

**Report on**

**Peters House Reuse Options**

Submitted to

**Hebron Board of Selectmen**

By

**Peters House Use Study Committee Members**

**Will Moorcroft, Chairman**  
**Donna McCalla, Vice Chairman**  
**Anne Fitzpatrick, Secretary**  
**John Baron**  
**David Bland**  
**Dan Larson**  
**Gayle Mulligan**  
**Ray Overton**  
**Barbara Soderberg**  
**Deena Watson**

**October 3, 2008**

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## Introduction

In early 2008, the Hebron Board of Selectmen created the Peters House Use Study Committee (“PHUSC”) and charged appointees with studying possible reuse options for the historic Peters House, located at 150 East Street. Those appointed members were also charged with considering local historic designation of the property, a process originally begun by the Hebron Historic Properties Commission in 2007.

At the Peters House Use Study Committee’s first meeting, held April 16, 2008, the Town Manager encouraged members to review all previous studies conducted from grants received by the Hebron Historic Properties Commission. In particular, members were asked to analyze the Robert Hurd Architectural Report of December 2005, in which Mr. Hurd made three recommendations for reuse of the property (according to Mr. Hurd, in no particular priority order):

- (1) Use of the house as a residential property;
- (2) Use of the building for municipal purposes (community center/municipal offices); or
- (3) Use of the building as a local history center/museum.

Finally, members were asked to create a report on possible reuse options, and present those findings to the Selectmen.

PHUSC members established a bi-monthly meeting schedule, and met on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m., Hebron Town Office Building, Lower Level Conference Room. Meetings were properly noticed, and minutes were filed with the Town Clerk.

Since the first meeting, two extensive site visits have been conducted, and two Stabilization Plans to make repairs to the house were completed. Members have also studied the John Obed Curtis Architectural Study of March 2007, as well as the Bruce Clouette Documentary Study of April 2007. These studies were jointly funded by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and the Town of Hebron through a Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant (HPTAG) awarded by Connecticut Trust. Members also studied the results of an informal poll taken by the Hebron Historic Properties Commission and the Hebron Historical Society during Maple Fest 2008.

Finally, members broke into subcommittees and did the research and reports for the following topics:

- A Change of Use Analysis and Architectural Study
- A study on Hebron’s current zoning regulations which would impact sale of the property
- A study on sale of the structure for residential purposes
- A study on sale of the structure for commercial purposes
- A study on use of the structure for municipal purposes
- A study on moving the structure to a different location
- A study on demolishing the structure.

# **Architectural Study and Change of Use Analysis of the Peters House**

*Note: See Appendix 1 for accessibility information and diagrams.*

- First floor can be adapted quite readily for accessibility.
  - The building would lend itself to open office design with cubical partitions. The cubical design gives the offices flexibility to adapt to changes in personnel and their subsequent requirements. The configurations are limitless and can be purchased economically through used furniture dealers.
  - The building would require two accessible bathrooms as the code mandates male and female facilities.<sup>1</sup>
  - The two staircases are not code compliant from the second floor.
    - The front stair would remain, as it is a historical feature.
    - The rear stair does not have headroom clearance at the top doorway. It is not acceptable/code compliant with the change in use. The roof of the ell prevents the alteration to a conforming height of 6'8". (See footnote 1)
    - The stair to the basement will require rebuilding.
    - The stair to the attic is fine as is.
  - The structure as is meets and exceeds present code loading requirements. This was stated in the Hurd Report.
    - The Hurd Report identified the first floor having a load capacity of 127.7 pounds per square foot (PSF) at 2,000 PSF bending stress. The code requires:
      - 100 PSF for: assembly areas  
office lobby & 1<sup>st</sup> floor corridors
      - 50 PSF for office space
      - 80 PSF for office corridors above the 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- The 2,000 PSF bending stress is conservative considering the old growth lumber that was used.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see conceptual floor plans in Appendix 2 for code solutions.

The second floor appears to be of equal framing thus equal loading as noted above.

Note: The possibility of using a portion of the house as a training/day room for local police was a late addendum to the previous use proposal from the Town. Such a use would create impact loads that exceed that which is recommended for this type of structure. Use of this facility for a police training/day room is not recommended as failure of plank floor could occur.

- There are 4 windows that will require the rebuilding of the frame and sills. It is recommended to replace the sash of most of the windows as that would be economically beneficial during the heating season.
- Lead paint need not be removed. The requirement is only stipulated when young people reside for long periods of time, such as a residence.
- The fireplaces could be reestablished. The evaluation of the fireplaces was not done in this report. If requested, it could be completed at a later date.
- The roof appears to be in good shape and has 10 remaining years of life.
- Exterior siding and architectural features will require refurbishing, scraping and repainting. NOTE: The lead paint removal requires special DEP permits for removal off site.
- Some interior work to the finishes will be required, such as the removal of some 20<sup>th</sup> century features, refinishing of the floors, and walls needing paint.
- Electrical service entrance appears to be adequate for the needs of an office space. However, rewiring will be required. In addition, the heating system will require a complete upgrade.

## Building Accessibility Study

Accessibility to and through the building can be attained with the following:

- Establish an accessible parking space just east of the rear ell.
- Erect a 39' +/- ramp with a 5' X 5' landing intermediate and a landing at the top which would be at the door threshold level.
- Existing entrance at rear ell meets code minimum.
- Two architecturally significant door frames at either side of the main fireplace that will require alteration of door stops. Remove door stops (label and preserve) and replace with ½" thick door jamb minus door stop. The goal is to end up with a doorless opening with 32" clearance.
- Three doorways must be reframed for a 32" clear doorless passage or 36" frame with door.
- Thresholds at doors and doorways will require gradual slopes where floor differentials exist.
- Second floor is NOT required to be accessible.

## Structural Evaluation of Peters House

The house appears to be in overall good shape. Virtually all of the structural columns, joist, rafter, wall, and sills are structurally sound.

