

GREEN FINGERS GARDEN CLUB/GREENWICH POINT CONSERVANCY PROJECT PROPOSAL

PROJECT SUMMARY: Kirby Williams, who serves on the Civic Improvement Committee of the Green Fingers Garden Club, introduced Green Fingers to the Old Barn project, a public/private partnership between the Town of Greenwich and the Greenwich Point Conservancy. In March, 2013 Sarah Morena, President of Green Fingers Garden Club and Karen Royce, Chairman of the Civic Improvement Committee, met with Suzanne Prunier and Peter Grunow, members of the Board of the Conservancy, to explore the concept of Green Fingers' engagement in the project at Greenwich Point. The Civic Improvement Committee subsequently discussed the project and expressed overall support including proposing the project to the general membership as a Community Trust Fund project. Karen Royce, chairman of the Committee (2011-2013), presented the **concept** of participating in the re-landscaping of the Old Barn to the Green Fingers Board on April 8, 2013.

Green Fingers Garden Club has an opportunity to partner with the Greenwich Point Conservancy and the Town of Greenwich in the planning for the landscaping and planting for this new area. Peter Grunow, the landscape designer who is also a GPC board member, has developed a landscape plan (pro bono). The Greenwich Point Conservancy will take on the responsibility of annual maintenance (which will be confirmed in an agreement between Green Fingers and GPC). Bruce Spaman must approve all plantings on Town property.

Participation in this project is consistent with the mission of the Green Fingers Garden Club: *The aim of the club shall be to increase the knowledge of horticulture, to develop the art of flower arrangement, to further the ideas of conservation, and to work for the development of civic projects.*

BACKGROUND: The Old Barn was built in 1887 and originally housed livestock. It is the oldest building on the Point. The Old Barn renovation is an \$850,000 project and will include the renovation of the area to the right of the recently renovated Innis Arden Cottage. (Due to storm damage to the concessions stand and the former Bruce Museum building, the Bruce Museum Seaside Program is now housed in the renovated Innis Arden Cottage). The Greenwich Point Conservancy is planning to renovate the structure where the brick bathrooms and old concession stand are currently located. The new structure will have a building for bathrooms on the left and a building for the concession area on the right with a common roof and open space in between. There will be a large patio with tables for "dining with a water view". Funds are being raised privately, primarily through the Beach Ball Fundraiser event sponsored by the Greenwich Point Conservancy. Chris Franco is President of the Board of the Conservancy and is the chairman of the project and Peter Grunow has drafted a planting plan for the landscaping – both were very engaged in the Innis Arden renovation project.

Below is a link to the project on the GPC website:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCtp16rLxMg&feature=youtu.be>

TIMING: The Project received P&Z final approval December 10, 2013. Below is the summary from the P&Z Agenda, December 10 describing the project:

North Concession Stand, Old Barn – Greenwich Point; applications PLPZ 2013 00311 for a municipal improvement and PLPZ 2013 00672 for a final coastal site plan to demolish the Museum/restroom building and renovate and restore the concession stand destroyed by Hurricane Sandy to its original configuration with a stone and shingle exterior and for the center section to be “open” from front to back, so that the water can be seen through the building, including new ADA compliant public restrooms, concession service and kitchen area, open terrace along the beach side populated with tables and chairs and alteration of the existing driveways and removal of public parking to create a traffic circle between the Innis Arden Cottage and the restored “Old Barn” with a safe and useful pick up-drop off area with handicapped parking on property located at 16 Tod’s Driftway in the RA-1 zone.

The permitting process is moving forward. After construction is complete the landscaping will commence.

COST: The estimated cost of the landscaping portion of the project is approximately \$35,000 – additional costs for construction and labor bring the total project cost to \$52,160. Green Fingers would commit to only the landscaping portion. There are sufficient Community Trust Funds to fund this project and have a balance left over. The budget may include the following items based on the plan as of December, 2013:

- Cut asphalt and remove asphalt and base
- layout all new beds
- add sandy loam to all beds as necessary
- top dress with sand
- add large boulders for stability and aesthetics
- mulch more finished beds near building

