

SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on September 5, 2002, in the Lobby of the Planetarium, Centerport, New York.

The following were in attendance:

Dr. Steven Gittelman - President
Michael Broxmeyer - 2nd Vice President
Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann - Secretary
Susan LeBow - Trustee
Donna deLuca Periconi - Trustee
R. Douglas Shaw - Trustee
J. Lance Mallamo - Executive Director
Leslie Tannen - Todd Shapiro Associates
Lorraine Vernola - Staff
Mark McHugh - Staff
Todd Studenroth - Staff
Stephanie Gress - Staff
Florence Ogg - Staff
Bill Dieck - Staff
Mike Carroll - Staff
Ann Marie Pastore - Stenographer

Absent:

Gary C. Fischhoff
Dr. Anthony Pecorale
Edward J. Hahn
Robert LaBua
Carl Luecke
William Macchione
Dr. William Rogers
Bertram E. Seides

(Dr. Steven Gittelman called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

Good evening, everybody. This is a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. Do we have a list of guests in attendance?

MS. PASTORE:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you for joining us. Are there any questions or comments from those of you who have joined us? If not, thank you for being with us this evening. Do you have any proposed changes in the minutes?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Just some minor corrections.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Do you want to put them on the record, please?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay, page seven, line four, the word should be "is" not "in." Page fourteen, line twenty-two the word should be "plotted" with two t's as in Thomas not two d's as in David. Lance, at the bottom of page seven, if you could just take a look, I need your - I'm sorry, Steve, it will just take a second.

MR. MALLAMO:

I think to clarify what Marjorie is saying, on page eight in the first sentence on page eight it says, "If you have one foot high elevation, you would need twelve feet." I should have stated it would need twelve feet in length. To continue, if you have a two-foot high elevation, you would need twenty-four feet in length. That would clarify that.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Okay, other than that, I move that the minutes be accepted.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We will not vote tonight because we do not have a quorum, but thank you for bringing those changes to our attention. Public Relations' Report.

MS. TANNEN:

Good evening, everybody. I'm really pleased to be here tonight. I'm very proud of the work that we were able to accomplish last month. We had tremendous success, thank God, with the publicity for Normandy Manor on the radio, television, internet, newspapers. As I said, I'm really proud and delighted to be here tonight to share it with you. We have four videos to show tonight, two of them are on media showers and two of them are on Normandy Manor.

VIDEO PRESENTATION 7:45 P.M. - 7:50 P.M.

8/9/02	News 12	Meteor Shower
8/9/02	NY - 55	Meteor Shower
8/21/02	LI NEWS	Normandy Manor
8/21/02	NY - 55	Normandy Manor

DR. GITTELMAN:

Wasn't there a News 12 spot?

MS. TANNEN:
They never showed it.

DR. GITTELMAN:
What?

MS. TANNEN:
You remember, they came late in the afternoon, and it never got aired.

MR. MALLAMO:
They did show, and they did the interview. It just never -

MS. TANNEN:
It never got used.

DR. GITTELMAN:
That was Gary's big moment.

MS. TANNEN:
I know, and we waited a few hours also. However, he did have a very nice interview on CBS radio.

DR. GITTELMAN:
We should all congratulate Carl Luecke on the marriage of his daughter. Thank you for that report. Education and Exhibits Committee.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Let's see. We're not going to do the accession, right?

DR. GITTELMAN:
We're not. Do you want to hold it off?

MS. PERICONI:
Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Okay. We should present it when we have a quorum.

MS. FUHRMANN:
I would just like to point it out to everyone at next month's meeting we will be accessioning the Japanese armor that is behind Susan, the gentleman standing in the corner that we have affectionately named Carl. Each of you in your packets has a copy of the resolution. It is one helmet with a faceplate, two breastplates, a thigh guard, shin guard and two spears. There is a photograph from 1937, December, that shows that it was part of the estate. I won't go into any detail because we have decided we cannot at this time accession it.

