

January 28, 2020

To: Vermont State Senate Committee on Institutions

From: Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Re: Vermont State Historic Preservation Grant Program

Dear Committee Members:

Over the weeks leading up to the December 19, 2019 meeting of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Council members reviewed fifty two applications for the Vermont State Historic Preservation Grant Program. This popular state grant program allows non-profit organizations and municipalities to access matching grant funds of up to \$20,000 to help rehabilitate historic buildings within the state of Vermont. The applications this year requested a total of \$753,565 in funding for historic rehabilitation projects with a construction value of over \$2.4M.

Over the course of the December 19 meeting, the ACHP reviewed applications, discussed the merits of each, and scored all qualified projects to determine which would receive funding. Of the 52 applications, 48 met the standards of the program, and were scored by the members. Ultimately, the Council was able to award \$217,166 in funding to sixteen applicants. While these sixteen were deemed by the members to be the best of the submissions, it was clear to all present that many more projects were worthy enough to receive grant awards had additional money been available to this program.

Each year, the ACHP reviews many applications for this program, and each year we lament the fact that we cannot award funding for worthy projects, some of whom have applied to the program multiple times only to be denied due to a lack of funds. Many of these involve improvements to important cultural resources and economic drivers in their communities. Investments by the State through this grant program help create opportunities for job creation in places where these investments are needed. As these are matching grants, moneys awarded will leverage much larger investments.

The staff of the Division for Historic Preservation, in particular Caitlin Corkins, Tax Credits and Grants Coordinator for the Division, does an outstanding job assisting applicants, encouraging them to apply, and perhaps reapply the following year. There is a strong collective effort to make this program succeed, and we look forward to it and the Vermont State Barn Preservation Grant Program every fall and winter.

The ACHP would like to thank the Senate Committee on Institutions, House Committee on Corrections and Institutions, and the Vermont General Assembly for the funding that makes this program possible. We would also request and encourage additional funding to allow more projects to receive grant awards, thus preserving more historic buildings that are part of Vermont's collective community fabric for future generations to use and enjoy.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Clark

Citizen Member, Chair

Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

eclark@nbfarchitects.com

802-774-1153