The following are items that will require replacement or repair in addition to the estimated costs contained in the Hurd report:

Replace 22 lineal feet of sill due to rot (\$250/linft)	\$5500.00
Replace/structurally repair southeast exterior corner post from the sill plate to just under the second floor girts	\$2250.00
Repair the east wall of main house at rear entrance	\$5000.00
Add five LVL sister joists at the 1 <sup>st</sup> floor joist (in basement)	\$1200.00
Add one jack column to the 1 <sup>st</sup> floor beam near fireplace foundation. This beam appears to have settled causing the upper 1 <sup>st</sup> floor fireplace surround to buckle.	\$500.00
Coat sills and beams in unexcavated areas with consolidating epoxy to preserve	\$1500.00
Basement tunnel – support for a split capstone. Crimp ends of two 2” diameter galvanized pipe 3/16” wall thick. Option of 2 X 2 X 3/16” thick angle with clipped ends. These should bear on the stone walls – 6” minimum on each side and shall be mortared in place.	\$500.00
Adjust the splash stones on the ground in the west (front) of the building. The stones should be removed and the area under them should be filled with a sand/cement grout slurry; then reset the stones. The stones have shifted over time and water from the roof and surrounding areas have washed voids around the foundation wall that allow a stream of water into the basement. By doing this, it will reduce the moisture in the basement and limit erosion of the foundation.	\$500.00
Reestablish a foundation at the last third of the ell to maintain sill elevation with freeze/thaw conditions. The ell requires 4-18” diameter concrete footing for support.	\$1800.00
Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor beams on either side of the rear fireplace.	\$3000.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$21750.00</b>

# **Town of Hebron Zoning Regulations To Be Considered In Any Sale of the Peters House**

## **Resources:**

Hebron Plan of Conservation and Development  
Hebron Zoning Regulations  
Michael O’Leary, Hebron Town Planner

## **Existing Zoning and Permitted Uses**

Presently, the Peters House is zoned R-1, Single Family Residential. As such the permitted use by zoning is a single family residence, as per Section 5.1.1 (a) of the Zoning Regulations, on a minimum lot size of one acre having 175 feet of frontage on a road. The R-1 District also allows a list of accessory uses to a house, such as an attached or free-standing garage, shed, swimming pool, and so on. Only a few, very limited business uses are allowed by right in the present zoning district, such as a “Use of House for Personal Business Purposes” under Section 5.1.1(i), or “Agricultural Uses” under Section 5.1.2.

The zoning regulations also list certain specific non-residential uses possible in residential zoning districts under the Special Permit provisions of the regulations. The Special Use process requires an application to the Planning and Zoning Commission requiring the submission of certain surveys, plans and documents and studies, a public hearing, and a decision by the Commission that the proposed use is harmonious and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood using several identified standards in the regulations such as traffic, parking, noise, hours of operation, environmental considerations, and so on.

The non-residential uses potentially approvable under the Special Permit process include: child day care center; group day care home; museum; place of worship; schools; veterinarian office; and Special Accessory Uses under Section 8.11 which require the owner to live on the premise, and could include: home occupations; professional offices; bed and breakfast; and, historic building used for an antiques or collectable shop.

## **Potential Zone Change**

Other than as identified above, any non-residential use of the Peters House would require a change in the zoning district for the property it would be located on.

All surrounding properties to the Peters House and to the East Street Park property, in fact the entire neighborhood, are all presently zoned Residential-1. The closest non-residential zoning

district is located in the center of town, the Hebron Green Zoning District, and is 1.8 miles away from the entrance to the site in question.

Zoning District changes in Connecticut are the sole purview of the local zoning commissions. They are required by law to be guided by the regulatory language and enabling law found in Section 8 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) as well the guidance received from the locally adopted Plan of Conservation and Development, created and adopted by the local planning commission.

In Hebron, the Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission performs both zoning and planning functions, and most progressive communities believe that this provides a forum where all the “planning” considerations of community planning and proper growth are taken into account by the “zoning” authority in creating and amending zoning districts , as the same agency performs both functions.

The Statutes provide broad guidance to the zoning commission to create zoning districts including: *“Such regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and in adopting such regulations the commission shall consider the plan of conservation and development prepared under section 8-23...”* and *“Such regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration as to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such municipality...”* (CGS Sec. 8-2).

In addition, case law in Connecticut frowns on the concept of “Spot Zoning” where individual small parcels of land are taken and zoned in a way different from any land surrounding it in a way that does not conform to the “character of the district” surrounding its location. The “Hebron Plan of Conservation and Development,” adopted in January of 2004, which provides the required statutory guidance for the zoning commission actions, make no mention of approval for small outlying commercial zoning districts in Hebron.

Conversely, the Plan contains many objectives of limiting the commercial business district generally to the Hebron Green area and the Town Center and discourages the creating of small, isolated or strip commercial districts.

Additionally, the Plan designates the area in question as part of the Town’s future open space network encompassing active or passive open space or agricultural land uses. Therefore the prospect of a rezoning would not be an obvious choice.

## **Neighborhood Considerations**

As earlier noted, the entire neighborhood is a residentially-zoned area, and the Peters House itself sits within a 170-acre town-wide park. The overall neighborhood consists of single family house lots, vacant property, permanently preserved farmland directly north of the Park property, and State Forest and Open Space land located directly to the East of the Park.

The Town of Hebron recently purchased the 170 acre park land in two purchases expending a total of \$1.3 million. The Town is presently in the process of constructing improvements to the Park costing over \$4 million which was authorized by a town-wide referendum. As one of the largest municipal investments ever made in a single property by the Town of Hebron, the Town should treat this property, now located within the Park and adjacent to its only entrance, extremely carefully so that it does not compromise the use, enjoyment, or value of the property.

It is also important to note that establishing a commercial zoning district in this particular location carries with it the potential of opening the doors to heavier traffic, more significant needs for water and sewer, longer hours, more noise than typically found in residential or park accessory uses, and general conflicts with park operations. These types of uses, typically associated with commercial enterprises, may not be compatible with either park operations or the surrounding rural and residential area.

## Sale of Peters House as a Residential Property

### Resources:

- Gregory Farmer, Circuit Rider, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
- Jim Celio, Owner/Broker, Century 21 Real Estate
- Donovan D. Rypkema, author, Feasibility Assessment Manual for Reusing Historic Homes
- [www.OldHouses.com](http://www.OldHouses.com) – listings in Connecticut
- [www.PreservationDirectory.com](http://www.PreservationDirectory.com) – resources for historical and cultural preservation
- [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org) – resources and listings for the sale of “at risk” historic properties (“Historic Properties Exchange”)
- [www.AntiqueHomesMagazine.com](http://www.AntiqueHomesMagazine.com) – listings in Connecticut
- [www.antiquing.com](http://www.antiquing.com) – listings in Connecticut
- Melissa Spear, The Trust for Public Land, New Haven, CT

### Benefits of sale of the Peters House as a residential property

- Source of revenue
  - Sale of house itself -- estimated at between \$150,000 and \$200,000; “restoration needed” historic properties currently being sold at “land only” value
  - Future tax revenue
- There is a small, well-defined niche market for this type of home. Members of this niche market typically:
  - Have money
  - Have time
  - Have reconstruction skills
- As a sub-option, the Town could restore the house, using matching funds from Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism (“CCT”) Historic Restoration Funds, and then later sell as a residence to a private buyer or transfer title to a non-profit organization, with prior approval of CCT. The preservation easements (and the responsibilities associated with those easements and required by the funding agreement for a period of 20 years) stay with the property, not the owner. Taking this approach could guarantee the proper restoration and preservation efforts are made. In the case of selling to a private buyer following restoration, there is the possibility that the Town’s restoration investment could be recouped or exceeded.
- A significant number of potential buyer leads are generated through the internet, which involves smaller costs of sale.
  - Basic listing in OldHouses.com is \$50 for 90 days
    - Featured Listing: \$30/30 days
  - Basic listing in PreservationDirectory.com is \$25/week
    - Featured Listing: \$60/2 months or \$125/6 months
    - Preservation Directory also has a print edition

- Most real estate firms have agents who specialize in historic home sales.
- Could be initially listed for free on Historic Properties Exchange (part of [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org)) to see what interest is generated.
- As part of a sale contract, preservation easements to protect the house can be developed with the assistance of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.
- National historic designation appears to enhance salability, as that qualifies the buyer for significant federal tax credits on any restoration work.
- The issue on the future of the Peters House would be resolved.