Summer staff has all gone back to school, and we are into our fall season. Summer intern has left after doing an excellent job in documenting 1,500 wet fish in jars. The wet fish in jars documentation is almost complete. Next the dry fish will be

done, and then conditioning reports will be completed. This is all necessary for reaccreditation.

A decision has been made that framed discolored copies of Belanski prints will be on display in the marine museum. We will be getting three touch carts, one for the dinosaur exhibit, one for the marine museum, and one with linoleum cuts in it also to be in the dinosaur exhibit which will allow attendees to create footprints and dinosaur prints and whatnot. We are exploring doing a voice recording for information about the mummies to be played on the loop for when we will not be able to have a person attending the mummy while people are walking through the Museum.

We are also researching having Willie K. Vanderbilt's movie transferred to video. It's called, "Over the Seven Seas" to be displayed in two locations, one is the bird room, and one is the second floor of the marine museum displayed on the loop for our attendees' interest.

All of the Trustees, all of the Suffolk County representatives, every school on Long Island, private, parochial and public, all of the Queens private and parochial schools should have gotten by now our school brochure. Let me just state, as I did in our committee meeting, I think that they did a fabulous job this year in putting together a very professional looking brochure. I think the schools must agree. They have already booked sixty-three school trips, which is twenty-five more than were booked at this time last year.

Florence is also bringing eighty copies of the school brochure to her LIMA meeting next Monday, the 9th, to be distributed.

As was mentioned last month, we have a new high school oriented program on scientific illustration. We have our first booking of this high school illustration program, which is pretty exciting.

Research has been completed at the American Museum of Natural History on Belanski himself. He had his first job at the American Museum of Natural History as a letterer in 1917. They're copying these research results for us and they'll forward that information to us.

Lance and staff are reviewing the results of the summer of having reduced the cost of attendance for camp and groups within the Planetarium with the shorter program to see what the impact was on our revenues.

For a number of months, we have mentioned that Florence applied for a grant in the National Foundation of the Humanities to survey preservational needs for archival function. We are thrilled to announce that Florence has received that grant. She got \$3,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to undertake an action plan to conserve the collections here. So that's very exciting. She has waited a long time for that grant to come through. I think a round of applause is definitely at hand.

Capital projects, the UV filters, heating and electrical work has begun. We have lent things to Dowling College for their exhibit on the Virginia Graham Fair, which they are doing at their location. Florence, as Chair of LIMA, will be conducting a meeting on September 9th there. She would also like to publicly thank the tour guides and

other staff members who responded to the terrible rainstorms last week and rescued collections from the rain that was coming into the building.

Also she wants to let everyone know that her daughter got engaged. It was very romantic, so we have another wedding coming up.

Trying to top that, Mark wants to let everyone know he is married a year on Monday, and he bought a house. We had a great meeting, a great committee meeting.

Summer schedule is over for the Planetarium and educational shows start on Tuesday. They are ready to go. They have some new images and new slides added. Everything is tweaked and up. Anthony Camitti is ready to go with his adult education programs that he will be running here at the Museum. He will be teaching telescopes and the introduction to the solar system through the adult education program that Zach has set up.

Stephanie is busy refurbishing our observatory. We are having it cleaned. The telescope is being taken apart and cleaned. The curtains will be brought down and cleaned. They are working with Zach to look for a donor for a CCD camera, which is an electronic camera with a drive that is attached to a telescope and takes photographs, and also a lap top to program to run the camera so the camera and the telescope move in a certain pattern so they can take pictures of various sky events and then send them in to have them reproduced for the shows. They are looking for a donor for that camera. That's the end of the report.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Thank you.

MS. FUHRMANN:
You're welcome.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Development Committee.

MR. BROXMEYER:
Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the last meeting. I didn't get to take an opportunity to comment on the Gershwin gala, so I'd like to take a few minutes to do that.