Jane Marsh

Chairman, Civic Improvement Committee

Green Fingers Garden Club (Green Fingers) and the Greenwich Point Conservancy (GPC) are pleased to announce that they will be partnering on the landscaping aspects of the GPC’s “Gateway Restoration Project” at Greenwich Point. The Gateway Restoration Project includes the restoration and rehabilitation of the circa 1887 “Old Barn” at the entrance to Greenwich Point, and the creation of a new pick-up and drop-off area, both of which will be enhanced with beautiful “naturalist-style” landscaping. At the January 12, 2014 groundbreaking for the project, Greenwich First Selectman Peter Tesei called

Greenwich Point, “a jewel in the crown of Greenwich” and “one of the town’s most important assets and open to all Greenwich citizens’. Greenwich Fingers and the GPC are pleased and excited to be able to partner to create the landscaping associated for the project, which is an important aspect of the project and which has been designed to enhance and reflect the natural beauty of Greenwich Point.

The Gateway Restoration Project will include the restoration of the Old Barn (formerly called the North concession building), which was damaged by Hurricane Sandy, and the creation a new dining “pavilion” and large deck on the beach side of the building, for the enjoyment of visitors to Greenwich Point. The restored Old Barn will include space for lifeguards, a food concession and new restrooms. The 1950’s-era brick restroom building adjacent to the Old Barn will be demolished and replaced with a landscaped area, and the center section of the Old Barn will be “opened up”, with both of these alterations allowing for the re-creation of the beautiful and open views of the beach and Long Island Sound around the Old Barn that existed when Greenwich Point was the private estate of Mr. and Mrs. J. Kennedy Tod. The new pick-up and drop-off area will be located at the present location of the parking lot adjacent to the Old Barn, and will be bordered by landscaped areas on each side. This change will also provide dramatic and enhanced views of the Long Island Sound beyond the existing historic stone wall located there.

Green Fingers and the GPC have created a joint project team to spearhead the landscape plan for the Gateway Project. The Green Fingers team includes several members who were instrumental in originating the joint project, including Kirby Williams, Sarah Morena, and Karen Royce, as well as Green Fingers President Diana Samponaro and Club members Jane Marsh, Chairman of the Civic Improvement Committee, Anne Bourne (also a GPC board member), Debbie Sterling and Marie Woodburn. GPC board members Suzanne Prunier and Peter Grunow (who is owner of Old Greenwich-based GroPro Landscaping, which has donated planning services for the project) also serve on the joint project team.

Diana Samponaro stated, “Green Fingers is delighted to be working with the Greenwich Point Conservancy on this very special project. After initially learning of the project, and closely following and supporting its progress through the approval process, our Club has enthusiastically signed on. Greenwich Point is one of the true treasures in the town of Greenwich, and we very pleased to be instrumental in helping to beautify this special and unique area.” Chris Franco, President of the Greenwich Point Conservancy, stated, “We are excited that the Gateway to Greenwich Point will soon be restored and upgraded, and are very pleased to be partnering with Green Fingers on the important landscaping aspects of the project. The GPC, like Green Fingers, takes our stewardship obligations of the natural beauty of Greenwich Point seriously, and our plan will be sensitive to and reflective of the natural landscape at the Point that is so treasured by our residents.”

Green Fingers, founded in 1935, is a member of the Garden Clubs of America (GCA) and the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc. Green Fingers undertakes local projects within the town of Greenwich executed with funds raised through its programs such as its’ tri-annual Preview of Spring, a GCA flower show. In May 2013, Green Fingers teamed with Greenwich Community Gardens and Family Centers, Inc. to create a Butterfly Teaching Garden at Armstrong Court. Examples of local Green Fingers projects include donations of the landscaping at the Island Beach Ferry Boat landing in central Greenwich, the planting of daffodils on the Bruce Museum Hill, and assistance with the landscaping at Wilbur Peck Court,

Pathways, and GADC's River House. The next Preview of Spring flower show will be held in March 2015 and will called "Hanami", celebrating the transient beauty of flowers.

The Greenwich Point Conservancy is a non-profit "stewardship organization" formed to work for restoration and preservation of the historic buildings and other structures at Greenwich Point. It's most recent project, the 5-year restoration of the historic Innis Arden Cottage and the creation at the Cottage of the Floren Family Environmental Center at Innis Arden Cottage, is the recipient of several prestigious preservation and adaptive-reuse awards, from the State of Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Institute of Architects and the Greenwich Historical Society.