### **Disadvantages of sale of the Peters House as a residential property**

- The niche market for historic homes is very small and very well defined. Those few potential buyers tend to focus on already restored homes and/or restored homes that have already attained historic recognition. They also tend to gravitate to homes that are located in legally defined historic districts. The Peters House offers only one designation, that of state recognition.
- Interest in historic properties as residential properties ebbs and flows, and because of today's challenging housing market and overall economy, interest is low.
- The location of the Peters House poses unique issues and challenges; it is within 100 yards of the only entrance to the Hebron sports complex.
- Barriers would have to be constructed to form some kind of barrier between the residence and the Park and its traffic.
- Time on market could be at least 18-24 months, given current housing market condition and availability of other, already restored historic homes in Connecticut. During that time period, the house could deteriorate further without some additional repair efforts on the part of the owners (the Town of Hebron.)
- In June 2008, there were a total of 68 historic Connecticut homes listed on PreservationDirectory.com and OldHouses.com. Of those, all but two were fully restored and asking prices ranged in the \$599K and above arena. The two listed as "restorable" (one in East Lyme and one in Westbrook) were for sale with 2-3 acres of land included, all at a price of \$250K in East Lyme and \$269K in Westbrook. Given land values in East Lyme and Westbrook, these prices are obviously "land only" prices.
- Pratt-Stannard House in Westbrook offers a very close analogy to Peters House; recently sold for \$220,000, or "slightly more than the value of the land."
- 150 East Street most likely would have to be sold for a "land only" price. Without local historic designation and proper preservation easements, there is the potential that the house might then be demolished, which would represent no true financial loss to the buyer but a cultural and architectural loss to the Town and the state.
- It is unlikely that the house would be rezoned for commercial use by the Hebron Planning & Zoning Commission. "Spot zoning" has been used only rarely in Hebron.

- State tax credits for private rehabilitation work are not available because Hebron is not in the list of “eligible towns.”
- A private owner does not qualify for grants available from traditional state or national sources of matching funds.
- The issues of known code violations (lack of potable water and chimney issues) could significantly impact a residential sale.

## Examples of historic homes for sale

### From Historic Properties Exchange:

(1) <http://www.cttrust.org/index.cgi/10279>

Home > Preservation News >

**HPX July/August 2008 12 Obtuse Road North, Brookfield**

#### **12 Obtuse Road North, Brookfield**

The main house was built circa 1820 by Amos Williams and a cottage was added in 1900. There is also a 20<sup>th</sup> century gambrel barn on the 3.81 acre site. The house, which is individually listed on the State Register for Historic Places, is in need of restoration. Although the house itself is in good shape, it sits on a desirable, sub-dividable lot.



(2) <http://www.cttrust.org/index.cgi/10178>



Home > Preservation News >

**HPX May/June 2008-Pratt-Stannard House, Westbrook**

**Pratt-Stannard House  
Westbrook (c. 1790)**

This center chimney cape-style house, constructed in the last quarter of the 18th century, is located on a quiet cul-de-sac near the Menunketesuck River adjacent to 20 acres of undeveloped land being considered for incorporation into the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

The antique house is in untouched condition and has nine rooms, three fireplaces, and original 18th century woodwork, as well fine early 19th century woodwork from the Greek Revival period. The first floor kitchen retains the majority of its 18th century elements, including the hearth, bake oven, and the decorative fireplace surround. The rear of the house features an early 20th century ell that offers the

potential for renovation as a modern kitchen or a master suite.

The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation recently supported professional structural and historical studies of the house that will aid future buyers in planning for preservation and restoration of the building.

The Pratt-Stannard house will be sold with 2 acres of surrounding land. For more information, contact Alicia Betty or Lisa Bassani at The Trust for Public Land, (203)-777-7367.

From Preservation Directory:

<http://www.preservationdirectory.com/HistoricRealEstate/HomesForSaleByRegion.aspx>

Search on Connecticut

From OldHouses.com:

[http://www.oldhouses.com/cf/listinglist.cfm?q\\_listingstate=CT&searchname=Listings+In+Connecticut](http://www.oldhouses.com/cf/listinglist.cfm?q_listingstate=CT&searchname=Listings+In+Connecticut)

No restorable houses have been listed in last 6 months, only fully restored homes.

From Antiquing.com:

<http://www.antiquing.com/oldhomes.htm#sales>

No restorable houses have been listed in last 6 months, only fully restored homes.

From Antique Homes Magazine:

<http://www.antiquehomesmagazine.com/property.php?listing=115254>

**Durham, CT (East) 06422**



- **Price:** \$225,000
- **Beds:** 3
- **Baths:** 1
- **Setting:** Village
- **Condition:** Restorable
- **Year:** 1775
- **Land Area:** < 1 Acre

- **Architectural Style :** Early New England Colonial
- **House Form:** 2-Story
- **Features:** Fireplace(s), Historic District
- **Exterior:** Clapboard
- **Agent Name:** Jay Berardino
- **Company Name:** Berardino Co. Realtors Inc.
- **Telephone:** 860-349-0344

Durham Historic District. First time ever offered publicly, the Jesse Cook house is an authentic Dutch Colonial with large central chimney and three fireplaces, keeping room and buttery all in original condition. In 1850 the attic was partitioned into three bedrooms and dormer windows were added. Available for \$225,000. Call Berardino Realtors 1 800 608 8398

<http://www.antiquehomesmagazine.com/property.php?listing=117374>

**East Hampton, CT (East) 06424**



- **Price:** \$265,000
- **Beds:** 6
- **Baths:** 2
- **Setting:** Near Village
- **Condition:** Fair
- **Year:** Circa 1750
- **Land Area:** < 1 Acre

- **Architectural Style :** Early New England Colonial
- **House Form:** 2-Story
- **Features:** Fireplace(s), Outbuilding, Gardens
- **Exterior:** Other
- **Agent Name:** Thomas Williams
- **Company Name:** Century 21 Connecticut Realty Associates
- **Telephone:** 860-267-2531

The Bryan Parmelee House is a Gambrel Colonial of 3738 sq. ft. just steps from the Village Center. It sits on a cut granite foundation and has enormous potential as a Bed and Breakfast, single or multi-family or in-law. The house was remodeled in 1904 with a late Victorian flavor and has an icehouse, two kitchens, leaded glass, a sleeping porch and a trunk room.

