

2024

# STONE HOUSES WINTER REPORT



# INTRODUCTION

Despite the cold and rainy weather, we are delighted to update you on the significant progress at the Stone Houses! The past couple of months have been bustling with activity, resulting in substantial changes to both the buildings and the site. Inside the houses, the walls have been closed up, marking a transition to the final stages of work. Outside the houses, construction is underway for new and replacement porches, and progress is evident in the vertical elements of the new public restroom.

The site is undergoing a remarkable transformation, with major grading and infrastructure work nearly completed. Despite occasional mud, the future ADA pathway and outdoor classroom are taking shape. In this update, we'll showcase several aerial photos illustrating the ongoing progress.

The aerial photo below captures the site before significant work began.



# RECOGNITION & THANKS

Dix Park Conservancy is able to renovate the Stone Houses thanks to a \$3MM gift from the State Employees' Credit Union and a \$2MM gift from the State Employees' Credit Union Foundation. Their contribution both preserves a significant part of the park's history and creates a welcoming entrance to the park, better accessibility and amenities for visitors, and spaces for community use, park interpretation and education.

The Stone Houses are a perfect fit for the State Employees' Credit Union. For over a century, the State of North Carolina employed countless physicians, nurses, therapists, and support staff throughout the Dorothea Dix Hospital campus to serve the mental health needs of its patients. Many hospital staff lived on the campus, including in the Superintendent's, Physician's, and Gatekeeper's Houses. With their generous support, State Employees' Credit Union honors the former hospital employees and all state employees who have served the people of North Carolina.



Check presentation from our partners at SECU and SECU Foundation at the Groundbreaking event.

# INTERIOR WORK SUMMARY

1

With rough-in work completed, the team moved to insulating and then closing up the walls. Trim work is underway, including patching original plaster trim in places, and floors are being patched and prepped for sanding and refinishing. Paint will follow close behind.



The original Physician's House mantel, cleaned and reinstalled, ready for paint.



New drywall in an office space on the second floor of the Physician's House.



Testing colors in the conference room of the Superintendent's House.

# INTERIOR WORK SUMMARY

2

Simultaneously, the design process for the Visitor's Center and exhibit in the Gatekeeper's Cottage is in progress. Despite its modest size, this building will play a crucial role in orienting & educating visitors to Dix Park. It will assist both first-time and seasoned park visitors, guiding them to new park spaces and events, while also providing insights into the complex and layered history of the site. Developed in collaboration with the City of Raleigh and the Dix Park Legacy Committee, this space will serve as the starting point for park tours and volunteer opportunities.

In such a tight space, every foot matters. Here is a concept for an events wall that would outline upcoming events and include a place for take-away event fliers.



# EXTERIOR WORK SUMMARY



Aerial photo taken in December as major site work has begun.

# EXTERIOR WORK SUMMARY

1 **Underground Infrastructure:** One of the more challenging aspects of any project on the Dix Campus is the underground work required to connect with existing utility systems that have been in place for decades. These systems have undergone expansions, updates, or replacements over the years, and the accuracy of records regarding their locations and conditions may not always be reliable. Compounding the difficulty is the fact that the site has a significant slope. Nevertheless, the team has expertly managed this demanding task, ensuring our partners, the City of Raleigh and DHHS, are kept informed and actively engaged throughout the process.



A maze of water, sewer, electrical, and gas pipes and conduits zig zag and connect the houses to the existing utilizes grid.

# EXTERIOR WORK SUMMARY

2 **Grading:** To meet the goal of providing an ADA pathway from the bottom of the site (the Rocky Branch Greenway trailhead and Boylan Dr. park entrance) to the top of the site (entry into the Ridge of the Park and close proximity to the Chapel) a winding path was designed to traverse the significant incline. Heavy grading transforms the side and creates new spaces, outlining the future circulation patterns of the site.



A clear view of the future pathway in front of the Superintendent's House, to be lined with trees, plantings, and benches.



# EXTERIOR WORK SUMMARY

**3 Physicians back deck and Gatekeepers Deck Replacement:** To facilitate accessible entry into the Physician's House, a new deck and porch were installed at the rear of the building. The result is a welcoming space that offers views of downtown and future views into the heart of the Hillside Garden. The deck at the Gatekeeper's Cottage did not need redesign, only a replacement of the porch decking. We expect both spaces to be extensively used!



Back entry deck into the Physicians Education Hub, hosting the City of Raleigh Parks Departments, Volunteer Services and Land Stewardship teams.



Gatekeeper's Deck: Also hosting a great view of the city, four rocking chairs will make this a welcoming space.

# EXTERIOR WORK SUMMARY

4

**Bathroom foundations and vertical:** The most anticipated new construction aspect of this project is the start of vertical work on the public restrooms being added to the Superintendent's House. This design solution integrates restrooms seamlessly without disrupting the site architecture and doubles the size of the events deck off the Superintendent's House. **It's worth emphasizing that these restrooms will mark the first public facilities at Dix Park!**



The stairwell off of the Superintendent's Deck taking shape. The restrooms will be to the right of the stairwell.

# PROJECT LOOK AHEAD



A current view of the site, with pathways and the outdoor classroom taking form.

## CONSTRUCTION MILESTONES AHEAD:

Remaining work for the site includes: installation of sidewalks, handrails and slabs, construction of seat walls, retaining walls, and historic Stone Piers, installation of site lighting, full landscaping installation, the addition of site furniture including bike racks, benches, and a water fountain, and the completion of the public restroom and expanded events deck.

Inside the building, work remaining includes: final paint, trades trim out, and furniture installation.

## RIBBON CUTTING IN EARLY 2024

We are anticipating project completion in early spring 2024 and a public opening and Ribbon Cutting in late spring 2024.

Thank you for reading! Questions about the Stone Houses project or other projects and events at Dix Park can be directed to [info@dixparkconservancy.org](mailto:info@dixparkconservancy.org).

