

1. Statement of Need

We envision an exciting future for Stonehurst as an exemplary historic house museum infused with relevance and vitality, helping to provide a new model for small museums and historic sites. Following the model of the International Coalition for Historic Site Museums of Conscience, we believe that “historic sites cannot focus solely on the past, but should encourage visitor thought, engagement and action in critical contemporary issues that are related to its history.” The proposed Stonehurst Permanent Exhibit and Signage project represents a major step forward in the development of Stonehurst as a museum devoted to its mission: “to provoke thought and provide historical perspective on the way Americans relate to their built and natural environment by ensuring that diverse audiences enjoy, appreciate and draw inspiration from Stonehurst and the legacy of its creators.”

A comprehensive Strategic Plan for Stonehurst was developed collaboratively by the City of Waltham (the property owner) and the non-profit Robert Treat Paine Historical Trust in 2002. Community leaders were an integral part of the planning process for all aspects of this municipally-owned property. They identified the exhibit project as a top programmatic goal, central to its mission. The plan states: 1) “Create a richer and more complete experience of Stonehurst by increasing the number of restored rooms, developing a comprehensive interpretive plan, and creating explanatory exhibitions.” Second and third high-priority goals also relate to the visitors’ experience of the site: 2) “Promote visitation to Stonehurst more widely and aggressively by developing a strong graphical identity and improving directional and informational signage on the property” and 3) “Improve visitor access, comfort and safety.” Over a period of years, the City and Trust have demonstrated their commitment to achieving these goals by gaining national support and investing considerable funds and staff time to the development and design of exhibits and signage.

The project grows out of federally-funded plans for interpreting and furnishing the Stonehurst interiors, and for improving informational and directional signage on the site. A National Endowment for the Humanities-funded interpretive workshop provided the essential intellectual framework for the interpretive plan. Next, grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and The Getty Grant Program funded a comprehensive visitor-oriented plan for restoring, furnishing and interpreting the interiors of the property. With a second IMLS grant, staff worked with an interpretive planner, brand strategist, designers and an advisory board to design exhibits, text panels, brochures, and site signage. The public participated in focus groups and tested mock-ups, providing valuable feedback that the team evaluated and incorporated over years. Self-guides to the exterior and landscape were also developed and are currently in use. We now look to the IMLS for funding to implement the interior exhibits and key site signage that the team so carefully planned in order to best communicate educational, wayfinding and organizational information to our audiences.

Waltham is a historic, diverse, and densely populated suburb of almost 60,000 people located approximately 10 miles west of downtown Boston. In 2007, 37% of the student population was low income; 36% spoke a first language other than English; and 55% considered itself White, 28% Hispanic, 9% Black and 7% Asian. The City is advantageously located along two routes of commerce and access that have shaped its history: the Charles River, a natural resource, and the manmade transportation network of Route 128, the Massachusetts Turnpike, and the commuter rail. Waltham is a regional center for hotels and industries centered on information technology, communications, education, consulting services and manufacturing. Waltham has ten hotels, two colleges (Brandeis

University and Bentley College) and welcomes 250,000 business travelers and 150,000 other travelers each year. Its downtown has undergone a renaissance with restaurants serving virtually every cuisine at all prices, including some of Boston's best small upscale restaurants. Along with the Charles River, the City has significant natural and cultural assets in a number of larger parks and estates, physically linked by existing and planned trails and open spaces, and conceptually linked by their historical connections to the preservation and conservation movements nationwide. The City of Waltham and the Waltham Tourism Council have made a commitment to increase tourism by assessing Waltham's visitors and attractions, and planning a city-wide system of vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding signage.

A feature historical and natural attraction of Waltham, Stonehurst is unusual in that it is a nationally significant resource yet it is municipally owned and community based. This National Historic Landmark property has appeared in countless publications and was featured in an episode of the popular PBS television show, "This Old House." It received funding through the Save America's Treasures Program and was recognized by the White House Millennial Council as one of the "enduring symbols of American tradition that define us as a nation."

