

CHAMBERLIN MILL, INC.

P.O. Box 2, Woodstock, CT 06281

SIA 2014 HERITAGE PRESERVATION GRANT

FINAL REPORT

April 7, 2015

1. **Abstract of work** conducted under the auspices of this grant.

Construction documents were completed for the permanent stabilization of the 30' X 50' Chamberlin Mill by a historic architect meeting the qualifications set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36. These documents include bid ready plans and specifications for stabilization of the field stone foundation, re-grading associated with storm water runoff, repair and replacement of selected timber sills, post-bases and floor joists, and metal roof replacement.

2. **Written summary** of the project conducted under the auspices of this grant for publication by SIA is attached. Photographs are available digitally from chamberlinmill@gmail.com.
3. **Two copies of the completed plans and specifications** are attached.
4. **Final report of financial expenditures and evaluation** of the success of this SIA grant in aiding the Grantee's project.

Financial expenditures:

Fee for CME Associates architectural services, per 8-20-14 proposal (attached)	\$5,000
Fee reduced by CME as match to SIA grant funds, per 8-20-14 proposal(attached)	\$2,500
Paid to CME by Chamberlin Mill Inc. (1-31-2014 invoice and 1-29-15 check attached)	\$2,500

Evaluation:

SIA's \$2,500 2014 Heritage Preservation Grant made it possible for Chamberlin Mill, Inc. to complete bid ready plans and specifications for the permanent stabilization of Chamberlin Mill. Reviewed at intervals by the Chamberlin Mill Building Committee, the final plans were approved as bid ready on March 23, 2015. With these documents, Chamberlin Mill, Inc. is now ready to proceed with the Mill's permanent stabilization, which is critical to the preservation of this historical treasure.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean McClellan, President

WRITTEN SUMMARY OF PROJECT FOR SIA PUBLICATION

February 25, 2015

Contact: Jean McClellan, chamberlinmill@gmail.com

Chamberlin Mill: A progress report on restoration plans

Chamberlin Mill, a rare sawmill in Woodstock, CT, has a long history and a renewed future, thanks in part to a 2014 Industrial Heritage Preservation Grant from the Society for Industrial Archaeology.

Deed research traces the use of this long-lived mill site to the 1700s, when Mannaseh Hosmer chose a fast-moving section of the Still River for grist and saw mill operations. While the building we see today dates from a later, post-Civil War period, when penstocks and water-driven turbines supported circular saw technology, evidence remains in the stones of the north foundation wall of an early mill configuration. Surrounding the surviving penstock is a 60 square foot section of rebuilt wall, large enough to accommodate an undershot wheel, which could have provided power to an up-and-down saw and grist mill. A grist mill stone recovered from the Still River adjacent to the site in the mid-20th century gives further evidence of mill activity pre-dating the current circular sawmill use. This mill stone, unfortunately, was removed from the site some time ago.

Following Mannaseh Hosmer's tenancy, the property was owned by seven generations of the Sessions-Chamberlin family, until purchased in 2008 by The Nature Conservancy, as part of its 98-acre Still River Preserve. Abijah Sessions, the earliest of the line, was a Revolutionary War veteran from Union, Connecticut, who owned mills in Union as well as Woodstock.

A simple post and beam structure, approximately 30' by 50', with two wide gable-end openings at the main level, Chamberlin Mill stands adjacent to Old Turnpike Road, once part of the Central Boston to Hartford Turnpike, an 1820s stage route. At the Mill's river level, penstock, turbine and tail race remain intact. The turbine, thought to be of Upham manufacture, is buried under mud, where it will remain until the structure is restored. The penstock, blocked off following the Great Flood of 1936, is no longer functional. Above the turbine, a shaft and large bevel gears, lead to the Mill's main drive shaft, still complete with 19th century wooden pulleys, and flat leather belts that for many decades provided power to the 1873 Lane #1 circular saw and Muzzy Shingle Mill on the main working level of the Mill.

While the Great Flood of 1936 destroyed water-power capacity at the Mill, it did not deter the tenacious Chamberlin descendants of Abijah Sessions. They continued to operate the Mill through the 1960s, with power provided to the saw by a 1928 Straight 8 Studebaker engine. According to family oral history, Raymond Chamberlin drove a 1928 Studebaker President to the mill site, cut it down, and attached the

engine section directly to the saw's main arbor shaft. The Straight 8 engine, known for its superior and steady power, saw several decades of use at the Mill, and remained on site, open to the elements, when The Nature Conservancy acquired the property in 2008.

This past fall, the engine was taken under the wing of Mystic Seaport engine restoration volunteers, who are painstakingly and expertly bringing it back to life. The plan is to re-connect it to the Lane #1 circular saw, once it is restored. Chamberlin Mill, Inc. has over three-quarters of the parts necessary for this work. It is actively looking for remaining Lane #1 uprights and other parts (chamberlinmill@gmail.com).

While water-driven sawmills were once familiar sights in New England towns, dotting nearly every running stream in this naturally forested region of the country, and serving to provide much needed lumber for the farmsteads and villages we now claim as the part of the architectural landscape, these mills gradually gave way to portable steam operations and ultimately, large distant producers of lumber. Almost all of the structures have disappeared. Because of the Chamberlins' tenacity and Yankee ingenuity, adapting their technology to meet the needs of time, this mill has survived, remarkably intact. Now, a tenacious community is resolved to keep this rare treasure alive for future generations to enjoy.

