that finally saw success last year. The Norwalk Preservation Trust's successes show that concerned citizens can turn a single preservation issue into a long-lasting organization with a credible voice in discussing the future of a city's historic places.

**Award of Merit, Community Preservation:
New Haven Citywide School Construction Program;
New Haven Public Schools and the City of New Haven.**

Over the past 13 years, New Haven has rebuilt or remodeled nearly 40 school buildings. After two early projects incited community opposition, the city began a systematic dialogue with the historic district commission and the New Haven Preservation Trust—not only on renovations to designated historic buildings, but on new designs and neighborhood infill as well—and, unlike many other municipalities, took the preservationists' advice in many cases. There have been disappointments, but at its best the program has given new life to historic buildings, constructed sympathetic additions, erected new

Woodruff-Brown Photography



ABOVE: Fair Haven Middle School, renovated by Roth & Moore Architects, is one of many projects in New Haven's Citywide School Construction Program.

ABOVE LEFT: One of the Norwalk Preservation Trust's first successes was saving the Ernst house, built in 1908, from demolition.

buildings appropriate to their surrounding neighborhoods, and inventively converted non-educational buildings to school use. Leadership by Mayor John DeStefano and Superintendent Reginald Mayo, coordination by school construction coordinator Susan Weisselberg, construction management by Gilbane Inc., and designs by a number of architectural firms contributed to a program that has benefited every neighborhood in the city.

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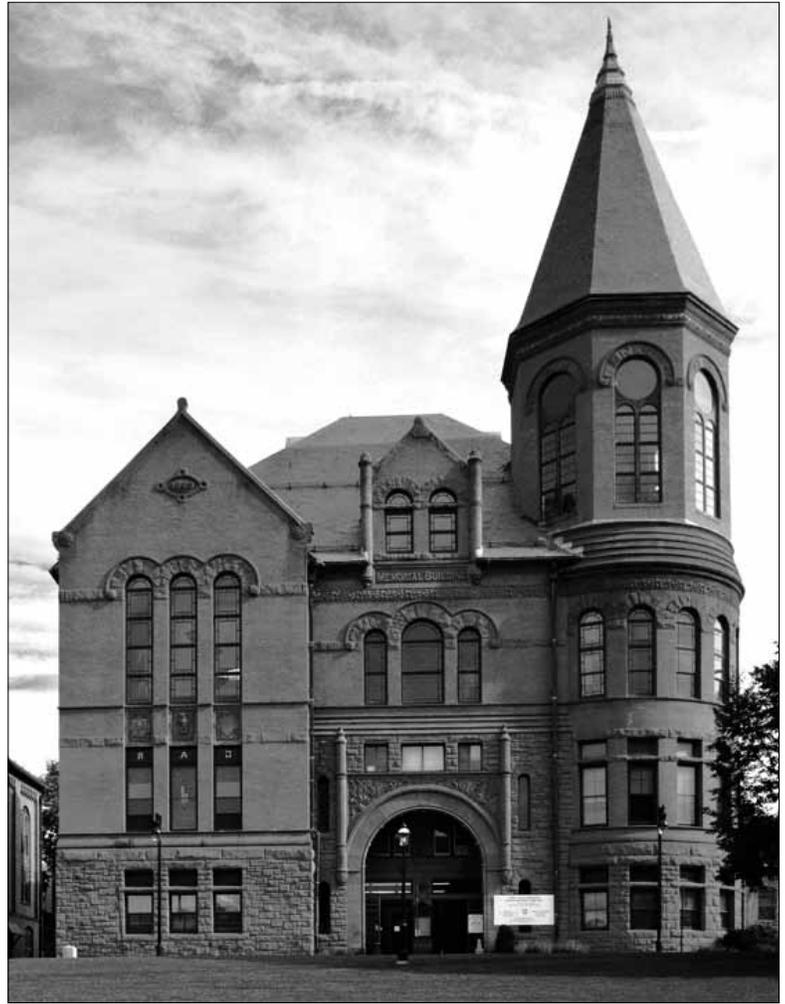
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Award of Merit, Historic Buildings: Restoration of Vernon Memorial Town Hall; Town of Vernon and Paul Bailey Architect, LLC.

