

Meeting Notes

COSTEP-CT met Dec. 2, 2010 at the Connecticut State Library, Van Block Facility.

Present: Kathy Craughwell-Varda (Conservation ConneCTion), Jane Cullinane (Conn. State Library, Preservation Office), Dana Hewson (Mystic Seaport), Anne Leeny-Panagrossi (Albertus Magnus College), Rich Malley (Conn. Historical Society), Robert Novak (Derby Historical Society), Lizette Pelletier (Conn. State Library, Public Records Office), Liz Shapiro (Conn. League of Historical Organizations). Note taker: Jane.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kathy Craughwell-Varda will apply for the training offered by the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works Emergency Response Training program. Yesterday Jane Cullinane forwarded an email about the AIC-CERT program to the steering committee.

Jane spoke with Dana Conover of the Conn. Dept. of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. Dana expressed support for the work COSTEP-CT is doing and wants to continue to receive our emails and announcements.

WEB SITE AND COMMUNICATION

Tara Kennedy started a folder on Google Docs for COSTEP-CT so we can share and work together on documents. The steering committee members are able to look at and edit the address book, survey questions and contact list. See <https://docs.google.com> and search for COSTEP-CT.

Kathy wrote press release about COSTEP-CT but wasn't able to add it to the Google Docs folder. Jane will be taking a workshop on Google Docs and will share tips on how to use the technology.

We suggested minor alterations in the layout of a press release that Kathy had prepared. Rob Novak will ask the Bridgeport Fire Chief if he will supply a quotation for it. Kathy will ask Dana and the Executive Director of the Barnum Museum for quotations.

Kathy wants to give the press release to the Connecticut Humanities Council and the League of Historical Organizations. Other members can share it with their Listservs: Rob -- first responders, Jane -- librarians, Lizette Pelletier -- archivists and town clerks, Anne -- academic library directors. Kathy will also share it with granting organizations such as the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

LOGO FOR COSTEP-CT

Liz Shapiro's friend adapted the Kellogg drawing of the fallen oak tree as a logo for COSTEP-CT and Rich Malley wrote a paragraph on the significance of the Charter Oak. Lizette will add this to the web site. She'll include the question "Why is our logo a fallen tree?" with a link to Rich's explanation.

MAY DAY

Jane suggested that town emergency management officials be included when cultural heritage organizations meet with local fire fighters. The Conservation ConneCTion will be encouraging these meetings as a "May Day" activity.

MUTUAL AID

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission awarded a grant to the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board and the Connecticut State Library that includes funds for a series of seminars on the topic of regional mutual aid agreements, to be moderated by Lori Foley of the Northeast Document Conservation Center.

SURVEY ON DISASTER RESPONSE SKILLS AND SUPPLIES

Liz and Kathy worked on the survey and thought that we should ask only about what equipment organizations have and whether there is any spare equipment that could be loaned out during an emergency. And, because past surveys and recent experience show only larger organizations are able to help others during an emergency, the survey should go only to those organizations.

Jane thought it would be helpful to survey a wider community so we have statistical data to demonstrate the need for grant funds to help large and small organizations accumulate stockpiles of supplies. But, since we expect most organizations to reply that they have no supplies, the group decided not to pursue this idea. The survey to larger organizations will be put on hold till the mutual aid seminars take place.

We don't yet know how to fund the acquisition of regional stockpiles and we'll need to find about seven organizations that can hold the stockpile and be available anytime of the day or night when a disaster response is needed.

We'll add the DPlan-lite supplies list <http://www.nedcc.org/disaster/dplan.php> to our website and we'll encourage organizations to begin to stockpile these supplies. Creative ways to start a stockpile would be to get a large trash barrel on wheels and use it to hold the supplies. Perhaps small organizations could offer free admission with the donation of a roll of paper towels or other supply from the list. Perhaps local businesses, such as the hardware store, would donate some supplies.

FEMA GRANTS AND HOW TO COSTEP-CT CAN HELP AFTER A DISASTER

None of the major disasters in Connecticut this year qualified for federal emergency management assistance grants. The Barnum Museum's experience was that it took too long to get estimates for historically sensitive repairs to the roof of their building and the window on applying for federal assistance had already closed. In addition, we think there is little understanding that every bit of damage should be submitted by everyone in an affected community.

What could COSTEP-CT do to help cultural heritage organizations in this regard? Perhaps we can include this information in the disaster plan training. Perhaps we can have a group of people who will help an affected organization fill out its FEMA paperwork.

DPlan does not have a section on dealing with FEMA or keeping up with estimated costs of repair or replacement. Jane said that the Northeast Document Conservation Center is struggling to find funding to update DPlan. Kathy said that Rhode Island found grant funds to pay NEDCC for a RI-specific version of DPlan. Perhaps COSTEP-CT could help find funds to pay for updates regarding FEMA grants.

We know that FEMA funds are granted when a region has enough damage to reach a monetary threshold. But we don't know much beyond that. Kathy will invite Dana Conover, and Jack Sullivan of FEMA, Boston, and Andrew Radant of the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Boston, to attend our February meeting to help us learn what we could be teaching about the FEMA declaration and granting process.

NEXT MEETING

We'll meet Jan. 13, 2011, at 10:00-12:00, at the Connecticut Historical Society.