



# Town of Woodbury Historic District Commission

281 Main Street South  
Woodbury, CT 06798  
203.263.3467 • [www.woodburyct.org](http://www.woodburyct.org)

**MINUTES – January 8, 2024**

**Work Session and Discussion**

**6:00 PM –Shove Building, 281 Main Street South, Woodbury, CT 06798**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Maureen Donnarumma, Chair  
Lois Y. Fiftal

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**MEMBERS ABSENT**

George Messier

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**ALTERNATES PRESENT**

Judith Kelz  
Marc Kroll

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**ALTERNATES ABSENT**

William Hickey

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**NOTED OTHERS PRESENT**

Thomas Arras, Lyman Gilbert, David Peckar (CrateCrafts Fine Woodworking)

**OPENING OF MEETING**

- **Call to Order**

Chair Donnarumma convened the workshop meeting session at 6:00 pm.

**MEETING WORK SESSION DISCUSSION**

David Peckar from CrateCrafts Fine Woodworking was present to discuss and help better understand how wood windows are constructed and how the restoration process works.

Mr. Peckar says that the replacement window business is BIG business; the industry wants to sell replacement windows, whereas restoring windows is a small business.

He explained the different parts of a window, like the sash, which is the piece of the window that goes up and down or swings out. This is the most common part of the window along with the glass that needs replacement. He said that wooden sashes will last a lifetime as long as they are well maintained.

Chair Donnarumma asked how easy is it to remove windows that are painted shut? Mr. Peckar said they are easy to remove and showed on the Shove conference window that you just remove the parting bead.

Mr. Peckar explained that windows from the 1800's that are double hung windows were made before air conditioning. They were designed to help circulate air in the structure by lowering the top part of the window because heat rises and opening the lower part to let the fresh air in.

Mr. Peckar brought with him two books that give explanations of how wooden windows work and the benefits and the trade-off with restoring them.

- Save America's Windows by John Leeke. This book shows how to care, maintain, and repair wood windows.
- The Window Bible by Steve Jordan. This book also talks about how to repair and restore windows that were made from the 1800's – 1940.

He explained the process of restoration for a window that hasn't been properly maintained, where the putty is falling out and the glass is loose and there is rot or a broken muntin. This process has to be done off site and what they do is:

- 1) Disassemble the sash, take out the 6-wood pin which holds the sash together. The sash consists of stiles, muntins and the glass. The glass will come out intact.
- 2) Once the window is taken apart, they can start the process to sand down all the surfaces to get rid of all the paint. They have machines that will get it down to the original wood.
- 3) They then reassemble the window and clean the glass and then they reglaze the glass.
- 4) Then they paint.

All these methods comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards for window preservation. The basic standards are to do as little as possible to keep everything intact and what needs to be replaced is replaced in kind.

Alt. Member Kelz questioned the comparison in price to restoration vs replacement. Mr. Peckar gave three scenarios because it truly depends on what needs to be done.

- 1) Houses that have storm panels where the wood window are deteriorated. The price of restoring the sashes is equal to less than the cost of replacement.
- 2) Sashes that need to be fully replaced will be about the same as replacement windows.
- 3) If sashes plus a storm panel needs restoration, it will be more than a replacement window.

He talks about the energy efficiency. If energy is an issue than two layers will be required. The two layers can be a storm panel and tight interior single sash or double pane glass. They test the same in energy efficiency.

Member Fiftal questioned how long it takes to restore a window? He stated that if sashes are deteriorated, due to low maintenance, in most cases a lot of the window trim and the sills are deteriorated also. On site remedial work for the frame needs to be done and that will take more time. If you are comparing the time it takes to clean up wood and install restored sash and trim vs replacement, it might take a little longer.

Alt. Member Kelz asked if any wood window can be restored? Mr. Peckar said his shop would be able to restore all wood windows and he thinks that most restoration shops should be able to do that too.

Alt. Member Kelz also questioned the argument that they hear a lot about new wood is junk. Mr. Peckar brought with him three samples of wood.

- 1) The first sample is Old Growth Pine. It is 300 years old and was used to make wood windows up until the 1920's or 1930's because after that it was hard to get. It only goes bad if the maintenance is not done.
- 2) The second sample was Eastern White Pine. This is a modern wood, and it does not last.
- 3) The third sample was Spanish Cedar. This has the same properties as the Old Growth Pine. Its just as weather resist but it is a lot of money.

Alt. Member Kroll asked if Mr. Peckar knew how other Historic Districts deal with the issue or window preservation vs replacement. Mr. Peckar has a friend, David Honn, who is an active member on the Historic District in Acton Massachusetts. They have very strict rules and they run into people all the time that move into their District and want to throw out the old windows and put in new. He is not sure what their rules entail but he would be an excellent person to talk to do help guide this Commission going forward.

There was a discussion about other restoration companies around and the other two mentioned where Justin Fink out of Southington and Kronenberger Restoration out of Middletown.

Alt. Member Kelz gave a scenario with a property owner comes in and they have 20-30 windows. 20 of them are fixable and 10 need a complete repair. What is the time frame on a job like this? Mr. Peckar answered with an average 6/6 standard size – 20 sashes turn around would be around 4-8 weeks.

Mr. Arras asked if you have an older house and sills are rotted at the bottom and the sashes are loose and sloppy. Do you work on the casing of the window? Mr. Peckar refers to The Window Bible by Steve Jordan. He then explained the process on how to repair that window.

Alt. Member Kelz asked if he ever worked with homeowners that have received grants? He stated that he has given price quotes for both grant applications and those seeking tax credits.

Lisa Amatruda questioned the response regarding the tax credits vs grants. He clarified that it is usually tax credits he quotes out for homeowners. Grants for homeowners is kind of difficult to receive unless the property is on historic registry list.

Ms. Amatruda also asked who does the on-site work since Mr. Peckar company, Crate Crafts, does not do on site work. He suggested calling a painter or a restoration contractor. She asked for clarification on a previous statement regarding the pricing. That price only included the price of the sash. You would then have to add in the price of the site work or rebuilding the window frame which then would be considerably higher than a replacement.

Lyman Gilbert, LG Builders, said the chances are if the sashes need repair the sills and frames will also need repair. Trying to maintain efficiency, the window needs to be very, very tight and in very good working order and to do that with an old sash inserted into a partially restored window frame is not practical.

Mr. Peckar stated that building codes are written for the replacement window industry. He states that in the code that if a window sash is taken out it needs to be brought up to today's code and the current code is for energy efficiency. He explained that if the town has Historic Districts that are governed by a Commission or Zoning than that supersedes that requirement for the building code.

Chair Donnarumma shared an email from Stacey Vairo, Preservation Connecticut, regarding some links on their website regarding window preservation.

- Here is the link to the entire website – Local Historic District and Property Commissions in Connecticut (lhdct.org)
- The Frequently Asked Questions section is here – Local Historic District and Property Commissions in Connecticut (lhdct.org)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no objections, the work session was adjourned at 7:14 pm.

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT  
Filed 16<sup>th</sup> day of Jan 2024  
at 9:40 o'clock A M  
Maura M. Mancini  
Town Clerk