This distinguished Richardsonian-Romanesque town hall, built in about 1889, is part of the Rockville National Register district. The top floor originally contained a grand auditorium, but, by the 1970s the town chopped up the space for offices, installed a dropped ceiling, removed historic stained glass windows, and filled the openings with concrete block and cheap sliders. In the 1990s, the town began a 13-year phased process to reverse these mistakes and restore the auditorium to its former appearance and public use. On the exterior, new, appropriate windows were installed and the brick walls were repaired and repointed. In the former auditorium, the partitions and dropped ceiling were removed, and the space adapted for public offices and ceremonial uses including offices for top officials as well as a new meeting room for the town council. The result is that the third floor has reclaimed its intended public use, and a significant historic structure was returned to its former grandeur with sensitive design and contemporary materials and systems.

Award of Merit, Historic Buildings: Restoration of Waterbury City Hall; City of Waterbury, Waterbury Development Corporation, and DeCarlo & Doll, Inc.

Over the years, Waterbury's city hall suffered from unsympathetic alterations, the loss of important ceremonial functions, vandalism and neglect. City Hall forms the heart of a municipal complex designed by Cass Gilbert and listed on the National Register, but still voters rejected a proposal to restore the building. This inspired a grassroots preservation movement, and the mayor and aldermen drew up a new restoration proposal, which won public support, thanks in part to leadership from the Mattatuck Museum.

Not only has City Hall regained its historic appearance—it also has regained its symbolic and functional place in the community: the mayor and aldermen are back in their original quarters—with the aldermen's desks turned to face the public—and Waterbury's citizens are in and out on a regular basis, carrying out business with city departments at new, specially-designed counters (see CPN, January/February 2011). This restoration gives outward expression to the dignity of government and of the citizen. More broadly, it has given a focus and visibility to Waterbury's efforts to rejuvenate its downtown.

Robert Benson



ABOVE: After a 13-year project, Vernon's Memorial Town Hall boasts repaired brickwork, restored windows, and refurbished top-floor spaces.

LEFT: The Mayor's office in Waterbury City Hall is one of many historic spaces that have been returned to their original appearance—and function.

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Connecticut Trust Awards Grants

In March, the Connecticut Trust awarded 13 municipalities and non-profit organizations a total of \$106,681.00 in Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants. The grants will make possible a total initial investment of \$222,602.00 in these historic sites. The grants are part of a comprehensive historic preservation technical assistance program of the Trust, in collaboration with and with generous funding from the Connecticut General Assembly, the Connecticut Humanities Council, and the Commission on Culture & Tourism, through the Community Investment Act. The grants are intended to encourage and support community efforts in planning for the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic buildings and places. (In the list, 'NR' indicates properties listed on the National Register).

Burlington, Burlington Historical Society: \$3,000 for bid documents for repairs to the ballroom ceiling of the Brown-Elton Tavern (NR).

Town of Eastford; \$4,250 for plans and specifications for rehabilitation of the Union Society of Phoenixville House (1806; NR).

Town of Enfield: \$5,000 for conditions assessment, plans and specifications for restoration of the Thomas Abbey monument (NR).

G. Farmer



The First Church in Windsor received a grant to assess the condition of and study possible uses for the William Russell house.

Town of Lebanon: \$15,000 for an Historic Structure Report and conditions assessment for the Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., house (1769; NR).

New Haven, Saint Paul UAME Church (1871; NR): \$20,000 for plans and specifications for roof repair to mitigate problems with the historic cast-stone exterior.

City of Norwalk: \$20,000 for a master plan for restoration and community use of the Gallaher Mansion (1931; NR pending) in Cranbury Park.

Pomfret, Friends of Connecticut State Parks: \$3,380 for a conditions assessment of the Averill house, which is being considered for the DEP's resident curator program.

Tolland, United Congregational Church: \$8,625 for conditions assessments of four church-owned properties in the Tolland Green National Register district.

Torrington, Torrington Historical Society: \$3,060 for plans and specification for a new roof for the Hotchkiss-Fyler house (1900; NR).

Town of Vernon: \$9,000 for architectural drawings for reuse of the Talcott Brothers mill (1870; NR). Federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits may be used.

Waterbury, Mattatuck Museum: \$2,500 for a symposium focusing on the Cass Gilbert National Register district and the newly restored Waterbury City Hall (1915).

Windsor, First Church in Windsor: \$7,688 for a conditions assessment and feasibility study of the Rev. William Russell house (1753-1755; NR).