On-site visitors to Stonehurst are generally from the Greater Boston region, most being residents of Waltham and neighboring towns. They fall into one of several groups:

- Adults and college students who tend to visit alone or in small groups to tour the house. Many are drawn by their interest in historic homes, architecture, Richardson, or Olmsted;
- Adults who attend mission-related public programs or events;
- School children who participate in curriculum-supporting programs and tours
- Adults who attend meetings of professional groups and community organizations;
- Guests invited to rental functions;
- Adults who have a casual interest in the property;
- People who utilize the grounds and surrounding conservation land.

We are committed to ensuring that all visitors to Stonehurst feel welcomed and comfortable and have ready access to the history of the site through a range of interpretive strategies. The signage and permanent exhibits that we propose to install with the assistance of the IMLS will address the most basic visitor wayfinding needs and provide a fundamental base for interpretation, marking a critical step toward realizing our long-term vision for this remarkable property. The project was designed to reach all museum, professional and casual visitors to Stonehurst regardless of their reason for visiting. With separate funding, it will be made available to a global audience through a virtual tour on the Stonehurst website.

The site is now largely unfurnished and sign free. Aside from a single sign at the street, there is no directional or informational signage to orient the 24,000 people who visit the site annually. These practical barriers inevitably interfere with their experience of the site. Most museum visitors tour the house and grounds with trained staff members and volunteers on 45-minute guided tours. Many museum visitors have expressed that they would like to have more freedom to explore their interests at their own pace. In addition, there are as many as 7500 visitors who experience the interiors of Stonehurst without a docent each year. These casual visitors, meeting attendees and function guests are some of Stonehurst's largest audiences. These visitors may rarely visit museums or historic houses and so this experience may help shape—or reshape—their perception of these institutions. They represent a good cross section of the population in terms of age, ethnicity, education and level

of income. However, their experience is currently cursory and purely visual given our lack of exhibits and signage.

By adding welcoming, wayfinding, and informational signage inside and outside, we will address visitor needs at their most fundamental level. By adding a layer of interpretation through permanent exhibits, we will offer all visitors an alternative to structured guided tours. The proposed project will dramatically improve the experience of the self-guided museum visitor, and will also create context and relevance for the casual visitor who attends a meeting, special event, or program at Stonehurst. As programs and meetings with targeted professional and community groups play an increasingly vital role in the life of the site, it becomes imperative that we adapt and expand the ways we deliver content. The project is intended to improve the depth and breadth of the museum experience, enhance the casual visit to the site, encourage repeat visitation, raise local appreciation and support for this national resource, and provide historical perspective on man's relationship to his environment that visitors can carry into their own lives.

2. Project Design

We seek funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to install wayfinding and informational signage and permanent interior exhibits for Stonehurst. The country home of housing reformer and affordable housing advocate Robert Treat Paine, Stonehurst is an American masterpiece crowning the career-long collaboration of architect Henry Hobson Richardson and landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, leading designers who broadly influenced the way Americans live and relate to their environment. Their pioneering designs for public parks, commuter rail stations, public libraries, community centers and country houses reshaped America's designed landscape. Hidden from the street on 109 acres of pristine conservation land, Stonehurst is the most intact example of their approach to country house design and the only one that is open to the public.

The proposed Permanent Exhibit and Signage Project consists of three components: a) fabrication and installation of two main site signs; b) exhibit fabrication and installation (including a map brochure); and c) development of a publicity campaign. The permanent exhibit and signs will extend through all public areas on the first and second floors (about 9000 sq. ft.) and into the historic landscape. Site signage inside and outside will orient visitors and provide basic organizational information at the main door. Educational exhibits will showcase the house and its permanent collection of artifacts (about 100 objects) and archives, making it available to the public on a large scale for the first time. The exhibits will combine selected furnished period rooms and open architectural spaces with explanatory text and images on wall panels, rail panels, banners, and a map brochure.