Beginning in 2009, the Woodstock Historical Society and Woodstock Historic Properties Commission undertook study of the Mill's potential and completion of interim stabilization measures, supported by grants from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and Society for the Preservation of Old Mills, matched by in-kind donations and local funding. In 2013, Chamberlin Mill, Inc. (CMI) was established as a 501c3 non-profit corporation to serve as a long-term steward for the site. In early 2014, The Nature Conservancy gave the Mill and a small piece of property at the corner of its Still River Preserve to Chamberlin Mill Inc., allowing the newly established non-profit to move forward with plans to revitalize the Mill as a publicly accessible historical and educational asset for generations to enjoy.

With funding from the Society for Industrial Archeology, matched by CME Associates of Woodstock, architectural plans and specifications have been completed, paving the way for the first phase of restoration to proceed in 2015. This phase, which comprises repairs to the dry-laid fieldstone foundation, has already been funded by The Summer Hill Foundation. CMI is now focused on raising funds for the second, most challenging phase of the restoration, involving drainage, sills and other structural elements along the north and east walls. Phase 3 will include replacement of the corrugated metal roof, and phase 4, stabilization of the turbine supports, turbine conservation, and excavation of the tailrace.

Though restoration is anticipated to take at least five years, small-scale programming has been initiated and Chamberlin Mill, Inc. looks forward to welcoming members of SIA and the general public to a fully-restored and operational Mill within the decade. (Some members of SIA will remember visiting Chamberlin Mill as part of the National Tour of Connecticut's Last Green Valley in 2011.) In the interim, visits of interested parties can be arranged as feasible, and the Mill's progress can be followed at www.chamberlinmill.org.

August 20, 2014

Ms. Jean McClellan, President
Chamberlin Mill, Inc.
PO Box 2
Woodstock, CT 06281

Re: Chamberlin Mill Construction Documents
Proposal #2364

Dear Jean,

As discussed, CME is committed to providing matching funds for the construction documents phase of the permanent stabilization of Chamberlin Mill. This match will be in the form of providing professional architectural services to develop the construction plans and specifications resulting in bid ready documents. The documents will be prepared by me, a CT licensed architect recognized as a historic architect meeting the qualifications set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36 and certified as such by the State of Connecticut Historic Preservation Office.

Construction documents will be prepared for rehabilitation of the 30'x50' circa 1860 post and beam Chamberlin Mill, and will address ADA compliance and site improvements. These documents will include bid ready plans and specifications for the following work:

- 1) Stabilization of the washed-out portion of the north end of center stone retaining wall on the lowest level;
- 2) Stabilization of the stone stack at the southwest corner on the lower level;
- 3) Replacement or repair of deteriorated main floor framing along the full length of the east wall, including timber posts and beams;
- 4) Repair of deteriorated sill and post in the northwest corner at the lower level;
- 5) Removal of soil buildup along the north wall and repair of rotted portions of timber sill which is partially buried in the soil at the main floor level;
- 6) Repair of deteriorated sill on the main floor level at the opening in the south wall;
- 7) Installation of permanent support for the sill on the west wall at lower level;
- 8) Safe long-term supports for the hay conveyor;
- 9) Stabilization of the turbine supports;
- 10) Improved drainage on east side of structure;
- 11) Protection along the north wall to prevent soil and snow build up;
- 12) Jacking the east side up to return the frame to a plumb position;

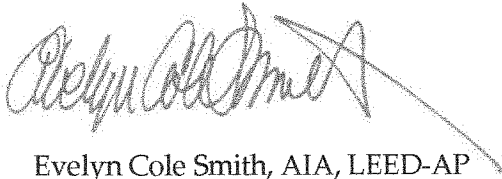
- 13) Repair of the fractured loft beam at the interior column;
- 14) Roof replacement;
- 15) Incorporation of site elements that will allow passage from the parking area to the interior of the building.

The fee for professional services relating to this scope of work is \$5,000. CME understands that Chamberlin Mill, Inc. will provide half of the fee in the amount of \$2,500, and that CME will contribute services in the amount of \$2,500 as the matching funds. Work can commence once this agreement is formalized by the authorized signatory of Chamberlin Mill, Inc. It is understood that the drawings must be finalized prior to October 31, 2014 in order to meet the obligations of Chamberlin Mill's funding source. If requested, CME will prepare an additional proposal of professional services for the Bidding and Construction Administration phases of the project.

To authorize this work, please sign, date and return one copy of this agreement to our office. Terms and conditions that govern this work are attached for your review and incorporated into this agreement.

I look forward to working with Chamberlin Mill, Inc. in the very near future to complete the construction documents which will serve as a tool for preservation of this very unique site.

Sincerely,



Evelyn Cole Smith, AIA, LEED-AP
Director of Architecture

Accepted by Chamberlin Mill, Inc.
Ms. Jean McClellan, President
Chamberlin Mill, Inc., PO Box 2, Woodstock, CT 06281

Date