Town of Woodbury: \$5,000 for plans and specifications for repairs to Old Town Hall (NR).

For more information about grants, call Jane Montanaro at (203) 562-6312, or visit www.cttrust.org.

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(January 31, 1936 - January 8, 2011)

“Architecture aims at Eternity.” —Christopher Wren

Many Connecticut landmarks had their hope for eternity extended through gentle and scholarly restoration by Roger Clarke. With roots in Yorkshire, England, and architectural studies in Liverpool and Germany, Roger worked in London before coming to the United States, where he worked for two prestigious New York firms practicing in the International Style—first Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and then Edward Larrabee Barnes. Then, in 1972, Roger and his wife Marjorie moved their family to Connecticut where he embraced small town living, sustainable design, and historic preservation.

When the Old State House, in Hartford, was threatened with demolition in 1975, Roger provided the rehabilitation plans needed to save it. Through the years that followed, he worked on important historic buildings across the state including Charter Oak Temple, Gillette Castle, Isham-Terry house, Brown-Elton Tavern, Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Thankful Arnold house, Butler-McCook house, Phelps-Hatheway house, Center Church (Hartford), Cheney homestead, Mark Twain house, and Chick Austin house. One of his most impressive projects was the restoration of Eolia, the 42-room

(continued on page 12)

Roger Clarke, 1998



Restoration of Eolia, at Harkness Memorial State Park, was one of Roger Clarke's most impressive projects.

Christopher Bergstrom Becomes Executive Director of Commission on Culture & Tourism

Governor Dannel P. Malloy named Christopher “Kip” Bergstrom as the executive director of the Commission on Culture and Tourism (CCT). Upon the planned consolidation of the CCT into the Department of Economic and Community Development, Bergstrom will assume additional responsibilities as part of DECD Commissioner Catherine Smith’s team.

“The Commission on Culture & Tourism is a key component of our economic strategy in the state, but it’s been underutilized,” said Bergstrom. “I’m looking forward to redesigning the way we approach tourism and cultural attractions and working with key stakeholders.”

Since 2008, Bergstrom was executive director of the Stamford Urban Redevelopment Commission; before that he served as director of the Rhode Island Policy Council and as Stamford’s first economic development director.

Bergstrom’s appointment highlighted Governor Malloy’s proposal to increase funding for the CCT’s tourism marketing. The Hartford Courant’s Capitol Watch blog quoted Bergstrom as saying that he hopes to use new strategies to “tell the story of Connecticut.” Highlighting Stamford and Hartford as business meccas and promoting the state as an historic destination are two potential strategies.

“Outside the casinos and Mystic, what do you have in Connecticut?” Bergstrom asked. “You have cities and towns and villages that have incredible place value.”

Bergstrom replaces Karen Senich, the CCT’s executive director since 2008. During her tenure, the Commission, formed in 2003 by merging arts, tourism, film and preservation agencies, made progress toward its goal of building greater connections among the four disciplines. 🌱

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New Canaan and Harwinton.

Preservationists in two towns are working to return an historic house to its original community. The house was built in 1795 for Steven Graves, of Harwinton, a Tory who became a respected citizen after the Revolution. In 1931 the Bristol Water Company bought the property for a reservoir project, but Merrill Clarke, pastor of the Congregational Church of New Canaan, and his wife rescued the house and re-erected it in New Canaan, where it became known as Harwinton House.

Eighty years later, Harwinton House's new owners, Garth and Kimberly Appelt, built a large new residence and, under zoning regulations, had to remove the historic structure. They filed for a demolition permit, but, thanks to New Canaan's delay of demolition ordinance, local preservationists had time to look for ways to save the house.

Members of the New Canaan Preservation Alliance called Harwinton's first selectman, Frank Chiaramonte, and he and town historian Roger Plaskett worked up a proposal to move the house back to Harwinton for use by the Harwinton Historical Society. Fortunately, the town had an unused grant from the state's Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP), and on March 15 a town meeting approved using the STEAP money for disassembling and storing Harwinton

Roger Clarke, cont'd from page 11

mansion and gardens at Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford.

Whatever the project, Roger was always mindful of the property's history and long-term preservation concerns. He also listened, with interest and respect, to his clients and to trades people. Roger was generous with his time and expertise, often offering his advice and services freely to colleagues and those he knew could not afford his fee. The historic preservation community will long mourn his loss. 🌱

—Susan Chandler, Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism

Mimi Findlay, New Canaan Preservation Alliance

Harwinton House, on its New Canaan site



House and constructing a new foundation.