First of all, I'd like to thank the Vanderbilt staff, as well as Zach and Lance for their hard work and commitment, especially during very difficult times. You all did a great job. Thank you very much. I'd also like to thank all the Board Members for their hard work in making calls and helping to raise money. I'd especially like to thank Carl and Donna for their hard work in setting up the event. Everyone's efforts came together. Overall, it really turned out to be a successful event.

Financially it was a tremendous success. The net revenues for the event almost doubled from last year. I think that's fantastic. We're right on the budget that Zach had prepared, which initially seemed a little lofty but we hit it, so that was fantastic.

The Development Committee met about a week or a week and a half ago to begin plans for next year's event. It probably will take place around the same time, early August. The music will be Irving Berlin. I'll start studying up on him.

In the next few weeks we're going to be meeting to discuss planning out the event, budgeting, dealing with the problems that occurred during the past event and how to deal with that in the future to avoid it. Our goal will be - this past event the net revenue was approximately \$35,000. I don't think we should have any problem raising that net revenue to over \$50,000 for next year. A little extra work from everyone, and I think we'll get there with no problem.

That's really my report for now. Any questions?

DR. GITTELMAN:
Susan.

MS. LEBOW:
Unfortunately, I had to be out of town on business for this event. I so enjoyed the last one; I wanted to be at this one. One of the comments that I made in talking to some of the people that I was in touch with was that a lot of people travel during the summer. A comment was made that we might consider making it early September when families were back in the groove and children were back in school because many of the people that I contacted were away for the summer and couldn't be there. I just wanted to put that out as a possibility for next year's event.

MR. BROXMEYER:
I think that we should definitely look into that. The only problem I can see in September is between Labor Day weekend and the Jewish holidays over two weekends, it could be a difficult thing.

MS. LEBOW:
It could be, but that was a problem this year. If anyone else encountered that in contacting people, I thought I'd bring it up.

MR. BROXMEYER:
Okay, thanks.

MS. LEBOW:
You did?

MS. FUHRMANN:
Well, we had to split up to - Mark went to pick Josh up and I stayed here and came to the event, which was not a good solution.

MS. PERICONI:
The reason we did it last year in August was because we had had the 50th anniversary in September, and because there was some difficulty with that event we felt we had to change the season. We have always had the gala in September so we changed the season to a sultry summer evening. We purposely did that, not to have another September event. Whether we should reconsider, I don't know. Perhaps we should move it -

MS. FUHRMANN:
What about October?

MS. PERICONI:

October is difficult.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Much greater weather problems -

MS. PERICONI:

Lance, perhaps we should consider doing it later in August, the second weekend in August because of camp situations. Michael, that's an idea.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Donna is going to speak to Madeline Kole. We're going to get a few different dates this time and hopefully we can get something that works for everyone.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I was the only one that was affected by the date, and I understood it totally.

MS. LEBOW:

The problem really is when we first talked about this, it was great for me and great for people I knew. But because it's so far in advance, people don't have their schedules -

MS. FUHRMANN:

No, when the day was picked I was the only one who said it was no good. I understood completely.

MR. BROXMEYER:

I think, unfortunately, when you're dealing with summers and so many people, you're going to have a certain percentage that just aren't going to -

MS. PERICONI:

Susan, three hundred tickets were sold this time.

MS. LEBOW:

I'm not saying -

MS. PERICONI:

No, I'm just saying, obviously there was the turnout we expected for it. June is impossible because of graduations and Father's Day. July is too early into the summer. September, we decided to change the theme for it in the event, but we'll discuss it. But I agree; I know what you're saying. It is a problem. It's just difficult to come up with a solution.

DR. GITTLEMAN:

But the committee can handle this.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I was very impressed with your efforts, Michael. I must tell you, I was the recipient of numerous phone calls. I know that you were very diligent in your efforts. So was Carl. Donna, it was a great idea from the beginning. It was executed beautifully. I thank everyone for their efforts and their contributions. Staff was wonderful. When

it rains, it pours. We did break the drought. We can take credit for something. Thank you. Finance Committee, Tony is not here. Marge.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Everyone should have received our year-to-date. Just to note that admissions are ahead of budget. If they keep going on this pace, we should have a record year. Everything is looking pretty good.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Cash flow is a little restrained.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Cash flow is a little restrained. August is a three-payroll month. However, we do seem to be holding our own, as was mentioned in committee.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments? Thank you. Personnel Committee, Gary is not here. Was there a meeting?