**Portland, CT (East) 06480**



- **Price:** \$269,000
- **Beds:** 3
- **Baths:** 1.5
- **Setting:** Rural
- **Condition:** Fair
- **Year:** 1722
- **Land Area:** 1 Acre

- **Architectural Style :** Early New England Colonial
- **House Form:** 2-Story
- **Features:** Fireplace(s), Garages
- **Exterior:** Wood Shingle
- **Agent Name:** Scott Nicol
- **Company Name:** Scott Nicol
- **Telephone:** 860-342-2285

1722 Historic Farmhouse located in quiet rural beautiful neighborhood with larger homes. Separate oversized two car garage with attached deck and much curb appeal. Features original wide wood floor boards, doors, woodwork, built- ins and three original stone fireplaces with front and back stairwell. House needs some improvements but potential exists for an antique lover's dream house.

From Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation:

<http://www.cttrust.org/index.cgi/9595>

Home > Preservation News >

**HPX January/February 2008 - The Shelley House, Madison, CT**

Individually listed on the National Register, the Shelley house is exceptionally well-preserved, featuring such early elements as feather-edged wall sheathing and exposed framing members with well-crafted chamfers and stops. Most impressive is the clear evidence that the house was actually built in several stages, beginning in the late 17th or early 18th century as a one-room, two-story structure with an end wall of stone, then gaining a second two-story section and finally a rear lean-to.



<http://ctmls.mlxchange.com/Pub/EmailView.asp?r=572642644&s=HFD&t=HFD>

Contact: Alison Gould 203-245-0456, ext 24

<http://www.cttrust.org/index.cgi/10326>

### HPX July/August 2008 108 Oxford Road, Oxford



According to Oxford Assessment records, the house was built 1878 although appears on the 1868 Beers atlas. 108 Oxford Road boasts two end chimneys and an elaborate portico with four pilasters. This two and one-half story white clapboard house, with overhanging roof is in imminent danger of demolition. A new doctor's office has been approved to be built on the site. The expected demolition delay will give potential buyers until September 2008 to remove the house from the site for reconstruction on their own lot. The house is offered for \$1.00

<http://www.cttrust.org/index.cgi/10576>

### HPX - September/October 2008 - Elias Sprague House, Coventry

Built in 1821 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this one and a half story, four-room cape is situated on four heavily wooded acres between moderate residential construction and the Nathan Hale State Forest in Coventry, Connecticut. The interior is almost entirely original, following the traditional floor plan of two front rooms on either side of a small hall with kitchen at the rear, a large central chimney and fieldstone foundation. The Sprague lot will have some deed restrictions—the buyer will have to preserve the historic facade of the building and cannot subdivide the property to put up other houses. The current owner, the Coventry Historical Society, is selling the historic home in the hope that the proceeds will help maintain its other antique buildings and museums.



**Contact:** Landmarks Antique & Country Properties at (860) 423-7484

## Sale of Peters House as Commercial Property

### Resources:

- Gregory Farmer, Circuit Rider, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
- Jim Celio, Owner/Broker, Century 21 Real Estate
- Donovan D. Rypkema, author, Feasibility Assessment Manual for Reusing Historic Homes
- [www.PreservationDirectory.com](http://www.PreservationDirectory.com) – resources for historical and cultural preservation
- [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org) – resources and listings for the sale of “at risk” historic properties (“Historic Properties Exchange”)

### Benefits of sale of the Peters House as a commercial property

- Source of revenue
  - Sale of house itself -- estimated at between \$150,000 and \$200,000; “restoration needed” historic properties currently being sold at “land only” value (This estimate was provided prior to the more recent “economic crisis” and may be lower in the future.)
  - Future tax revenue
- House can be protected through a “Historic Overlay Zone”, one of the recommendations from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. NOTE: Colchester has a “Historic Overlay Zone.”
  - <http://www.cttrust.org/index.cgi/2075>
  - Historic Overlay Zoning in Connecticut
    - A historic overlay zone is an additional layer of regulations for a specific area that is laid over the underlying zoning regulations. The base zoning regulations continue to be administered, but the overlay adds another level of regulations to be considered. Historic Overlay Zoning is when historic district design review is established through a zoning ordinance rather than an independent process such as establishing a Local Historic District (LHD). This Historic Overlay tier is applied to an area considered worthy of preservation because of its architectural, cultural or historic significance.
    - Historic Overlay Zoning is another avenue a Connecticut municipality can use to protect historic areas and structures rather than establishing a Local Historic District. In 1977 Connecticut General Statute 8-2 was amended to allow zoning commissions to consider historic factors when rendering a zoning decision.

- In certain instances it may be more beneficial for a municipality to use zoning regulations for historic preservation than establishing a local historic district/property. A zoning change (overlay) does not require the two-thirds approval of property owners in order to establish it or approval of an ordinance by the municipal legislative body. To amend a local zoning ordinance and add a historic overlay it is not necessary to have a community election.
    - Another benefit for a zoning board review is that they can regulate the use of a building, whereas a Local Historic District Commission cannot. Although it may appear a LHD Commission may have more authority over a "district" because a zoning commission decision may be overturned or undercut by a zoning board of appeals, the zoning commission does have the power to prohibit ZBA from granting use variances in certain instances. A zoning commission can implement a similar control over individual projects through a special permit that a LHD Commission can exercise through a "Certificate of Appropriateness". Using a historic overlay zone may be a good alternative to establishing a local historic district when certain required criteria cannot be met, such as obtaining the required two-thirds property owner vote.
- A significant number of potential buyer leads are generated through the internet, which involves smaller costs of sale.
  - o Basic listing in OldHouses.com is \$50 for 90 days
    - Featured Listing: \$30/30 days
  - o Basic listing in PreservationDirectory.com is \$25/week
    - Featured Listing: \$60/2 months or \$125/6 months
    - Preservation Directory also has a print edition
  - o Most real estate firms have agents who specialize in historic home sales.
  - o Could be initially listed for free on Historic Properties Exchange (part of [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org)) to see what interest is generated.
- As part of a sale contract, preservation easements to protect the house can be developed with the assistance of Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.
- National historic designation appears to enhance salability, as that qualifies the buyer for significant federal tax credits on any restoration work.
- The issue on the future of the Peters House would be resolved.