"The biggest obstacle is funding," wrote Roger Plaskett in an email. "Our historical society has a little bit of available funds, but we are probably looking at \$300-350K needed to complete the resurrection. Although it was a major step forward to save the house, and the New Canaan Preservation Alliance should be credited with playing a major role in this

accomplishment, there are many more steps to go before we can walk into the front door again."

The Appelts agreed to an extension of the demolition date while Harwinton made its decisions, but by late March workers began dismantling the house. 🌱

For more on the history of Harwinton House, visit <http://harwintonhistory.com/Harwintonhouse.html>.

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Fairfield.

On March 10 the Southport Historic District Commission unanimously turned down an application to demolish a house by the noted Fairfield architect Cameron Clark (1887-1957). Clark specialized in the Colonial Revival style and was known for his deft handling of proportion and decorative detailing.

Alex and Judith Urquhart applied to tear down the waterfront house and replace it with a much larger, Georgian style structure. In its denial, the commission noted that the "house is an historically and architecturally integral component of the Southport Historic District and Southport Harbor waterfront—and is an important visual component that—if lost—will have an irreversible impact on its immediate neighborhood, on the Southport Historic District and Southport Harbor Waterfront." In addition, the commission found the proposed new design inappropriate in both scale and style.

The Urquharts are suing to overturn the ruling. They claim, through their attorney, that the house already has stylisti-

cally inconsistent additions—approved by the commission—that renovating the house under FEMA regulations would be impossible, and that the commission has approved the demolition of other, equally significant structures.

The commission's action was significant because the body took advantage of state laws that allow it to consult with experts to determine the historic signifi-

(continued on page 14)



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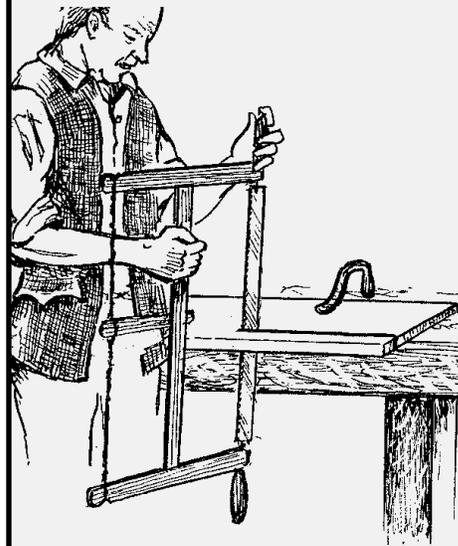
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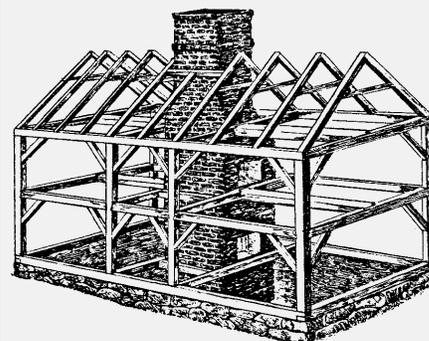
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cance of the property and the consequences of the applicants' proposal.

The state enabling statute for historic districts (Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 7-147c(h)) says that commissions may "employ clerical and technical assistance or consultants and incur other expenses appropriate to the carrying on of its work." In addition, under CGS Sec. 7-147c(j)(5), commissions "may cooperate with other regulatory agencies and groups interested in historic preservation" and (CGS Sec. 7-147c(j)(9)) "consult with groups of experts."

The Southport commission received advice from the Connecticut Trust and the Commission on Culture & Tourism. In a letter, Helen Higgins, the Trust's executive

director, outlined the house's significance and summarized criteria that the commission should take into account in considering the application. She concluded that, in local historic districts, "demolition should be discouraged and avoided whenever possible." 

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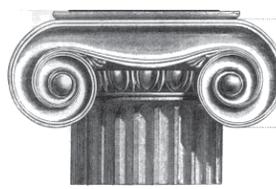
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Wallingford, cont'd from page 1

In order to justify demolition, the Town argued that rehabilitating the house would be prohibitively expensive—an argument that owners have used successfully in other CEPA cases. However, Judge Berdon ruled that, while it is permissible to take cost into account, that factor cannot be the sole criterion.