MR. MALLAMO:

No.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Membership, Doug Shaw.

MR. SHAW:

Zach and Wendy have been working diligently at developing a new system of benefits for membership, which are still in discussion. I would like to read them into the minutes. I apologize for not having copies for everybody. The major changes are now offering discounts for site use for some of our corporate folks. The benefits for individual members, seniors, individuals and families are unlimited free admission to the museum grounds, mansion tours, exhibits, and planetarium for a year, seasonal event brochures and newsletters, discounts on educational programs, workshops, plays and other special events, and a 10 percent discount in the museum shop.

The patron level at \$150, it's the above benefits plus six complimentary tickets for any special non-fund raising event.

The benefactor for \$300, all the above plus recognition in the museum newsletter and a 10 percent discount on site use subject to availability.

For business and corporate members, non-profit organizations at \$250 or businesses at \$500 are the benefits of benefactor memberships plus 50 complimentary passes to visit grounds and attend mansion tours, exhibits, and planetarium shows plus recognition in the newsletter.

For the \$1,000 corporate membership it's the above benefits plus 100 complimentary passes and a 10 percent discount on site use.

A corporate Eagles Nest at \$5,000, it's all of the above plus 250 complimentary passes, advertisement on planetarium dome before public shows and a 25 percent discount on site use.

Corporate gold coast membership at \$10,000, it's all of the above plus 500 complimentary passes, sponsorship, recognition for a major event or a program, and one complimentary site use per year, subject to availability.

These are still in discussion, so if anyone has any suggestions, you can forward them to me or to Zach.

Membership for 2002, as of the end of August, we were at \$13,445 plus \$3,450 for the membership allocation from the Gershwin party. We are on target to finish the year on budget.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Is there any discussion? I'm a little concerned about the site use. I don't know that a dollar value of the site use components in each of those offerings -- I'm sure that you will look at it to make sure that, for example, the site use for my family when we had my daughter's bat mitzvah here was \$5,000. Now what you're saying is that I can get a 10 percent discount if I made a \$300 contribution. What would happen is that as I was signing the contract for \$5,000, I would give you \$300 and say take off \$500 from the bill.

MR. STUDENROTH:

Right.

DR. GITTELMAN:

That doesn't benefit the Museum.

MR. STUDENROTH:

If I could jump in because I'm the author of this, your math is absolutely right. The thought, though, is that it's very likely to drive more business. In other words, someone might well be encouraged to join and to take advantage of that discount who otherwise would not use the site. It's the same theory that if you can get two in for the price of one, it's more likely that two people will come for that one admission, than they would not come at all. So you're not losing the admission; you're gaining the one. That's the basic theory.

DR. GITTELMAN:

My problem, Zach, is that you automatically will have everyone who would have used the site take the 10 percent discount and contribute the \$300. So you have a net loss of revenue. I know you understand my arithmetic.

MR. STUDENROTH:

Yes, I do.

DR. GITTELMAN:

You have an automatic net loss in revenue. What I would ask you to do is to project out your automatic loss in revenue on each of those lines and then to project what your expected revenue gain is to see if you still want to do it quite that way. Or did I just pay too much? If the arithmetic is really different --

MR. STUDENROTH:

No, yours is the net savings to the individual user is \$200 because they would surely join for \$300 to take a \$500 discount. So the loss to the museum for that one particular use is \$200. The theory, however, which was our theory, I presume, when

we lowered the price of a planetarium show from \$3 to \$2 is we may drive more business and therefore actually get people paying for two shows because they're slightly shorter and they're already here and they're different. Therefore, they will spend \$4 instead of the \$3. Or they will come when they wouldn't have come previously because it's a better value than it was before.