## **Disadvantages of sale of the Peters House as a commercial property**

- Interest in historic properties as a location for commercial enterprises ebbs and flows, and because of today's challenging housing market and overall economy, interest is low.
- The commercial market for historic homes is much smaller than the market for historic homes as residential property. Potential buyers tend to focus on already restored homes and/or restored homes that have already attained historic recognition. They also tend to gravitate to homes that are located in legally defined historic districts. The Peters House offers only one designation, that of state recognition.
- The location of the Peters House poses obvious constraints for many commercial ventures, in that it is not located in a highly-trafficked area, such as the center of town. Instead, it stands in an isolated, residential area. The location issue alone severely limits the potential market for commercial buyers.
- The location of the Peters House poses unique issues and challenges; it is within 100 yards of the only entrance to the Hebron sports complex, further limiting the potential market for commercial buyers.
- Barriers would have to be constructed to form some kind of barrier between the residence and the Park and its traffic.
- Available land for parking could be an issue, depending on the nature of the commercial business. This would be especially important if the house were purchased for use as a tavern and/or restaurant; parking facilities would be needed for not only patrons, but also staff.
- The 2-acres originally proposed to be sold with the Peters House includes sensitive wetlands, which most likely means additional land would need to be included in the purchase to allow for needed parking facilities.
- Hebron already has one bed-and-breakfast that was not successful; that property has been on the market for almost 2 years.
- Hebron's Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Hebron Plan of Conservation and Development, are not prone to making spot-zoning decisions, which would be required to sell the Peters House as a commercial property. "Spot zoning" has been used only rarely in Hebron.
- Time on market could be at least 18-24 months, given current housing market condition and availability of other, already restored historic homes in Connecticut. During that time period, the house could deteriorate further without some repair efforts on the part of the owners (the Town of Hebron.)
- The zoning issues mentioned at the beginning of this report on the potential of selling the house for commercial use severely constrain both the range of possible commercial uses and the likelihood of such a sale.
- The issues of known code violations (lack of potable water and chimney issues) could impact a commercial sale.

- The Town of Hebron would relinquish control of who would occupy the site and thus potentially compromise the safety and security of children using the recreational fields.
- The value of the land associated with the Peters house is negligible to anyone except the Town of Hebron due to the presence of wetlands, septic and well location.

### Example of historic home for sale as commercial property

<http://www.innmarketing.com/listing.php/1351/>

## Bed and breakfast for sale - Potential- Connecticut

### Historic Connecticut Inn and Tavern with Potential for numerous Business Opportunities (#2446)



#### **#2446 Historic Connecticut Inn and Tavern with income potential from many diverse business opportunities and access to Beaches and Historical Landmarks**

Built in 1725 along an old Indian path, a weekly stagecoach from Norwich to Providence began to run by the Tavern in 1768, which years later, ran daily. Town historical records indicate that the "spacious tavern house for the accomodation of travelers" operated by Captain Eaton "became a very noted and popular resort". George Washington stayed at the tavern in 1776 and in 1781, which said arrival is illustrated by a large wall mural (approximately 7x8 feet in size) inside the front door entrance area of the Plainfield town hall. History indicates Lafayette wrote a letter while sitting in an antique chair on the inn's front stoop. In 1797 Captain Eaton opened a post office which was

Windham County 's third. This house was also the original courtroom for Judge Joseph Eaton.



In addition to the fact that George Washington and Lafayette stayed at the property, the Prudence Crandall House is one of numerous area Historical Landmarks that history buffs from afar may be interested in touring. Prudence Crandall's Academy to educate the daughters of local wealthy families transformed, in 1833, by becoming the first integrated school in the U.S. when she admitted a 20 year old black female named Sarah Harris. As the white families withdrew their daughters, Prudence responded by replacing them with free black female students from as far away as Boston , New York and Philadelphia .

Prudence was arrested and put on trial twice. In 1886 the legislature honored her stand by granting her a pension of \$400 a year. In 1995 the CT General Assembly passed an act making her CT's state heroine. Other attractions include the Nathan Hale homestead in Coventry , and the Henry Bowen House (Roseland Cottage) in Woodstock that was host to 4 U.S. Presidents. Southeast CT is the state's number one tourism market due to the diversity of attractions

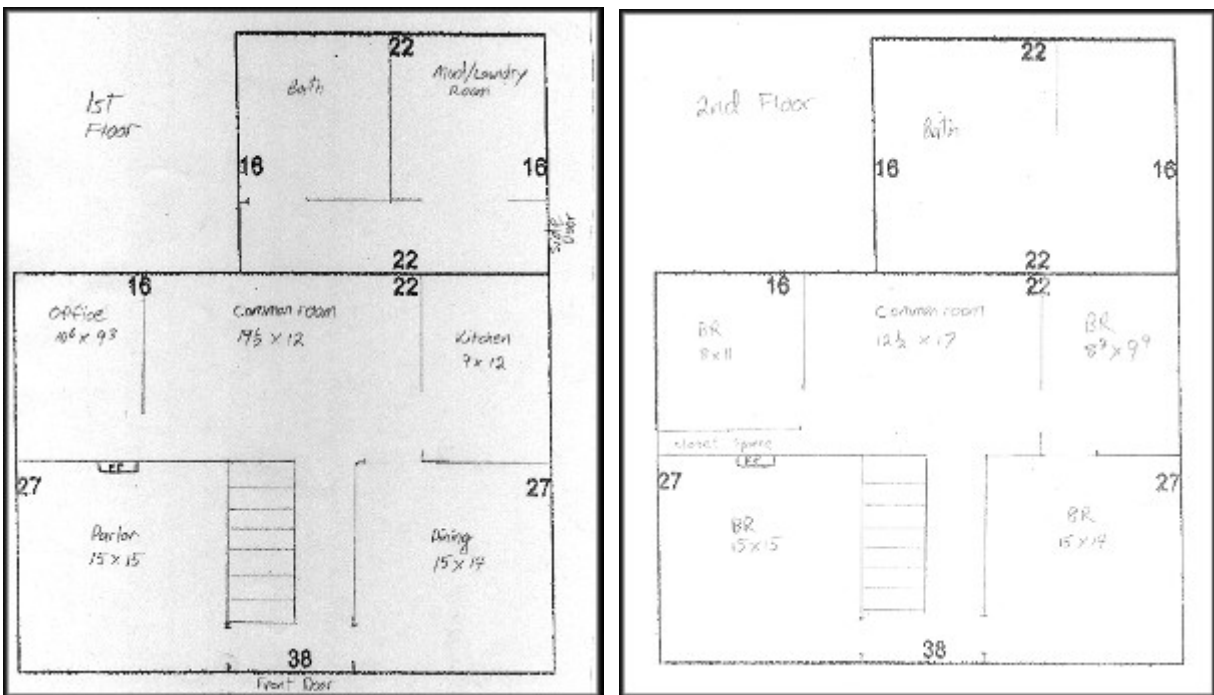


The home features original wide board floors, dentil moldings, original iron latch door fixtures, stonewalls with granite post gate, 2 refurbished and working Rumford fireplaces, all updated systems and a 2 dog shed/kennel. Today the home is used as a residence and is located in mixed use area on Rte 14A (a modestly traveled route) just several hundred yards from I-395 exit 88.

This location offering outstanding visibility and accessibility is complimented by zoning regulations that allow for a multitude of in home business uses, including by special permit, the operation of a Bed and Breakfast and/or an accessory apartment.



