

## Budget Update

After months of negotiations, Connecticut has a budget. While the SHPO's operating budget remains intact, for the next two years \$5M of the Community Investment Act Fund, a significant source of the SHPO's granting funds, will be reallocated to the General Fund to help offset revenue losses. It is still unclear whether this money will be distributed evenly across the four organizations that benefit from the CIA fund (SHPO, Department of Housing, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and Department of Agriculture). The SHPO is anticipating an even distribution, which would result in approximately \$1.25 million in lost funding for our grant programs for each of the next two years.

In other funding news, the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit is in jeopardy of elimination under the federal tax reform plan currently working its way through congress. [Click here for more information about the program and how to help save it.](#)

## New Additions to the National Register

October was a busy month for the National Register of Historic Places program with three new listings that encompass a total of 267 acres and nearly 400 historic properties! These National Register nominations help recognize three centuries of Connecticut's history. They include the Westbrook Town Center Historic District in Westbrook, which highlights the town's pattern of rural coastal development from 1700 through 1966, as well as the late eighteenth century Abijah Comstock House and grounds in New Canaan. In New London, the Hodges Square Historic District nomination (pictured) provides insight into the city's transition from whaling into a manufacturing economy through recognition of a late nineteenth to early twentieth century neighborhood that developed as the city expanded. The district includes Riverside Park, overlooking the Thames River. In Wilton and Ridgefield, the National Park Service also updated documentation on the Weir Farm National Historic Site with the first park-wide National Register nomination.



Did you know that most National Register nominations are available for review and download on the NPS's website? Check it out!

## Superstorm Sandy - 5 Years Later

In October 2012, Superstorm Sandy struck much of the East Coast, causing billions of dollars in damage to properties, many of them historic. The next year, Connecticut's State Historic Preservation Office received some \$8 million in federal disaster recovery funds earmarked for historic preservation.

Since then the SHPO has used the funds to identify and preserve historic resources in the coastal counties of Fairfield, New Haven, Middlesex, and New London. The projects, many of which are ongoing, include:

**Repairs to historic properties.** The Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Assistance Grant program helped rehabilitate a Victorian-era mansion in New Haven; an early nineteenth century lighthouse in Bridgeport; an 1891 Shingle-style chapel, now used by a social services agency, in Stamford; the Old Barn at Greenwich Point, the oldest extant structure from the estate that became Greenwich Point Park; and other properties.

**Surveys and nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.** Projects range from the Stonington Cemetery, a Colonial-era family graveyard that evolved into an active memorial-style cemetery; to the Morris Cove Historic District, a nineteenth century seaside resort turned "urban suburb" in New Haven; to the Westbrook Town Center Historic District.

**Survey of underwater resources.** Nautical archaeologists have surveyed offshore and upriver locations, assessed the post-Sandy condition of known shipwrecks, and identified additional resources. Recently, for example, the team identified the remains of the steamship Washington, a side-paddle steamer that sank off the coast of Stratford in 1831.

**Resiliency planning.** The SHPO is working with municipalities to incorporate historic preservation into resiliency planning. Cultural resource and hazard mitigation specialists have led charrettes with regional Councils of Government; developed datasets on historic properties vulnerable to flooding and sea level rise; analyzed plans in 91 towns; held outreach sessions with direct-shorefront towns; and produced a best-practices guide for planners.

**Digitization of data and digital mapping.** More than 50,000 paper documents in the SHPO's library have been scanned, and a searchable database on resources in the coastal counties has been created. Meanwhile, addresses have been geocoded for use in a Geographic Information System. Eventually, researchers will be able to search spatially for historic properties and use hyperlinked data for a variety of research and planning purposes. Other projects include **archaeological surveys**; booklets on **archaeological preserves**; a survey of **historic dams**; **historic context reports** on property types; and a booklet for property owners on **protecting historic buildings during climate change**.



# Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

## Identifying Historic Properties - Part 2

In the last installment about Section 106, we described the process of defining and surveying the project area. A project proposed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) was used as an example to demonstrate how the process moves forward, but their actions are consistent among most federal agencies. In that example, the DOT recognized that the project had the potential for impacting historic properties and hired a consultant to conduct both archaeological and architectural surveys. Before initiating the surveys, the consultant reviewed existing records on file with SHPO including archaeological site files, national and state register listings, and previously completed survey reports in the project vicinity to develop a context for interpreting the survey results. The archaeological survey included subsurface testing, which consists of hand-excavating small units measuring approximately 1.5 feet in width excavated at regular intervals. The soil is removed in layers following the soil stratigraphy and sifted through screens to retrieve any artifacts that may be present. In this example, the consultant identified a small scatter of typical nineteenth century domestic debris. The architectural survey was completed by a combination of deed research, visiting local repositories for historic information, a field investigation from public rights-of-way, and interviews with property owners, when possible. The consultant identified several historic residential structures and a Civil War era cemetery. The next installment will present the next steps of the Section 106 process, which includes evaluating the potential eligibility for listing these resources on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as an evaluation of project effects.

The picture below is of one of the historic homes identified adjacent to the bridge replacement project.



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## Upcoming Events

**New Haven Preservation Trust - Preserving & Celebrating African American Historic Places: Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 5:30, Dixwell**



## Avenue United Church of Christ

The SHPO is pleased to sponsor an event hosted by the New Haven Preservation Trust on the preservation of African American historic places with speaker Brent Leggs, Senior Field Officer for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Free and Open to the Public. To register email [info@nhpt.org](mailto:info@nhpt.org) or call 203.562.5919.

## Connecticut Preservation Action - Preservation Summit: Historic Preservation Tools for Development

**RESCHEDULED** - Friday, December 1, 2017 from 8:30-12:00 at The Lyceum, 227 Lawrence Street, Hartford - A conference for developers, municipal planners and leaders, local historic preservation groups and others about historic preservation tools, programs and ideas to enhance community and economic development in Connecticut. [Register for the event here](#)

## Tax Credit Presentation

SHPO staff will provide a brief presentation on the tax credits available to corporations at the Charter Oak *Cultural* Center on Thursday, December 7, 2017 from 4:00-6:00 p.m.

*Please email us if you have an upcoming event you'd like featured in our next newsletter. And see below for upcoming events at the State Museums.*

## News from the Museums



## Prudence Crandall Museum

Happy Birthday to Prudence Crandall! Prudence Crandall Day was celebrated at the Museum on Saturday, September 2nd with vendors, music, blacksmithing demonstrations and - of course - birthday cake!



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**Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine**



Back by popular demand, A Historic Halloween at Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine! On Friday and Saturday, October 27 and 28<sup>th</sup>, over 1200 visitors flocked to Old New-Gate Prison for a Halloween a la New-Gate! This “come as you wish to be” event featured live performances from the Marquis of East Granby Junior Fyfe and Drum Corps, and re-enactors from the Lebanon Towne Militia. This event was the first of many collaborations to come between the SHPO office (which owns and operates the museum), Old New Gate, Inc., a nonprofit group that promotes the history of Old New-Gate Prison, the East Granby Historical Society, and the Town of East Granby. With special thanks to State

Representative Tami Zawistowski for her support.

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## Henry Whitfield State Museum

On Thursday November 2<sup>nd</sup>, staff from the Henry Whitfield State Museum were on the Green in Guilford to attend a ceremony to recognize the installation of three “Witness Stones” to mark the lives of Moses, Phillis and Candace, three of the many African American slaves living in Guilford in the 1700s. The Witness Stone Project was created by Guilford Social Studies teacher Dennis Culliton and marks the beginning of a multi-year collaborative effort between local and state museums, the town of Guilford, and students at the Adams Middle School.



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## Eric Sloan Museum



Friends of the Eric Sloan Museum were busy in the past month. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, the Friends hosted its Harvest Party to great success. The “educational” outhouse on the grounds of the museum was recently restored and the Friends started the process of restoring the Noah Blake cabin. Pictured here is SHPO staff member, Todd Levine and a member of the Friends group taking a closer look at the foundation of the Noah Blake Cabin.

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# SHPO Office will be Closed

The SHPO office will be closed Friday, November 10th in honor of Veteran's Day. The SHPO staff extends our deepest appreciation to our country's service men and women.

The SHPO will also be closed on Friday, November 24th for the first of three mandatory furlough days. The remaining two will be December 26th and 27th.

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