

Building Renovations Task Force Report, November

Lots of progress this month.

1. Excavation. Tom Havill began work on the excavation. As is often the case with these kinds of projects, it was a bit more complicated than expected. When he dug out the back yard, he encountered a lot of debris from an old building (the Woodstock Gas Works), which was located in the back yard and burned down in the 19th century. This all had to be hauled away.

As I write this, Tom is just finishing up what he is able to do this fall. This included the heavy work of digging trenches, laying pipes for drainage, installing two dry wells and hooking up the drainage pipes to the dry wells. He has, of course, done the major regrading to get the slope working away from the building and exposing the foundation where he can. He was able to get the exterior grade well below the floor level of the Chapel and below the ground level of the crawl space underneath. This should help that area quite a lot.

The trench and drain below the door to the Chapel will also be a great improvement. At this point he has left that trench slightly larger than it will be when the project is completed.

To wrap things up for this year, Tom will rake out the lawn and spread some hay over top.

Robert Black is planning to visit North Chapel on 11/17/17 at noon, to review progress on this project and to enable him to draw up some plans for finishing the project in the spring.

2. We're reviewing two proposals for the insulation project and expect to make a recommendation to the board soon.

3. We're also contacting contractors about the renovations to the Chapel and SE rooms. Inspiring them to focus on preparing bids while they are engaged in other projects is a challenge but one we're working on.

4. While this work is underway, it's worthwhile to begin talking about what we'd like to accomplish in parlors and offices. Since we now have a good idea of what we've been able to raise as part of the campaign, we're more able to discuss the benefits and tradeoffs involved in various approaches to this work. The questions revolve around whether we want to proceed with planning a major construction project there, as we envisioned in the sketches that were part of the task force's report to the board. This will be fairly expensive, take a long time, and disrupt the use of the public rooms as well as Geraldine's and Leon's offices. Or can we accomplish much of what we want to do with less work and a lower out-of-pocket cost? Robert Black will be away for the month of December, but we could plan on a meeting in January to fully explore these options.

Submitted by Michael Stoner