When we do the arithmetic on this, which I have yet to be able to sit down with Carol because she's been out and I've been out, is to see how many actual individuals are renting the museum per year, how much would we therefore be losing, and can we make that up in one single rental which we otherwise wouldn't have gotten? That's the individual side of it.

More importantly, I feel, is the business and the corporate side because museums have a terrible time - we don't have a product that we're selling per se. Selling the use of this as part of a larger program is a true value that we have, which is of great value but we haven't really developed that yet. We want to look at promoting business and corporate membership here as well and bringing the use of the premises in that.

DR. GITTELMAN:

While you're doing this, so that we don't become redundant, can we have an analysis of what site use generates, what the former site use has been, what our saturation levels are, and not only what our saturation level is but what is the saturation level that we want. Truly we don't want an event every night in the court yard.

MR. STUDENROTH:

Correct.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Let's come up with some sense of what we want to sell and what proportion of what was sold. It may be that you just don't want to tie up every Saturday night throughout the summer time.

MR. STUDENROTH:

I've discussed that with Carol as well. Obviously, this is a staffing and personnel issue. If we have appreciable increase in the use, now we're having to staff it, so those costs go up and it's unreasonable to think that she, who is a single person on staff, could handle a much larger volume so we have to look at those implications too. But we're just analyzing how we're using the site, can we develop this, and how does this fit into the membership picture.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I would like to see projections.

MR. STUDENROTH:

That's all in discussion.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. Anything else, Doug?

MR. SHAW:

No, that's all.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any other questions? Dinosaur Committee, Ed is not here. Do you want to do a report on that, Lance?

MR. MALLAMO:

Ed is not here tonight. His father has been ill, and he was unable to attend. He did indicate to me that he had been notified by New York Institute of Technology that we should have a meeting arranged between the museum and NYIT sometime within the next two weeks.

Also on a related matter, I have personally took a trip to Orlando on August 21st to meet with representatives of the Oceanering Entertainment Systems, Universal Studios and ideas at Disney MGM Studios on a possible collaborative effort on the permanent dinosaur exhibit. This was a connection made for us by Ray Ann Havasy. Ray Ann did attend the meeting as well. I thought it was a very productive meeting. We learned a lot. We spent a lot of time with these individuals who are very anxious to assist in the development of a project. I'm just waiting to receive a proposal. I got an e-mail the other day. I should have something by - I was hoping I would have had it by tonight. We'll have to keep you posted on that. I think that looks very promising. A lot of good ideas came out of it.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Questions or comments? Thank you.

MR. MALLAMO:

I'll also just add that even despite the heat of the summer, which had a somewhat negative effect on the dinosaur exhibit because it was sometimes over 110 degrees in the building with the summer heat, but hopefully when we get our new gas hookup shortly, we'll be able to get some heat and air conditioning in there. The exhibit did make over \$5,000 so far. It is bringing in revenue. I think when we told the County that we were developing alternative revenue sources that has certainly had a positive impact. We're having a big conference on September 17th to announce its opening with the County Executive. We look forward to fighting people off when they get here.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Well, Lance, you might as well go right into your report.

MR. MALLAMO:

I'll just continue on the dinosaurs. We are doing new educational programs. Our reservation clerk told me that the teachers are very thrilled and excited. We have six or eight bookings so far for these two new programs. The brochure has only been out for about ten days, so we're looking forward to having that in place.

I think for my report I would just like to focus on the large number of capital projects that are going on right now. It's really getting to be a massive job just keeping everything moving and getting the public here with all of these different activities happening simultaneously and all of the daily emergencies that happen with electrical outages and water shut-offs, etc. Things are really moving along on many, many projects. We are in the midst of more than 50 percent of installing gas mains, natural gas, to all the buildings in time for this season's heating system. I'm sure I told you before this involved bringing gas up Little Neck Road to the museum site. They are now on the property putting the piping underground to each building.