While there is plenty of opportunity for business, on the realistic side, a building design offering “spacious accommodations” in the 1700’s has it’s limitations by modern standards which is one reason the Tavern is hundreds of thousands of dollars less than any other B&B offering in CT. A floor plan layout of the building is provided here.



There are four bedrooms and a bath on the second floor. Two of the bedrooms are small. One option would be to put a bathroom in next to the largest bedroom for a premier room (existing closet between the two rooms already has an opening), while offering the other 2 rooms with the existing

bath as a suite. The addition of an accessory apartment is allowed by special permit. This is an excellent location for many types of small businesses offering high visibility and superior highway access. Obviously any business conducted in harmony with preservation of the home will be of less intensity than conventional commercial. Commercial sites with similar highway access in this area and others sell for the list price of this property (and more) for the land alone.



### **ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL USES FOR 20 ACADEMY HILL RD**

(FORMERLY EATON'S TAVERN)

**MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL/HOME BUSINESS ALLOWED IF CONDUCTED WITHIN THE MAIN DWELLING AS A SECONDARY USE AND NOT MORE THAN TWO EMPLOYEES WHO DO NOT RESIDE AT THE PREMISES.**

# Retention of Peters House for Public and/or Municipal Purposes

## BACKGROUND

In the course of completing its mission, the Peters House Use Study Committee reviewed the December 2005 Robert Hurd Architectural Report, which included three recommendations for the property. The recommendation to reuse the house as a residential property has been discussed earlier in this document.

With regard to Hurd's recommendation on using the Peters House as a local history museum or educational center, members concluded:

- (1) While use of the Peters House as a history museum is a popular choice for many residents, as evidenced by the Maple Fest 2008 informal poll conducted by the Hebron Historical Society and the Hebron Historic Properties Commission, "house museums" in Connecticut have a significant failure rate in terms of being able to offset operational costs with museum entry fees, supplemented by highly competitive, but small, operational grants.
- (2) A history museum would require hiring at least one staff person to manage the facility, as well as a potential second staff member to work on acquisitions, displays, programs and publicity.
- (3) An outside organization would have to be identified to manage the museum, because the Hebron Historical Society at the current time does not have the funds or membership to adequately staff a museum. This could change in the future.
- (4) If the Peters House is retained in public ownership, a few small areas of the house could be dedicated to Hebron history, artifacts, displays, and occasional programs, thereby creating a mixed-use environment.

At the request of the PHUSC, a memorandum was sent to Town of Hebron department heads in April 2008, requesting input about the potential use of the house as office space. Several responses were received:

- (1) The Fire Department stated that it does not require any space at the Peters House.
- (2) The Town Clerk's office stated that it needs to be located in close proximity to all other departments that are dependent on each other. In addition, it would be cost prohibitive to equip the house with its required climate-controlled fireproof vaults.
- (3) The Town Manager stated in April that the probate offices might have a need for space in the house. However, Probate Court matters would be isolated from the Town Clerk's office, where access to land records is a common need, both for court staff and Hebron residents involved in probate matters;

vital records are maintained by the Town Clerk's office, but are frequently required for probate matters; and Probate operations would need to be ADA-accessible, yet the size of the rooms on the first floor of the Peters House far exceed the space requirements required by the Probate Court; wills and other official documents are archived in the lower level vault; a similar vault would need to be installed and secured at the Peters House, thereby raising the overall costs of the restoration project.

- (4) The Parks and Recreation Department expressed a strong desire to have office space in the house. At the May 21, 2008 meeting of the PHUSC, Richard Calarco, Director, Parks and Recreation, and Thomas Fenton, Engineer, gave an in-depth presentation on the current Park Development Plan. There was also open dialogue between Mr. Calarco, Mr. Fenton, and committee members on exactly what modifications to the house would be required should Parks and Recreation move their operations to the Peters House. Mr. Calarco also presented members with space requirements for his operations, along with a suggestion that some space in the house be set aside as "history/educational resource areas."
- (5) Hebron's policing services are likewise interested in office space in the house.

The PHUSC focused on the two most viable municipal/public uses for the Peters House:

- (1) Offices for the Parks and Recreation Department, and
- (2) Offices and other spaces for Hebron policing services.

## **OFFICES FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

### **Benefits**

- There is little interdependency between Parks and Recreation operations and other town agencies, so relocation of this department would free space for another that does require proximity to other town departments in the current Town Office Building.
- Minimal modifications to the house would be required in order to accommodate those operations.
- Making those required modifications to the house will cause the least damage to this historical architecture of the building, and most, if not all, of the significant interior historical and architectural features of the house's interior could be readily preserved.
- The space requirements for Parks and Recreation would encompass most of the Peters House, leaving two areas available for display of Hebron historical artifacts.
- Because of Parks and Recreation hours, the areas dedicated to Hebron history would be available to the public on a regular basis, thereby meeting the requirements of several state grants.
- Having the Parks and Recreation office located at the Town's largest recreation complex would provide easy access for park users.

- The first floor can be modified to meet not only Parks and Recreation requirements, but also ADA requirements.
- Parks and Recreation can tap into the park water supply at minimal or no additional cost to the Peters House restoration project.
- The project can include extending the ell to the original footprint (stone foundation) in order to build additional ADA-accessible restroom facilities, thus enhancing the current park development plan, especially for the field closest to East Street.
- By moving a municipal operation to the Peters House, such as Parks and Recreation, the originally proposed need for privacy landscaping will be obviated, therefore saving money.
- Parks and Recreation welcomes the opportunity to move their operations to the Peters House.
- The Director would have all of his staff, both office staff and maintenance personnel, at the same location.
- Parks and Recreation equipment will eventually be stored in a “cold storage” facility located to the east of the Peters House, thereby creating easier accessibility to that equipment by staff members.
- Moving Parks and Recreation from its current location at Hebron Town Office Building will open up much-needed space at that facility which could then be used by other departments or the Probate Court, which is currently out of compliance with state regulations.

## **Disadvantages**

- The Town of Hebron would be required to match state funds for the restoration and renovations needed to the structure in order to accommodate the needs of the Parks and Recreation department.

## **OFFICES FOR HEBRON POLICING SERVICES**

### **Benefits**

- Police services could vacate their unsatisfactory space at Fire Station No.1, making it available once again to the Fire Department, for which the space was originally designed.
- A police presence at the Peters House would provide additional security for the park facilities, helping deter costly vandalism and damage to the fields by dirt bikes and ATV's.
- The second floor would provide enough square footage to meet most of the needs of the resident troopers and other police, with the exception of an interview room which would have to be on the first floor to be ADA-accessible.

