

## Old Constitution House Renovation and Reopening Plans

16 Main Street, Windsor, Vermont  
Updated April 10, 2026



### Current Projects:

#### 1. Environmental Stabilization Project

**Funding:** Semiquincentennial Grant through National Park Service (in hand)

**Amount:** \$409,960      State Match: \$53,714 (capital bill FY26)

**Status:** Building Energy Consultant and Architectural Historian *Contracted/Design Underway*

The purpose of this award is to undertake an environmental stabilization project at Old Constitution House, ensuring the pre-1777 former tavern opens in 2027 for the public. This project will include contracted services to remediate the mildew and moisture, restore historic windows, abate the issues creating the mildew, and improve air quality with the installation of a new mechanical system. We are currently conducting a detailed heritage assessment of the property, including dendrochronology, to precisely map its construction and history since 1777.

#### 2. FEMA Flood Public Assistance Project

**Funding:** FEMA Public Assistance (in hand)

**Amount:** \$57,868      State Match: \$6,430 (capital bill FY26)

**Status:** Consultation with Vermont Flood Managers Ongoing/Design Underway

This project requires the replacement and relocation of the new mechanical systems above base flood level. For Old Constitution House, located in flood zone, flood impacts have affected the basement/foundation, basement windows, first-floor flooring, and full-width front porch. The new mechanical systems are expected to be relocated to the second floor of the 1914 ell addition. Agency of Natural Resources flood managers have been onsite, providing recommendations. A flood certificate recommending elevation was provided, resulting in contract with engineers about two possible flood adaptation



scenarios. 1) leave at current height with flood mitigation to basement and flooring; or 2) elevate plus/minus 3 feet to meet the Vermont Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule (FHARC). Project scope and funding must not overlap with Semiquincentennial project.

### 3. Landscaping Improvements

**Funding:** SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance

**Amount:** \$25,000 estimated (need to find funding)

**Status:** Consultation with county foresters and BGS landscape architect ongoing; removal planned for Summer 2026

Landscaping improvements include removing aging trees and plantings, and replace as appropriate with new. Remove plantings negatively impacted by flooding. Improve paths and parking for accessibility. Once design plan and safety measures are established, work shall include volunteers.

#### Completed Projects:

##### 1. Dendrochronology

**Funding:** SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance (FY24)

**Amount:** \$9,000

**Completed:** Written and oral history documents the Old Constitution House was the Elijah West Tavern, where the Vermont Constitution was adopted in July 1777. The exact construction date of the tavern is not known and its status following a town fire, various uses, and two relocations is unclear. The building arrived at its present location at 16 Main Street in 1914. To function as a museum and tearoom, the building was altered with fashionable Colonial Revival-style detailing, porches, and two rear ells. The dendrochronology was completed on the main block, the part believed to have existed in 1777 when the Vermont Constitution was adopted.

#### Future Projects:

##### 1. Plaster Repairs and Interior Repainting

**Funding:** SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance

**Amount:** Undetermined

**Status:** Expected 2027-2029

##### 2. Address Mold Invading Collections

a. Deaccession of irrelevant items

**Funding:** Undetermined Grants (including Daughters of the American Revolution)

**Amount:** Undetermined

**Status:** Based on funding 2026-2028

##### 3. Update and Expand Exhibits

a. New Docent Tour

i. Tour related to Date of Building and its History, Vermont Constitution, Windsor History, Preservation in Vermont



**Funding:** State Historic Sites Special Fund and Undetermined Grants

**Amount:** \$45,000 estimated

**Status:** 2027-2029

4. Cyclical Maintenance Plan

a. Repair Exterior Cladding

b. Replacement of Roofing

c. Repainting

**Funding:** SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance

**Amount:** Undetermined

**Status:** Expected 2027-2030

**Reopening Plan**

1. Soft Opening for 2027

a. Volunteers Cleaning and Landscaping prior to opening

b. Welcoming Windsor and Celebration of Old Constitution House: Date TBD

c. 250<sup>th</sup> Vermont Constitution Commemoration: July 8, 2027

d. Limited Opening, restricted to first floor

2. Full Opening for 2028

a. Resume full exhibit opening and events calendar

b. Opening May to October, Friday to Sunday and by appointment for school groups



**Current Conditions Images**



1. Tavern Exhibit Room
2. Chimney Breast Moisture and Peeling Paint
3. Window Pre-Restoration
4. Foundation Damp from Flooding
5. Mold on Chamfered Support Beam
6. Outdated and Inaccurate Exhibit Panels