The HVAC work in the mansion is ongoing. We're trying to get the systems in so that we will have heat there by the fall, so there will be relocations from time to time of different exhibits, including the mummy, which will be relocated from different rooms almost on a moment's notice. We're going to be putting the mummy on wheels so that we don't have to relocate it from that wing of the building. We've gone over this with the staff, what's the best way to protect it while the work goes on. We have worked out a plan where it can stay within that wing and just be relocated for construction as it goes on.

I'm happy to report that the curatorial staff worked with the contractors regarding the drilling that was to occur. The contractors purchased a special core-drilling piece of machinery that does a phenomenal job of drilling with no vibration. In fact, they told me that the alcohol in the jars in the invertebrate room barely moved as this drilling of a five-inch hole took place right next to it. So we don't believe we have to empty these rooms with all the collections as we initially thought.

Next week they will be starting the installation of our new fencing. The fence has been delivered. It's absolutely beautiful. This is where all the chain link fencing is right now. It will be replaced with wrought iron fencing of a decorative design. We will be expanding our paving and walkway project.

For the first time we will be making the marine museum first floor accessible to the handicapped so that the walkway will go from the parking lot right to the door of that structure, which is now on our video tour of the mansion.

We're also redoing all of the electric in the mansion, actually the mansion and other historic buildings. All the historic buildings will be rewired. We have asked DPW to design and expand the HVAC project to the caretaker's cottage, the powerhouse, Normandy Manor, the marine museum, and the boathouse, so that we'll have new heat and air conditioning in those buildings as well.

The museum is getting a hefty credit from Key Span as an offset for some of the cost associated with this. We expect a credit for nearly \$60,000 on our Key Span bill over the next year, which will be very much appreciated. Key Span is donating the cost of bringing the gas service up Little Neck Road, which came up to near \$200,000 in cost to them that normally they would not be paying for.

Our seawall project is also well underway. They have done the cut-back next to the seaplane hangar building and have installed some temporary bracing on the hillside. On the stone section of it, they have removed all the vegetation and re-pointed the masonry that was missing on the seawall and reinstalled I would say almost 80 percent, at this point, of the large boulders and fieldstone that had been forced out of the seawall by the Nor'easter in 1992. That work is all done. We expect by the fall of this year the stone seawall between the boathouse and the seaplane hangar will be totally repaired with only the portion of the seawall south of the seaplane hangar, which is going to be raised from three feet to eight feet to be completed, so that project is working out very well.

Unfortunately, we had intended to move the Egyptian mummy to the caretaker's cottage, but with all the activity occurring in the south parking lot we have been told this is going to be a staging area for at least a year or two for construction vehicles

and equipment and materials. They have advised us not to relocate it to that area because it would be unsafe for children to walk through.

That's why we're going to be keeping the mummy in the mansion area. This is a real coordinated effort on the part of the staff who has been very, very cooperative in making adjustments on an almost daily basis to accommodate the public and our busy schedule. To see wonderful things happen here, we're very, very excited about it. This is really years of work all coming together at one point.

Next week on September 12th we will be visiting the Suffolk County Legislative Parks Committee who have the Vanderbilt Museum as the primary agenda item on their Parks Committee agenda. All Trustees are welcome to attend. We will be talking about the status of our endowment and about the status of capital projects here at the Museum and what our needs are. We're looking forward to that meeting as well.

MS. PERICONI:

Lance, did you say wrought iron fencing?

MR. MALLAMO:

It's an iron fence. It is not a painted fence. The fence is powder coated with a baked enamel black finish.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Is it really iron or it's aluminum?

MR. MALLAMO:

It's not aluminum. It is an iron fence. If it were not powder coated it would rust. You may have even seen it, Donna. This is not the exact fence, but it's very similar to one that was used in the restoration of Central Park recently.

MS. PERICONI:

Excellent.