## **Disadvantages**

- The first floor interview room may require use of space needed by Parks and Recreation.
- A 1,600 square foot garage would have to be constructed adjacent to the house to provide cruiser bays, evidence storage, and bicycle and equipment storage. The garage would need to be architecturally suitable to complement the house and to enhance the entrance to the park.
- It is possible that a communications tower may be required, entailing additional expenditures. In addition, the tower might not be aesthetically pleasing in a park setting next to an historic house.
- It may be necessary to hire someone to man the police office during normal business hours, since police duties would not fall to the Parks and Recreation staff.
- Conversion of the second floor to police space may damage some architecturally significant features of the house, e. g., attaching lockers to walls with historic moldings.
- It is unclear what a “training room” entails. If it includes weight-training or other physical fitness equipment, such a room may have to be located in the basement, requiring additional cost.
- The present police location in the town center at Fire Company #1 gives the community a central and convenient site for police business and community education during town events, school field trips, and community events.
- The sharing of space by fire and police personnel allows for good communication. Moving the police would make communication between two key safety groups more difficult and complicated.
- The Town of Hebron would be required to match state funds for the restoration and renovations needed to the structure in order to accommodate the needs of the Hebron policing services.

**Note:** The Peters House Use Study Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Town of Hebron that a good and proper use of the house would be a combination of public and municipal uses and a historical museum/local history center.

# Relocation of the Peters House to a New Location

## Overview

While relocating a historic structure to a new location is currently considered one method of historic preservation, it is a method replete with compromises. Currently, relocated structures are not eligible for “National Register” designation because many changes can be made to the integrity of the historic accuracy of a structure. Most importantly, a historic structure is severed from its original setting and the archaeological record associated with it, resulting in the irreplaceable loss of historic information.

Relocation of a structure can take two forms:

- (1) Move a structure intact. This preserves many aspects of a building’s accrued history. However, this method is subject to greater financial cost due to the need to disrupt electrical and cable service. It becomes less cost effective the further a structure needs to be moved.
- (2) Completely disassemble a structure. This method has been used by many of the world’s museums to preserve significant historic structures. This method necessitates a knowledgeable staff, since with this method (as in historical archaeology) all evidence is destroyed and small details must be noted. Once disassembled, a structure may be moved anywhere in the world and reassembled in any way an owner wishes. The best solution is to move a structure as few feet as possible from its original location.

## Benefits

- If the property value outweighs the historic value, an historic structure is sometimes relocated. Recently, this has been seen most frequently in Connecticut’s “Gold Coast” towns located in close proximity to New York City.
- If a structure has been allowed to deteriorate beyond the point where it can be reasonably restored financially on its original site, or a neighborhood has been so denatured so as to no longer provide a credible site for a structure on its original site, relocation offers a possible alternative to the complete destruction of a historic structure.
- While the current two-acre parcel is virtually worthless without the Peters House on it, the land would provide benefits from a Parks and Recreation point of view. This land might provide additional parking space, entry space to the park, and a functional septic system could provide adequate resources for restroom facilities located closer to the public right of way.

## Disadvantages

- The Peters House is structurally sound and its condition does not warrant relocation.
- Hebron is not a “Gold Coast” town in which available land and/or housing is so in demand that destruction of historic properties is a necessary or accepted practice.
- A location to which the Peters House can be moved has not been identified, and sales of historic properties for relocation purposes are generally unsuccessful. This has been proven in the past with Hebron’s struggle over the future of the Ruth House in the 1990’s.
- Change in land use by the Town of Hebron has already compromised the historic integrity of the Peters House to some degree. Built as a farm house, current activity in converting the surrounding area to recreational fields and parking lot may have eradicated archaeological evidence of barns, outbuildings and fields associated with the structure. Recent research undertaken by Dr. Bruce Clouette indicates the land was the site of the abduction of the Caesar Peters family, and their subsequent rescue by the citizens of Hebron. This event is the earliest known documented evidence of manumission in Connecticut.
- Currently the Peters House is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As a result, relocating the structure to a new, unknown location would be detrimental to its historic integrity. While the structure is of supreme importance architecturally and historically at the local and state level, its historic importance would be greatly diminished if the structure were to be relocated beyond Hebron.
- While historical and architectural research has been done by the Town of Hebron since 2005, there is more work to be done. In essence, the Town of Hebron may be relinquishing ownership of one of its greatest cultural assets which will be lost for all time to future Hebron residents.

## **Demolition of Peters House – Burning Option**

### **Benefits**

Allowing the Peters House to be burned by the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department would:

- Provide fire fighting practice for local fire volunteers.
- Irreversibly remove the house from the site, allowing for potential development of additional recreational fields.
- Irreversibly solve the problem of what to do with the house with a “Final Solution.”

### **Disadvantages**

There are distinct financial and environmental disadvantages to the burning option.

- Statewide clean air and water environmental acts limit materials that can be burned in an open air, non-controlled burn. Included in this category are asbestos and lead containing materials as well as noncombustible materials such as glass, metals, ceramics, and fiberglass.
- Asbestos-laden materials would need to be removed before combustion including complete removal of 2400 square feet of roofing shingles. This would entail the following costs:
  - Scaffold costs
  - Dumpster cost
  - Labor costs
  - Liability insurance
- Removal of 730 square feet of linoleum and other floor coverings would entail:
  - Dumpster costs
  - Labor costs
  - Liability insurance
- Removal of all exterior clapboards over 1500 square feet containing lead base paint would entail:
  - Scaffold costs
  - Dumpster cost
  - Labor cost
  - Liability insurance

- Removal of all interior trim, plaster, and floorboards over 5400 square feet would entail:
  - Dumpster cost
  - Labor cost
  - Liability insurance
- Removal of noncombustible materials including all windows, insulation, pipes, bathroom and kitchen fixtures, wiring, heating system would entail:
  - Dumpster cost
  - Labor cost
  - Liability insurance
- Demolition process would be subject to Hebron 90 Day Demolition Delay Ordinance.
- Demolition process would create a tempting hazard to public and would most likely require adequate fencing to keep trespassers out.
- The structure stands in the watershed of the Fawn Brook and Salmon River which may require approval of the Environmental Protection Agency to insure the area's ground water is not contaminated.
- The structure stands next to other residential structures and land that will be open to public access. The burning option opens the high likelihood of ash and smoke contaminating the air and ground for an unspecified area in Hebron, but especially for abutting properties.

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **MEMOS FROM**

### **MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS**

#### **ON SPACE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS**



Hebron Parks & Recreation Department  
 15 Gilead Street  
 Hebron, CT 06248  
 860-228-5971, ext. 136

DATE: May 21, 2008

TO: Peter's House Study Committee

FR: Richard Calarco CSFM, CRRP  
 Director of Parks and Recreation

RE: Peter's House

In my opinion, the Parks and Recreation Department main office would be a great fit for the Peter's House. As you are aware the East Street Property will become the Town's major park facility and the location of its park operation. Additionally, the parks building will be the storage facility for recreation equipment as well. Therefore, if the P&R office operation is located at same facility it makes operation more efficient in time and energy.

