

## The Latest from Virginia Beach History Museums

### June 26, 2020



Dear Museums Friends,

As we continue to navigate the global challenges brought on since March, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and interest in the Virginia Beach History Museums. Although we remain closed to the public we have continued to refine and adapt our programming, including shifting significant amounts of content to the virtual sphere.

Since March, we've activated the [Virginia Beach History Museums YouTube channel](#), created a virtual version of the children's education program "Then and Now," invited guests into our virtual Museums through #VirtualHistoryVB, promoted [self-guided virtual tours of the Francis Land House and Thoroughgood House](#), collaborated with our friends at the Virginia Beach Surf and Rescue Museum for an Instagram Live and much more. We look forward to continuing to build our digital profile, even after our Museums re-open to the public.

### **Lynnhaven House Restoration Status**

The next phase in the Lynnhaven House Restoration began in May 2020. E.T. Gresham is the General Contractor for this phase of the restoration. The steps in the work process involve architectural, mechanical, and electrical repairs. Interior plaster will be removed to help the brick walls dry out, a geothermal heat pump and an electrical heater will be installed, and HVAC ductwork will be replaced, among other steps, over the next few months.

In order to provide you more detailed information, the City's Public Works Department has outlined the scope of the restorations:

The Architectural Work will involve:

1. Removing the plaster and metal lathe work in its entirety from the masonry

walls, rafters/ceiling joists, knee walls, and interior dormers. These materials will be removed from the site and disposed of in accordance with local regulations.

2. The wood baseboards, chair railing, and casing at dormer openings would also be removed and stored for reuse.

The architect informed us that the plaster is being removed so the brick walls can dry out with a few seasons of the new mechanical system dehumidifying. At one time they were going to reinstall the plaster sooner, but it was recommended by Watson & Henry (consultant on mechanical/environmental systems in historic buildings) to let it dry out for a few seasons.

The old plaster was trapping moisture behind the plaster, keeping the brick wet and the mortar was starting to fail. The next step, in approximately 6 months-1 year after completion, is to repoint the interior brick where needed, then apply the new plaster on furring. There is a specialized plaster that can handle the saltwater that gets driven into the brick from the exterior. In construction, furring are thin strips of wood or other material to level or raise surfaces of another material to prevent dampness, to make space for insulation, or to level and resurface ceilings or walls. Furring refers to the process of installing the strips and to the strips themselves.

Mechanical Work will include:

1. Replace the (1) 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.
2. Replace the ductwork and most supply & return air grilles.
3. Provide new HVAC Direct Digital Controls for temperature and humidity control.
4. Install an electric heater in the cellar.

Electrical Work will include:

1. Support connection to the new HVAC equipment (geothermal heat pump, electric unit heater, and condenser pump).
2. Replacement of electrical receptacles.
3. Installation of a light fixture in the cellar.

Some recent photos from the Lynnhaven House restoration:



### **Francis Land House Restorations to Begin in Mid-July**

The restoration of the Francis Land House is set to begin in mid-July 2020 and the house will remain closed to the public. SDC Contracting Inc. from Virginia Beach is the General Contractor for this project. The work involves interior & exterior modifications, heating & air conditioning (HVAC), fire protection, and electrical work.

In order to provide you more detailed information, the City's Public Works Department has outlined the scope of the restorations:

Civil & Landscaping Work will include:

1. Replace the oyster shell & brick sidewalk with aggregate sidewalk to match existing.
2. Regrade around foundation.
3. Rebuild well with 3 ft high brick wall and polycarbonate cover.
4. Replace a portion of the picket fence/gate.
5. Plant (8) shrubs on the site.

Architectural Work will include:

1. Basement floor gets a new concrete slab. Install tile on basement floor.
2. Install bentonite panel waterproofing system around the Francis Land House below grade.
3. Repoint interior brick wall in basement (1800 Square Feet).

4. Remove and provide a (1) new mechanical closet in the basement.
5. Some plaster removal and reinstallation will occur to support electrical circuit installation.
6. New soffits will be provided to support installation of the new ductwork.
7. Repair some gypsum wall board wall and ceilings on the first floor where water damage occurred.
8. Repair outdoor floor planking in covered porch. In addition, the porch's wood framing and screening will be replaced.
9. Relocate electrical subpanel on second floor.
10. Replace the guttering and downspouts.
11. Replace screen fence around outdoor heat pumps (1 x 6 vertical treated wood planks).
12. The existing stairs facing northwest will be temporarily shored and supported during construction.
13. Walls will be repainted with existing colors. Existing furniture and collection will be reinstalled.

Fire Protection will include:

Currently, the existing fire protection system has (3) halon systems. Two of these systems will be replaced with a new Novec 1230 system. The (1) halon system in the Visitors Center will remain. For fire protection, there will be a vestibule with a door installed to separate the new section to the original house.

Mechanical Work will include:

1. Replace four (4) of outdoor heat pumps and indoor air handlers. The accessory items include a refrigerant piping, thermostats, outdoor equipment pad for heat pumps, and emergency drain pans.
2. Replace the ductwork and supply registers & return air grilles.

Electrical Work will include:

1. Install track lighting in the basement's multipurpose room. In addition, 1' x 4' LED lighting will be installed in the other basement rooms.
2. Install track lighting in the exhibit area on the first floor.
3. Install ceiling fans in workroom and porch on the first floor.
4. The existing chandeliers in the main parlor and dining room will be salvaged

and reinstalled.

5. The existing wall sconces in several areas on the first floor will be salvaged and reinstalled.
6. Installation of new circuitry throughout for the lighting, ceiling fans, receptacles, and switches.
7. Support electrical connection to the new HVAC equipment.

SDC Contracting estimates that the interior work will be completed in the next 3-4 months, though the schedule may change.

### **Other Museums Updates**

The Thoroughgood House remains closed due to COVID-19, but plans are being finalized to re-open the site, in the safest manner possible. The Princess Anne County Training School/Union Kempsville High School Museum remains closed, and, being that it is in the Renaissance Academy, is closed when Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) are closed. We will continue to monitor for any VBCPS updates.

For more updates from the Virginia Beach History Museums, please sign up for our monthly e-newsletter [using the sign-up form on museumsvb.org](https://museumsvb.org/sign-up).

Once again, I 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