The most challenging design phases of the exhibit and signage project have been completed as explained in the Statement of Need, leaving only the fabrication, shipping and installation phases. The Stonehurst curator who has been deeply involved at every stage will serve as project manager. She is an employee of the City of Waltham, who also reports regularly to the Trust. She will continue to work closely with the designers of the site signage and exhibits who will in turn oversee the fabrication and installation. A detailed project schedule, with reviews, sign offs, shop visits, etc. is provided.

a) Site signage. In 2008, a comprehensive system of identification, directional and regulatory signs was carefully designed to best communicate educational, wayfinding and organizational information

about Stonehurst to our audiences. Designers worked with a team of Stonehurst staff and stakeholders, as well as with the exhibit design team, to define the feel, tone, message and look of the signage. We propose to fabricate and install with the assistance of IMLS: one site identification sign, and an entrance plaque with brochure display.

b) Interior Exhibits. We seek IMLS funding to fabricate and install permanent exhibits that were designed to convey the story of the house, landscape and people who created and lived in Stonehurst. The creators of Stonehurst witnessed dramatic societal changes and responded with pioneering designs that helped change the face of America. In Stonehurst, these post-Civil War visionaries created a house and landscape that expressed their artistic and social values, their solutions for an era of change. Visitors can best understand its significance by exploring the way the creators knit ideas together in a spatial environment through the interplay of three themes: nature, art and science. As three-dimensional expressions of the ideas of Stonehurst's creators, the house and grounds are central characters in the place-based story. Furnishings, personal artifacts, archival material, visual material and other primary documents from our permanent collection enhance the sense of people and place, further animating the inherently evocative spaces. A map brochure, "Walk Through Stonehurst," will orient the visitor and provide basic information on the exhibits.

Selected spaces will remain open and unfurnished to communicate the fundamental power of the architecture and design and to continue to serve as flexible assembly spaces for school groups, meetings and events. In these rooms, themes are supported by physical evidence in the form of architectural spaces, views, unique architectural features, and historic wall furnishings such as paintings and prints. Interpretive wall panels, designed to hang from the historic picture rails that are found in every room, will carry content. The text points to visual cues found either in the architecture or the furnishings to support central themes. Historical photographs, archival documents and quotes are liberally distributed across the panel to illustrate and enhance the text.

Although the story of daily life at Stonehurst is secondary to the broader themes of art, nature and environment, selected period rooms provide windows into the lives of Paines and the people whom they hired to maintain their estate. Period rooms – the library, dining room, butler's pantry, master bedroom, daughter's bedroom, bathrooms, dressing rooms and linen closet – are protected behind rails carrying text panels.

The period rooms offer an opportunity to share objects from the permanent collection at Stonehurst that are presently in storage and unavailable to the public. The permanent collection consists of the historic contents of this seasonal house which was owned by a single family for over a century. Most of the furnishings of Stonehurst date to its late 19th-century heyday. Descendants of the Paines donated the house to the City of Waltham with much of its contents intact. The Trust continues to collect items historically associated with the house and family. An initial exhibit list of about 100 objects from the permanent collection includes about 45 works of art, 35 pieces of furniture, and 20 household accessories. The final list of household and personal accessories will be developed during the grant period. While this project is focused primarily on making the permanent collection available to the public, the text panels also incorporate photographs and archival material from the Massachusetts Historical Society, Historic New England, and elsewhere. No objects will be borrowed for this exhibit and the exhibit will not travel.

Supplementary lighting for the text panels will be introduced sparingly in selected secondary rooms where such modern intrusions will detract only minimally from the historical environment. In

the second floor hallway, freefloating translucent banners carrying historic images, will be backlit to evoke the spirits of the people who lived and worked at Stonehurst.

c) Publicity campaign. The opening of the permanent exhibits will represent a turning point in the history of the Stonehurst, creating a tremendous opportunity to raise local, regional and national awareness of the organization as a whole. A targeted publicity campaign will showcase the new exhibits and encourage newcomers to discover the property for themselves. It will announce IMLS's participation and will also introduce Stonehurst's exciting new role in promoting public dialog on how careful integration of the built and natural landscape can contribute to quality of life. We will hire a communications consultant to create a prioritized publicity plan and assist the staff in its implementation.