In addition, park operation would be able to easily access office information as well.

The space would be as follows:

1 Main Office	10x20	200 square feet
2 Operations Offices (Separate or same)	10x15	150 square feet <i>RA</i>
1 office storage	10x10	100 square feet
1 office machinery	10x10	100 square feet

One thing I would like to see is some history of the East Street land and Chicken Operation added to Peter's House history. The Parks and Recreation Office could also serve as the host and have the house open for 40 hours per week for people to visit.

Please contact me if you need additional information.

# Memo

To: Peter's House Reuse Committee  
 From: Jared Clark, Town Manager  
 CC: Resident Trooper  
 Date: August 21, 2008  
 Re: Police Offices

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## Needs Overview

The current police space allocation in Fire Station No. 1 is unsatisfactory for several reasons: all staff must share a combined single office space and the storage spaces in the office and the garage are inadequate. The Fire Department has lost space built originally for their use. To properly meet the space needs of Hebron's policing services organization the following spaces are required.

<b>Hebron Policing Services Space Needs</b>		
<b>Office Space:</b>	Dimensions	Square Feet
Waiting Room	10 x 10	100
Public Unisex Bathroom	8 x 8	64
Administrative Office	10 x 12	120
Resident Trooper Offices	10 x 20	200
Office Storage Closet	8 x 10	80
Coat Closets (3)	3 x 3 * 3	27
Small Evidence Storage	6 x 8	48
Interview Room (sound controlled)	8 x 12	96
Male & Female Bathrooms & Showers	8 x 14 * 2	224
Officer Locker Room	8 x 16	128
Officer Work & Reports Room	10 x 12	120
Training Room	16 x 24	384
<b>Office Space Needs:</b>		<b>1591</b>
Estimated Circulation Space	30%	477
<b>Total Estimated Office Space:</b>		<b><u>2,068</u></b>
<b>Garage:</b>		
Cruiser Bays	12 x 24 * 3	864
Large Evidence Storage	16 x 24	384
Bicycle & Equipment Storage	16 x 24	384
Minimum Garage Space		<b><u>1,632</u></b>
<b>Total Office and Garage Space Needs:</b>		<b><u>3,700</u></b>

The second floor of the Peter's House appears to have a total number of available square feet that can meet many of the police office space needs. Compromises may be required because of existing room configurations. For example the main entrance to the space could be up the so-called back stairway that currently is serviced by an outside doorway/exit. The administrative and related office spaces may have to be accommodated within what appears to be the existing kitchen space. The ballroom can meet the locker, work area and training room needs of the department. The second floor living room can remain as a single room to provide desk and locker space for the resident troopers. The existing single bathroom may need to function as a unisex facility. To avoid the requirement of providing handicapped access to the second floor it may be possible for officers or the administrative officer to meet with residents in an adequately sized interview room on the main floor.

It remains necessary to construct a free standing secure garage facility adjacent to the house that generally meets the requirements as set forth above.

Housing the police department at the Peter's House site not only helps meet critical space needs for the police and fire departments, it also provides additional security for the park facilities. Based upon the number of dirt bikes and ATV vehicles that currently ride across the property, providing for the protection of playing fields for the Town will be a continuing problem as long as the fields are there. Locating the police on the premises will provide additional security as a result of a natural recurrence of police presence on the property helping to reduce Town repair costs from vandalism.

Relocation of the police to the East Street property removes their presence from the center of Town; however, this location does not appear to positively or negatively affect the requirements for policing services in Hebron center. The one immediate negative affect will be a loss of the police presence in the area of the school bus fueling station behind the fire station making the fuel potentially more susceptible to theft.

The above space needs estimates are based upon internal conversations of required spaces. They are not based upon architectural specifications or any study beyond an initial attempt to use the Peter's House to improve the ways in which Town space needs for public safety services are addressed.

**APPENDIX 2**

**ARCHITECTURAL**

**DIAGRAMS**

**ON**

**REUSE OPTIONS**

**Created by:**

**Ray Overton**







# **APPENDIX 3**

## **ARCHITECTURAL**

### **DIAGRAMS --**

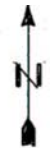
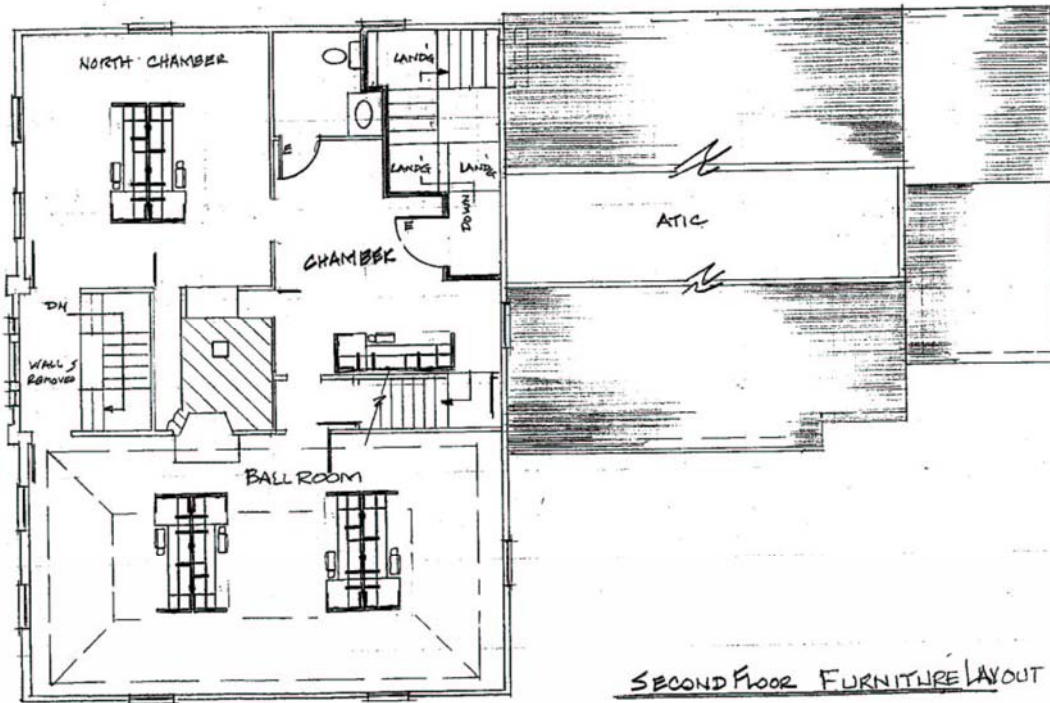
## **FURNITURE LAYOUT**

### **EXAMPLE**

**Created by:**

**Ray Overton**





SECOND FLOOR FURNITURE LAYOUT

PETERS HOUSE	DATE: 9/17/08
SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"	
SECOND FLOOR PLAN	
F-2	