As for the argument that the Town might need the property for town hall expansion, the judge ruled that simply wanting to demolish the building isn't a justification for demolishing it.

Judge Berdon concluded that the Town clearly did not consider prudent and feasible alternatives to tearing down the house. For instance, the Town did not pursue grants or other ways to make rehabilitation less expensive or easier and it rejected

several firm offers to buy or lease and rehab the building.

The judge's ruling strongly affirmed the importance of preserving historic sites. He wrote, "Under CEPA, there is a public trust in state resources and it is within the public interest to prevent [sic] such resources from unreasonable destruction."

Preservationists and others hailed the ruling. "Historic and natural resources make a large contribution to quality of life in Connecticut," said Attorney General George Jepsen. "This case is important for protecting historic resources because it is the first time a permanent injunction has been issued by a Connecticut court to permanently preserve a building on the National Register."

Betsy Merritt, General Counsel for the

National Trust for Historic Preservation, called the ruling "a wonderful precedent." She said, "At a time when many other states are seeing the courts chip away at their strong state preservation laws, it is encouraging to see Connecticut's law continue to be so effective. One of the key reasons, in my view, is the extraordinary degree of collaboration and partnership between the public sector advocates and the private sector preservation groups in Connecticut."

In March, the town council voted to sell the house. 🌱

More information on the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, as well as a link to the full text of Judge Berdon's decision, can be found at <http://ctrust.org/index.cgi/1046>.

Harlan H. Griswold Award, cont'd from page 4

said Christopher Bergstrom, Executive Director of the Commission on Culture & Tourism. "Their dedication to the public good kept them going."

The Harlan Griswold Award, presented jointly by the Trust and the Commission on Culture & Tourism, recognizes individuals, corporations or organizations whose activities embody the dedication to preservation of the late Harlan Griswold, longtime chairman of the Connecticut

Historical Commission (forerunner of the Commission on Culture & Tourism) and a founder of the Connecticut Trust.

"By their achievements in saving this historic house and revitalizing a National Register district, Larry Cafero and Bob Duff exemplify Harlan Griswold's leadership, vision, and dedication to preserving Connecticut's heritage and making our state a better place for all of its citizens," said Helen Higgins, Executive Director of the Connecticut Trust. 🌱

Janet Jainschigg Award, cont'd from page 5

though a volunteer herself, insisted on the highest standards of professionalism. Jan Cunningham exemplifies the professional excellence that the Janet Jainschigg Award celebrates. 🌱

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New London: A Street with a View

Once again, it's possible to see Union Railroad Station at the foot of State Street, New London's main thoroughfare, and it's possible to see the city from the doorway of the station. Since 1646, when New London was settled, the Parade—the open space at the foot of State Street—has been the city's primary civic space. But for more than forty years, from the urban renewal days of the 1960s, it was filled with a raised plaza that blocked views and cut New London off from the river that gave it life.

Now, the city has rebuilt the Parade, restoring the original slope down toward the water and constructing a new plaza that provides public open space

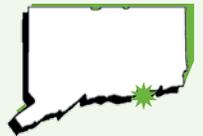
while giving renewed prominence to the historic railroad station and the Nathan Hale school (see CPN, March/April 2009).

Bruce Hyde, New London's Director of Development, led the effort to gain public and city backing, working with New London Landmarks, New London Main Street, and the City Center District; New Haven consultants Wilbur Smith Associates and Gregg, Wies & Gardner Architects developed the new plans, which work within existing topography and drainage and transportation systems to tame and improve traffic flow, provide

space for public activities, and interpret New London's history.

This project was not a restoration of the Parade's past appearance—over the years the space was, for the most part, simply that, an open space. Instead, what New London has done is to reinterpret the Parade for the present day. But in doing so it has given new life to the historic space and new visibility to the historic cityscape it enhances.

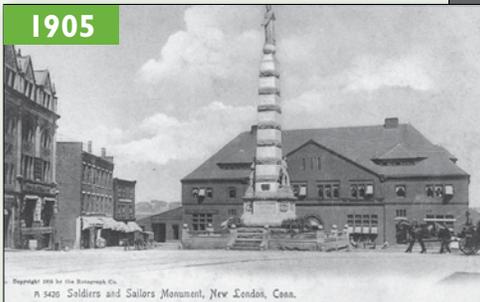
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