3. Project Resources: Time, Personnel, Budget

The Trust will collaborate with the City, the owner of Stonehurst and an informal partner, on every step of this project, as it routinely does each day. The close collaborative relationship between the Trust and the City is described in the Statement of Purpose.

Ann Clifford, Project Director, has served as the Director and Curator of Stonehurst for the past ten years, focusing efforts on strategic planning for the organization as well as planning, raising funds, and implementing both preservation and interpretive initiatives. She will coordinate consultants and advisors; review and provide final approval of designs and samples; supervise period room, lighting and exhibit installations; maintain records and obtain permissions; and help publicize the project. As it is her responsibility to accomplish organizational goals, care for the property and engage visitors, a substantial portion of her time will be devoted to this essential project.

Jennifer Meader, Director of Education at Stonehurst, has thirteen years of teaching experience both in a museum and classroom setting, with a strong commitment to building partnerships with schools and reaching out to families. As a vital member of the team, she will lead programming efforts.

Andrew Barresi, Principal, and John Marksbury, Senior Designer, for Roll Barresi Associates are environmental graphic designers who developed the signage program for Stonehurst. They will supervise the fabrication and installation of site signage, as they have for other major museums, arboretum, and cities throughout New England.

Heather L. Hogue, an independent exhibit design consultant who is sensitive to historic environments and architecture, will oversee the fabrication and installation process. In her ten years of experience with Museum Design Associates, she served as senior designer and project manager for a dozen historical projects throughout the country. Ms. Hogue designed the three dimensional components of the exhibits with Stonehurst, Wells, and the larger team.

Erin Wells, Senior Graphic Designer for Museum Design Associates, has worked with Stonehurst on this and other projects over the past two years. She will continue to work closely with Ms. Hogue and see the graphic components that she designed through their final phases.

Mystic Millwork, a division of Mystic Scenic Studios, Inc. is a full service design and fabrication company with a commitment to high quality craftsmanship and 20-year working relationship with designer Heather Hogue. This firm will fabricate and install the exhibits.

Derek Barnwell, Senior Associate, Available Light, has over 17 years experience designing lighting systems for museums, architecture and entertainment. Working with the curator and exhibit designers, he will oversee the installation of supplementary lighting system that he designed.

Advisory panel members with whom we have been working and will continue to work: John Cox, History Teacher, Waltham Public Schools; Laura Driemeyer, American Studies scholar; Cheryl Robertson, interpretative and curatorial consultant; Cynthia Robinson, Director of Museum Studies Program, Tufts University; board members of the Waltham Historical Commission; and 3 board members of the Robert Treat Paine Historical Trust: an architect, landscape architect and retired museum photographer.

The Trust has built an impressive track record of fundraising for special projects, particularly for an organization of its small size. Despite its meager operating budget, we have successfully helped raise over \$1 million in federal and state grants to preserve and interpret this extraordinary site over the past several years. The high-profile exterior preservation project completed in 2003 was funded as an official Save America's Treasures project. Now that the most urgent physical needs of the house have been met, we are focusing on providing excellence in interpretation and programming. The Trust recently published an award-winning, 40-page, full-color guidebook to Stonehurst. With grant funding from the NEH, IMLS, and others, we have enlisted the help of leading museum professionals, scholars, preservationists and creative thinkers to ensure excellence in our effort to serve the public while maintaining low operating costs. A grant from the IMLS will allow us to share fundamental interpretive exhibits with the public.

