

CDPA Meeting Minutes
October 30, 2004 Annual Meeting of Members

Katie MacLaren, current Vice President, called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. It was noted that **Houston Putnam Lowry**, President, was unable to attend because he is in London receiving recognition for work as an international trial arbitrator and attorney.

Nominating Committee Report

Katie MacLaren reported that the nominating committee was suggesting the following:

President and director: Houston Putnam Lowry

Vice President and director: Doug Putnam

Secretary and director: Katie MacLaren

Asst. Secretary and director: Scott Gibbs

Treasurer: Houston Putnam Lowry

Honorary Director: Hope Allen

A question was asked as to the required number of vice presidents and **Doug Putnam** stated that there is no regulated limit to the number of vice presidents on the CDPA Board.

Myrtle Morse moved to accept the nominations and **Bill MacLaren** seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the elections were duly noted.

Financial Report

Doug Putnam reported that the CDPA currently has \$534,000 of investments at Advest, the company where he works. Two people can adjust the investments and those two people are Houston Putnam Lowry and Doug Putnam (who make up the present investment committee). He said the investments have done quite well and that the financials are published quarterly to the members. Major expenses have been grounds maintenance and marketing Putnam Elms.

There was a motion to accept the report, a second and the motion carried unanimously.

TFMI Report

Bill MacLaren reported that he has been doing the mowing at Putnam Elms on behalf of TFMI twice a month and that it takes about half a day. The elm wood has been cleared in the back and all debris from ash trees felled on our north boundary has been removed. The pump will be turned off soon and the pipes drained for winterization of the house.

The Walking Weekend series was a big success with 119 people combined for the two weekends visiting Putnam Elms and Old Trinity Church.

The workshops have also been moderately successful, in particular basket weaving and watercolors, but it's possible that we've charged too much for them and might attract more people if we lowered the prices. Also, it takes a couple years often to build up a reputation for offering workshops.

The *NY Times* featured an article in its "Escapes" section on Friday, October 29 following Rte. 169 from Lebanon up to Massachusetts through Brooklyn, Pomfret, etc. and highlighted peoples' interests in pursuing old New England experiences.

Efforts continue to secure grants for exterior paint restoration. TFMI was notified by the 1772 Foundation that our application cannot be considered in view of the large numbers of applications received from properties that have much higher rates of public participation. A representative of the 1772 Foundation has offered to meet with TFMI over the winter to discuss other prospects for funding and uses for Putnam Elms.

Nancy Bell announced that the Brooklyn Town Council adopted a provision last week in the town meeting whereby locals can designate a "scenic road" with considerations given to stone walls, tree cutting, etc. A \$50 fee is required to apply for it. **Bill MacLaren** expressed a desire to have a consensus of nearby property owners get behind the idea of trying to designate Church St. a "scenic road". Nancy will go to the next town council meeting on Nov. 16th and collect further information.

With Rte. 6 expansion the idea of a permanent or semi-permanent sign at the intersection of rte. 6 and Church St. was discussed in order to get more visibility for Putnam Elms.

It was suggested that a "working weekend" be scheduled in April to get gardens and brush cleared out for the spring and summer seasons. **Katie MacLaren** will attempt to schedule the weekend and let members know when it is.

The CDPA received a certificate of commendation from the Connecticut Botanical Society for conserving a Notable Tree of Connecticut, namely the largest known hybrid weeping Larch in the state that stands at the south side of the Elms. The tree was entered in the Notable Trees Registry on September 20, 2004. A discussion followed about attempting to get more of the trees labeled on the property.

A representative of Textile Museum in Lowell, MA has indicated that the best way to preserve the wedding dress is to lay it down in a protective environment rather than having it displayed on a mannequin.

The Brinley oil painting discussed at the last meeting has been appraised. The quote of \$250 to have it insured with a deductible of \$250 was accepted and approved by those present. Additional discussion addressed the future appraisal of other paintings in the house. **Bill MacLaren** will look into it.

Bill MacLaren thanked **Hope Allen** for furniture she recently donated to Putnam Elms.

Putnam Elm's current manager **Cindy Dias-Reid** submitted her resignation from TFMI effective 10/30/04. She has indicated that she is happy to lead workshops at Putnam Elms next year as part of the programming. **Emily Gibbs** moved that we thank her for her services and write a note from the organization applauding her for all of her efforts and successes.

Clearing brush to the stonewall south of the house and removing some of the low branches in maples in the front has been completed.

There was a motion and a second to accept the TFMI report and it passed unanimously.

New Business

Mary Cross inquired about getting an updated membership list with names, addresses and phone numbers. **Katie MacLaren** said she would find out about how to go about that from **Houston Putnam Lowry**. It was suggested that the current membership list should be culled if it has not been in several years to reflect the current membership.

Emily Gibbs donated an original Library of Congress Copyright Department letter written to **Emily Malbone Morgan** registering her book *A Poppy Garden* on March 21, 1892.

John Cox donated a Classical Dictionary printed in New York in 1816.

Sue Jaynes donated *Lions & Eagles & Bulls: Early American Tavern and Inn Signs* published in 2000 in conjunction with an exhibition by the Connecticut Historical Society. It includes Israel Putnam's sign of General Wolfe used at his tavern from 1768 until 1775.

There was a motion to extend new membership status to **Elizabeth Steiner** whose maternal grandfather was William Pitt Putnam through the Ohio branch. Motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Ms. Steiner has recently been loaned a copy of a handwritten journal belonging to **Daniel Putnam** and her son has suggested scanning it into a computer so that the CDPA can also have a copy. Ms. Steiner says she has sent her contact information to **Houston Putnam Lowry**.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Katie MacLaren
Acting Secretary