

THE DEMOLITION OF *PLAIN DEALING*:

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS REGARDING REMOVAL OF WOODWORK

Provided for the Town of Denton by the Caroline County Historical Society

November 13, 2016

Background: The demolition project involves a historic structure containing very significant historic **woodwork**. Bidders must be aware that the building, although much deteriorated, damaged by fire, and altered over time is one of the most historic buildings in Caroline County. Specifically, the structure dates to circa 1792; qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places; is the oldest public building in Caroline County; and, is perhaps the oldest building in Denton. The name “Plain Dealing” dates to the late 1820’s when the structure served as a plantation dwelling prior to the Civil War. More important however, the brick building was originally erected by the county government and served as the Caroline County Alms House (i.e., “Poor House”). Thus, the original woodwork in the dwelling, much of which survived, is of great importance to Caroline County and needs to be preserved.

General: The successful removal and preservation of specified portions of the **woodwork is a primary objective of the demolition project**. Bidders must be aware that the “salvage” of specified portions of the woodwork is the subject of a specific Memorandum of Understanding between the Maryland Historical Trust, the Town of Denton, and the purchaser of the real estate. The Caroline County Historical Society, although not a signatory to the MOU, is also a long-term interested party that has agreed to provide technical assistance regarding the successful removal of the woodwork. These instructions were prepared by the Society pursuant to that role.

The most important items to be removed have been specified. The items to be salvaged are set forth below.

1. *Remove all of the woodwork from the center stairhall on the first floor of the original almshouse. This woodwork includes the following.*
 - a. The original exposed-beam ceiling including both the ceiling boards and ceiling joists. These items are beneath the lathe and plaster of the current ceiling.

- b. The original flooring. This original flooring is below the current floor boards.
 - c. The baseboards and all miscellaneous trim work.
 - d. All of the doors (four) and door jambs (five).
 - e. All parts of the stairway up to the level of the attic.
2. *Remove selected woodwork from other parts of the dwelling.* This woodwork, which should be easily removed, includes the following examples.
- a. The chimney breast and mantel from the south bedroom chamber of the second floor.
 - b. The mantel from the south parlor on the first floor.
 - c. Selected floorboards, particularly from the attic.

Representatives of the Society will be available to show and discuss these specified woodwork items to potential bidders.

The ultimate objective for removal of the specified woodwork is to create a museum exhibit. The eventual use of the woodwork will be as an exhibit discussing the history of the structure, particularly its use as an 18th-century alms house. The permanent exhibit will be erected in the Museum of Rural Life owned and operated by the Caroline County Historical Society in Denton.

Great care will be needed for the difficult task of removing the historic woodwork. The past experience of the Society with similar projects involving the removal of 225-year-old woodwork indicates that the items (usually made of pine) are always nailed and very firmly affixed to hardwood structural components. Hence, the items can be easily damaged in their removal, necessitating great care by the responsible party.

The demolition contractor has the option to remove the woodwork or hire a subcontractor to do the work, but must be prepared to demonstrate that the responsible party has the experience necessary to accomplish the difficult task. As noted above, the successful removal of the historic woodwork without damage is an extremely important element of the demolition project. Bidders must indicate their willingness to participate in this effort, plus demonstrate their ability to successfully accomplish the work.

Woodwork items must be carefully marked as part of their removal. Several separate contractors are being used to document the dwelling prior to its demolition. These activities are not the responsibility of the successful bidder. However, the bidder or his subcontractor will be responsible for placing markings on each item as it is removed so that the item can later be properly reintegrated into the museum exhibit. The markings must be able to survive the cleaning process described below. Again, the Society will work with the bidder to achieve the desired result.

A specific experienced subcontractor is recommended for the removal of the woodwork. As noted above, qualified bidders can do the woodwork removal, or hire an appropriate subcontractor. A licensed subcontractor qualified for this type of work is the following.

Mr. Michael (Mickey) McCrea
Linchester Trading Company
3531 Seaman Lane, Preston, MD 21655
mickltc@outlook.com Cell 410-310-9202

Coordination between the demolition contractor and a subcontractor is essential. The removal of the woodwork will necessitate cooperation and coordination between the bidder (demolition company) and a subcontractor. Based on its previous experience, the Society believes that most of the woodwork can be removed prior to the commencement of demolition. However, for certain key items, careful demolition may facilitate the safe removal of some specified items of woodwork. For example, a key element of the woodwork to be removed is the ceiling of the center stair hall. The ceiling includes the wooden beams and wood boards that compose the ceiling. Inasmuch as the beams may be part of the structural support for the entire structure, a pause for the purpose of safety, may be needed at some stage in the demolition process.

The bidder, or a subcontractor hired by the bidder to remove the woodwork, will be responsible for several tasks subsequent to the removal of the woodwork. Two major tasks are involved.

1. *Cleaning the woodwork.* The historic woodwork being removed will be covered with mold and soot. All of the removed woodwork must be thoroughly cleaned, *especially to permanently remove all mold*, and then carefully dried for storage.

2. *Placement of woodwork in a container.* A container, probably the commercial trailer of a tractor trailer, will be provided on-site to the bidder. The bidder, or its subcontractor, is responsible for placing the salvaged and cleaned historic woodwork in the container.

Further information is available. Representatives of the Caroline County Historical Society are available to answer questions and meet with potential bidders or their contractor(s). The Society can be contacted as follows.

Mr. JOK Walsh
410-310-1307