MR. MALLAMO:

It's got cross bracing and a medallion in the center. I think it's quite beautiful. Frankly, it wouldn't have to go very far to be an improvement over the ratty chain link that we have up here right now. I think it's going to be quite spectacular. It was a design by DPW specifically for this site. Actually, they did a lot of work on this to get it to be installed in a level fashion without stepping down because of the terrain we have here. That was a real challenge. I know that the people of DPW put a lot of effort into this job.

MS. PERICONI:

What company will you be using? Do you recall?

MR. MALLAMO:

Bill, do you remember? It's a firm in the Bronx. This fence is custom made for this site. It is not a stock fence that you would buy.

The other thing I'll add is that we were reviewed today, quite unexpectedly but we were very happy to have them here, by the National Parks Service who were reviewing the property as a national historic landmark. We are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the New York State Register of Historic

Places. Normally that would be the highest level of significance, but actually there is one step higher reserved for the primary historic sites.

MR. STUDENROTH:

The competition for this is very, very fierce.

MR. MALLAMO:

Very, very fierce. Zach had contacted them a few months ago, and Carolyn Pitts arrived today from Philadelphia. We gave her an extensive tour of the property. She was thrilled with what she saw, very, very impressed. I think that she was thrilled that the acquisition of Normandy Manor and the Museum was so forward looking and the extent of the programs that we have here. I left with the impression that she left here with a very favorable view of the Vanderbilt Museum.

Austin O'Brien was also with her. He is from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation representing the State Historic Preservation Officer. Actually I reviewed with Austin some of our handicapped accessibility issues as we went through the mansion. He did not recall that any plan had ever been submitted to their office, which was a requirement of the ADA law. He saw firsthand the several constraints that we have within the mansion that formed the architectural barriers inherent in the construction of the estate that are almost impossible to remove to have full ADA compliance.

I did discuss with him the view of the architect that we have working on this issue, David Swift, who is going to have a report ready for the County by October 28th on our ADA compliance issue. Each of them understood fully that in several key areas on the second floor, notably the connecting hallway between the organ room and the yellow bedroom, the balcony between the yellow bedroom and the main hall near Mr. Vanderbilt's bedroom, and the hallways between Mrs. Vanderbilt's bedroom and her dressing room and her closet, none of which are over twenty-eight inches in width and would not be possible for wheelchairs to be accommodated. Even Mr. Swift looked at the possibility of putting in elevators as an alternative, not taking into consideration the cost, and we realized we would need a minimum of four. He doesn't know how they would be properly installed without affecting other spaces. I think he is leaning heavily toward the remedial mitigation measures as an alternative interpretation, including possibly using the video tour that we have in place currently.

I anxiously await that report. I was glad Austin had the opportunity to come through himself firsthand and see it. He is very familiar with the property for many, many years and seemed to fully understand our property and our problems here regarding handicapped accessibility. We look forward to resolving that issue.

MS. PERICONI:

I have a question.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes.

MS. PERICONI:

Do we have any definite plans for the peacock pool yet?

MR. MALLAMO:

Our definite plan currently is we just got the authorization to extend - which I didn't mention the other capital project - our irrigation system. This will be starting Monday. That will be to put in underground sprinklers through the museum property including all the museum gardens, the courtyard, the golf course, and any major lawn areas. We just got the go-ahead to extend that to the peacock pool earlier this week. Once we have the water infrastructure in place there, we will be able to again bring Cornell back in to begin to plan to landscape there.

What we did there this year, Donna, was when we redid the cesspool at the powerhouse, we were able to - because we had excavation occurring in that area, we put in a whole new drainage system. Previously the driveway emptied into the peacock pool. That's why it was always filled with mud. We connected all the drains and put in piping in the same trench as the piping as the powerhouse to drain that area to a different dry well so we no longer have the drainage problem that we had. Now having water there was the last piece of the puzzle. Actually the last piece is fixing the cracks in the pool. Then we can fill the pool. We have an estimate for that already.

MS. PERICONI:

Do you think we'll have that completed in 2003?

MR. MALLAMO:

I definitely think we will, yes.

