

EXTERIOR PRESERVATION 2011-2012:



Figure 1: Restored facade

Project Description

In June of 2010 the Town of Lexington contracted with Menders, Torrey and Spencer Inc., to prepare the plans and specifications for implementation of exterior envelope restoration work as described in the Historic Structures Report published in September, 2009.

The preservation and restoration scope was intended to return the extant exterior to an appearance closely resembling the historic appearance of the Stone Building. The accepted period of restoration was the 1840-1870 period which was the longest span of the Lyceum use and had the most intact evidence of exterior finishes. The most important preservation steps included replacement of the asphalt shingle roof, grading around the building with installation of a 3 foot gravel drip, and restoration of the chimney flashing. The foundation was scheduled for selective repointing, as were all three chimneys and the brick portico. Window openings were to be spot glazed and made operational. Storm sash would be cleaned. Shutters would be removed and repaired, and door hardware cleaned for proper operation. After careful removal of the balance of aluminum siding, damaged clapboards were to be replaced. Repainting of all the siding, trim and openings was to take place after existing finishes had been stripped and lead paint

properly disposed of. Evidence of rot and deterioration was to be repaired so the areas of failure do not expand. The budget available for the work was \$182,000.

The plans and specifications were prepared and the project publically bid in September of 2010. At conclusion of the bid process a single bid of \$365,000 was received. This bid was well beyond the established budget and analysis identified the primary issue as the cost of lead paint handling. The new requirement for lead paint mitigation promulgated by the Commonwealth that summer had created a volatile bidding climate for painting, which was already estimated at about half the project budget since it was known that removal of the accumulated paint layering would be an expensive proposition.

The project was rebid in the Spring of 2011 with the General Contractor instructed to provide the painting under his own services and with further clarification in the specifications about the required level of work under the new lead paint handling requirements. This round of bidding was more successful and Campbell Construction Group, LLC of Peabody, MA was selected as the contractor with a bid of \$178,000.

Work commenced in May with removal of the aluminum siding from all elevations. Work progressed well and in early June a discussion was held on site to review the condition of the copper skirt at the eaves of the roof. The skirt was in worse condition than had been hoped and the resoldering of seams was deemed impractical due to the worn material. Cleaning the existing solder and wire brushing the surface would wear through the copper. With the goal of limiting the added cost to the project it was elected to remove the drip line work from the project and complete that work with Town resources and to incur a minor increase in cost to remove the copper skirt, provide a new copper liner for the gutter and provide expansion joints for the gutters. This change added \$4,950 to the total project cost. At this time three tab asphalt shingles were requested to be substituted for the specified architectural style asphalt shingles since they were considered more sympathetic to the historic appearance of the Stone Building.



Figure 2: Copper gutter liner

Because the layering of paint was so thick on the building it was deemed prudent to remove all paint – with reserve of some protected areas to preserve the historic paint sequence because new coats of paint over the existing would be subject to failure if the heavy underlayers lost adhesion. With the proximity of the adjacent church, school and daycare paint removal by mechanical means was prohibited and chemical stripping was done instead. The painters made multiple applications of SmartStripPro by Dumond Chemicals. Described as a low odor, low VOC paint stripper, the painter applied the material with brushes and allowed generous lengths of time for the stripper to dwell on the wood. Eventually the paint layers were removed down to bare wood. The removal task took several months and was essentially the only activity on the site since the other work was either above or below the paint work areas and would not be reachable during the paint removal process.



Figure 3: Shoulder at chimney

Eventually the wood was stripped and the amount of required clapboard replacement and trim repair could be tallied and measured against the contract unit quantities. There was slightly more trim and



Figure 4: Fire escape footing before removal

The fire escape was removed, exposing a gap in the mortar at the foundation of the Stone Building. Though not large, because the site work had been removed from the contract the architect and owner discussed means of closing up the opening to prevent animals and water from entering the building. The Town was able to procure services for repointing the gap and installing the gravel drip along with hard plastic edging to keep the stones in place.

molding repair but the clapboards were covered by the units. Campbell Construction extended their repairs to cover the additional trim exposed by the paint removal.

The Town of Lexington's own consultant disconnected and drained pad mounted air conditioning unit and removed the units a little later when they would have been in the way of demolition of concrete pad. Removal of the fire escape from the north elevation was done in preparation for the next phase of work when the addition is to be constructed. The concrete pad at the foot of the

Repointing of the chimneys revealed an odd detail at the south east chimney shoulder where a copper cap had to be devised to cover what would have been upward facing mortar joints.

With the wood, roofing and masonry work complete the painters returned to paint the exterior. For the body and trim the color was California Paints Jewett White #HIST102. This reflects the off-white coloring of the 1840-1870 period and is an amalgam of the multiple generations of slightly cream whites that showed in the paint samples and the light coloring in the earliest photographs. The sash on door colors required more conjecture. Very little strong paint evidence remained on the sash, even the oldest in the attic, but fragments showed a very dark series at the earliest evidence. The historic front door was entirely stripped in the 1940's and the other two exterior doors were installed in 1947. Similar precedence had to be used to guide paint selection and after discussion with the Town, California Paints Sayward Pine #HIST101 was selected for the fenestration and the shutters.

All shutters were scheduled to be painted. Many sets were stored in the building basement. Paint removed was best handled off site and the shutters were removed for treatment. During removal a count of extant shutters showed that several pair were missing. In addition as paint was removed several additional shutters revealed deterioration requiring more extensive repairs than the corner brackets and screws initially required. A change order was requested to replace the failed and missing shutters, including the half window shutters at the quarter round attic windows in the tympanum of the façade. This change for \$6,239 dollars was processed through a town purchase order and brought the complete project cost to \$189,189. Installation of the final shutters occurred in February 2012 and completed the project.



Figure 5: Restored facade and partial east elevation



Figure 6: Restored rear elevation



Figure 7: Restored rear and west elevations