

Old Constitution House Renovation and Reopening Plans

16 Main Street, Windsor, Vermont



Current Projects:

1. Environmental Stabilization Project

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

Amount: \$409,960 State Match: \$53,714 (capital bill FY24)

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.

2. FEMA Flood Public Assistance Project

Funding: FEMA Public Assistance (in hand)

Amount: \$64,298

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 must be relocated to the first or second floors; if on first floor it must be on an elevated platform. Project scope and funding must not overlap with Semiquincentennial project.

3. Landscaping Improvements

Funding: SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance (FY24)

Amount: \$15,000 estimated

Status: Consultation with county foresters and BGS landscape architect ongoing

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

4. Dendrochronology

Funding: SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance (FY24)

Amount: \$20,000



Status: Dendrochronologist Contracted

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. The building was moved twice, landing 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 will seek to definitively document the original construction date of the main block, what parts existed in 1777, and what parts date from the 1870s relocation and the 1914 relocation/alterations.

Future Projects:

1. Plaster Repairs and Interior Repainting
Funding: SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance (FY26)
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: grant pending)
Amount: Undetermined
Status: Based on funding 2026-2028
3. Update and Expand Exhibits
 - a. New Docent Tour
 - b. Tour related to Date of Building and its History**Funding:** State Historic Sites Special Fund and Undetermined Grants
Amount: \$35,000 estimated
Status: 2026-2028
4. Cyclical Maintenance Plan
 - a. Repair Exterior Cladding
 - b. Replacement of Roofing
 - c. Repainting**Funding:** SOV Capital Construction Major Maintenance (FY26-FY28)
Amount: Undetermined
Status: Expected 2027-2029

Reopening Plan

1. Soft Opening for 2027
 - a. Volunteers Cleaning and Landscaping prior to opening
 - b. Welcoming Windsor and Celebration of Reopening: May 29, 2027 (free to Windsor residents)
 - c. 250th Vermont Constitution Commemoration: July 8, 2027 (free to all)
 - d. Limited Opening, restricted to first floor and exhibit rooms
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 Exhibit Panels