The project will be completed over the course of two years. The Robert Treat Paine Historical Trust and City of Waltham have already committed significant funds and staff time to this critical project, and are deeply committed to seeing it through to completion. Having just closed out the exhibit planning grant from IMLS, this grant application is one of several that are being submitted over the next year. The Trust will apply to private foundations which have supported past efforts at Stonehurst as well as those which are not yet familiar with the property (i.e., National Trust for Historic Preservation, Fidelity Foundation, 1772 Foundation, The Boston Foundation). For the purposes of the grant applications, only the value of staff time is shown as "committed funds." In May 2008 (shortly before the dramatic economic downturn), the Trustees raised \$15,000 from their first large fundraising event, plus \$25,000 from targeted individuals, to restore architectural finishes of second-floor period rooms. The Trustees will hold a targeted fundraising event and appeal specifically for this project in October 2010. Receipt of a matching grant from the IMLS would provide an exciting challenge to donors and foundations who may need added incentive to give from their depleted resources during these difficult economic times.

Committed

Robert Treat Paine Historical Trust	34,301
City of Waltham	14,144

Pending

Institute of Museum and Library Services	94,471
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In Preparation

Private foundations	12,000
Targeted fundraising event & appeal	15,000
Mass. Foundation for the Humanities	5,000
Waltham Community Preservation Committee grant	<u>14,500</u>

TOTAL **189,416**

4. Impact

This highly visible project will transform Stonehurst in the public eye, introducing collections, scholarship and concepts to the public on a large scale for the first time through creative exhibit methods. The project will result in permanent exhibits throughout the Stonehurst interiors, wayfinding signage on the property, brochure racks, an informational kiosk, a map brochure, and a publicity plan.

This project represents a turning point in the history of the Stonehurst, creating a tremendous opportunity to raise local, regional and national awareness and support for the organization as a whole. Signage will improve visitor orientation, comfort and safety while conveying a strong, consistent visual identity that will help the Trust build and strengthen connections with new and existing stakeholders, and broaden its base of annual financial support. The exhibits are aimed to increase the appeal of Stonehurst to a broad audience with a variety of interests rather than a selected group of scholars and specialists. As casual visitors are converted to museum visitors, the impact (measured in numbers and depth of experience) will increase. We will measure the following outcomes using a short exit survey and statistics from our guestbook and membership records: 1) All Stonehurst visitors know more about the significance of the design of the property and the way it helped reflect and shape changes in American living; 2) casual visitors to Stonehurst return for a museum visit or program and 3) visitors become members of or donors to the Friends of Stonehurst.

The pioneering approach to exhibits at Stonehurst respects the power of place, and harnesses that power to inspire visitors and to help them draw connections to contemporary issues. The customized exhibits at Stonehurst will provide a new model for infusing small museums and historic sites with relevance and vitality. In order to reach this constituency, we will present the Stonehurst model at annual conferences of the New England Museum Association and American Association of Museums.

BUDGET FORM: Section B, Summary Budget

	\$ IMLS	\$ Cost Share	\$ TOTAL COSTS
1. Salaries and Wages		\$34,301.00	\$34,301.00
2. Fringe Benefits		\$14,144.00	\$14,144.00
3. Consultant Fees	\$15,390.00	\$6,345.00	\$21,735.00
4. Travel			
5. Supplies and Materials	\$79,081.00	\$7,200.00	\$86,281.00
6. Services		\$31,703.00	\$31,703.00
7. Student Support			
8. Other Costs		\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (1-8)			
9. Indirect Costs			
TOTAL COSTS (Direct and Indirect)	\$94,471.00	\$94,693.00	\$189,164.00

Project Funding for the Entire Grant Period

1. Grant Funds Requested from IMLS	\$94,471.00
2. Cost Sharing:	
a. Applicant's Contribution	\$80,549.00
b. Kind Contribution	\$14,144.00
c. Other Federal Agencies*	
d. TOTAL COST SHARING	\$94,693.00
3. TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING (1+2d)	\$189,164.00
Percentage of total project costs requested from IMLS	50 %

*If funding has been requested from another federal agency, indicate the agency's name:

