

## The Latest from the Virginia Beach History Museums October 22, 2020



Dear Museums Friends,

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the beautiful changing colors of fall. My deepest thanks to you for your ongoing support and interest in the Virginia Beach History Museums. There have been many exciting things happening behind the scenes at the History Museums over the past few months that I want to share with you.

Over 270 people responded to our recent Public Input Survey and provided over 9000 useful and informative responses! This input will help us guide future offerings, programs and events at the History Museums. Thank you to all who took the time to participate in the survey. The restoration of the Lynnhaven House and Francis Land House are underway, and I would like to provide you with the latest updates:

### **LYNNHAVEN HOUSE RESTORATION UPDATE**

E.T. Gresham is the General Contractor for this project. The work involves interior modifications, heating and air conditioning (HVAC), and electrical work. No exterior work will occur to the building or the site.

#### **Architectural work involves:**

- In June 2020, the Contractor removed the plaster and metal lathe work in its entirety from the masonry walls, rafters/ceiling joists, knee walls, and interior dormers. The work was necessary to ensure the brick walls would dry out, thus protecting the brick and mortar from further damage.
- The next step, which will occur six months to a year after completion of this phase, is to repoint the interior brick where needed.

#### **Mechanical work involves:**

- In September 2020, the Contractor replaced the geothermal heat pump and accessory items located under the interior stairs. The accessory items include a dehumidification unit, condenser pump, equipment pad, emergency drain pan, and hoses.
- New ductwork, as well as supply and return air grilles, are currently being installed, and will be completed in the later part of October.



**Electrical work involves:**

- The wiring for the new HVAC equipment (geothermal heat pump, electric unit heater, and condenser pump) is now complete.
- The Contractor replaced the electrical receptacles and installed a light fixture in the cellar.

**Issue discovered during restoration:**

One issue found during construction involved several joists that have started to have some localized rotting. Each joist in the cellar spans the entire length of the house, and they are the sole source of support for the first floor. The Structural Engineer has provided sketches where they propose supporting the three beams where the structural issues occur, and the Contractor is currently in the process of pricing this additional work.

**FRANCIS LAND HOUSE RESTORATION UPDATE**

SDC Contracting Inc. is the General Contractor for this project and was awarded the contract in July 2020. The scope of work involves interior and exterior modifications, heating and air conditioning (HVAC), fire protection, and electrical work. A detailed explanation of these items is listed below:

**Architectural work involves:**

- Install new concrete slab in basement floor.
- Install a bentonite panel waterproofing system around the House's foundation below grade.
- Repoint interior brick wall in basement.
- Repair some gypsum wall board and ceilings on the first floor where water damage has occurred.
- Repair outdoor floor planking in covered porch. In addition, the porch's wood framing and screening will be replaced.
- Relocate electrical subpanel on second floor.
- Replace the guttering and downspouts.
- Replace screen fence around outdoor heat pumps.

**Fire protection involves:**

Currently, the existing fire protection system has three (3) halon systems. One of these systems was designed to be replaced with a new dry agent system. This system is under review by the City, as alternate proposals are being reviewed.

**Mechanical work involves:**

- Replace four (4) outdoor heat pumps, indoor air handlers and accessory HVAC items.
- Replace the ductwork, supply registers and return air grilles.

### Electrical work involves:

- Install track lighting in the basement's multipurpose room. In addition, 1' x 4' LED lighting will be installed in the other basement rooms.
- Install track lighting in the exhibit area on the first floor.
- Install ceiling fans in workroom and porch on the first floor.
- Install new circuitry throughout for the lighting, ceiling fans, receptacles, and switches.
- Support electrical connection to the new HVAC equipment.

### Civil and landscaping work involves:

- Replace the oyster shell & brick sidewalk with aggregate sidewalk to match existing.
- Regrade around foundation.

This project is still undergoing the shop drawing review, where the various materials are submitted for approval by the Contractor. The Architect and Engineers will review these submittals to ensure they meet the intent of the design. This process should be complete by the end of October.

The Contractor has begun to install their silt fences and excavate around the perimeter of the house to install the bentonite panels.

We estimate that the project will be completed in the first quarter of 2021, unless unforeseen circumstances arise.

### Other Museums Updates

Since our last update, staff has launched a podcast, called "[Beyond the Passage](#)." Each podcast features staff discussing histories associated with our Museums, as well as interviews with special guests. In addition, we now have [a blog](#) on the Virginia Beach History Museums website. Staff write about a variety of museum topics, whether they are specific histories, anniversaries, timely issues or other historical topics that interest them. We will post at least two blogs per month. Our staff also continues to re-shape educational programming and is in the process of creating new seasonal programming. Stay tuned for more exciting news!

For more updates from the Virginia Beach History Museums, please sign up for our monthly [e-newsletter](#) at the Virginia Beach History Museums website.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and interest in preserving and enhancing the Virginia Beach History Museums. Please do not hesitate to email me at [elabows@vbgov.com](mailto:elabows@vbgov.com) if you have any questions, and we will keep you posted on the next steps in the restoration processes.

My Best Wishes,



Emily Labows  
Director, Cultural Affairs Department