MS. PERICONI:

That would be a wonderful fundraiser, the peacock pool. I have some great ideas for that.

MR. MALLAMO:

I definitely think it will be done. It's always been a priority of mine because it is the first thing you see when you come to the Museum.

MS. PERICONI:

It's so special.

MR. MALLAMO:

It's never been a particularly attractive area. To have that landscaped and filled - we have done some work on the peacock house -

MS. PERICONI:

We have them along the south shore. A couple of our estates have them regularly visiting.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, peacocks are available. They would make a wonderful addition there.

MS. PERICONI:

And I have an organization that I think perhaps will help us with that. I would love to see that for 2003. And it's doable, then.

MR. MALLAMO:

Right. Actually doing the seawall project has helped move the seaplane hangar project along because we're going to be using some of the skills of that contractor to get the seaplane hangar cleaned out and having the area widened there. It's enabled our planning to now move a lot quicker. If you get an opportunity to go down there sometime, it's quite different than you remembered it. It's going to be a great asset. Any other questions?

DR. GITTELMAN:

I've enjoyed every moment of your report - well, almost, except for the reports about the handicapped accessibility. But I enjoyed all discussion about the capital projects.

MR. MALLAMO:

I will just say that I know the handicapped issue has been a major concern of ours. I have to tell you we have been inundated with a number of guests with disabilities and met the challenge each and every time. I think for the most part all of our visitors have been very happy. We have realized the steps we have gone to be accommodating, even to the point of we're now working on putting our video tour in closed caption for the hearing impaired. That will be the next step, and then we'll be replicating it in foreign languages as well. We have several languages right off the bat that are going to be done, including Russian. We have a large contingent of Russian visitors coming through here on group tours. Our tour guide who brings them has offered to interpret into Russian for us. That will be coming. This experience has been a very positive one in the end. I think it has been very beneficial for us.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Are you done?

MR. MALLAMO:

I think. I could think of something else, but I'll be quiet now.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Save something for next meeting.

MR. MALLAMO:

I know that tennis is on tonight.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Donna.

MS. PERICONI:

I feel as Steve feels. We're probably the only two old timers here and Marjorie.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I beg your pardon.

MS. PERICONI:

Marjorie, you look young.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I wish I felt it.

MS. PERICONI:
It was an outstanding report.

DR. GITTELMAN:
It's colossal. I mean, when we put together the plan to get these things done, it was a dream.

MS. FUHRMANN:
Pie in the sky.

DR. GITTELMAN:
And here we are. I would say it went by like that but it didn't.

MS. FUHRMANN:
We're talking about getting the peacocks.

DR. GITTELMAN:
I can't believe we're talking about getting the peacocks. It's wonderful. It's all very wonderful.

MS. PERICONI:
Obviously, it has everything to do with our Executive Director.

MS. FUHRMANN:
And his marvelous staff.

MR. MALLAMO:
Yes, I don't think we could accommodate any of this without the wonderful job all of the staff has done to pitch in and work as a team to get these things going.

MS. PERICONI:
So we're leaving on a happy note.

MS. FUHRMANN:
We still have Steve to go.

DR. GITTELMAN:
Steve's done. I don't want to say anything. I feel like I've lived it. It's been wonderful. Do we have any unfinished business? Any new business?

MR. MALLAMO:
I'll just add the Committee for Normandy Manor had one meeting. Bert and Bill were unable to be here tonight. Although Donna is on the committee, she was unable to make the meeting. It was very preliminary. We toured the site. We expect to have a report at the next meeting.

MS. LEBOW:
I would like to be on that committee.

MS. FUHRMANN:
It's in the minutes that you are.

MR. MALLAMO:

Okay, good.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I mentioned you because you had asked me previously. Given no new business, and that we have not established a need for an executive session, can I have a motion to adjourn?

MS. FUHRMANN:

I'll do that.

MS. LEBOW:

Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We are now adjourned.

(Dr. Gittelmann adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.)

SG/ap

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