

From: Carol Akin [carolakin@gmail.com]  
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Dear Friends of the DeLancey-Cooper House<

I'm afraid we don't have good news.... We have only 2 1/2 weeks left until the owners will sell the DeLancey-Cooper House to a developer.

It was made clear from those who have recently spoken to the one major donor, that he feels the house could soon need major work done (roof, furnace, the whole electrical system, etc.) which the Committee could not afford to repair. (I don't agree, but he's 94, in real estate and goes to his office daily, and has a firm opinion). Our income would rise, if we owned the house, by over \$20,000 per year (lower property taxes and increase in apartment rentals) for much more. We would also continue to fund-raise. Thus, maintaining the house (which I did explain in a financial letter to him two weeks ago) should not be a problem. He has, however, decided not to support us.

I received a call from one of the owners stating that they very much hoped we could save the house, but that there was a bid they would accept within two or three weeks, and that was all the time they would give us. I then called the owner who was my main contact, and he corroborated it – and reluctantly agreed to give us a couple more days, and set the final date at August 17th – the very last day for us to submit an offer – before signing with the developer who had the acceptable bid.

Thus, with apparently no others ready to come forth with the \$2.5 million in three weeks, the Committee turned its efforts to trying to move the house. The owners would give it to us for nothing if we could get it off the property. We would need to purchase land (\$350,000) and move the house (close to \$150,000), and then restore it (without the addition of the kitchen and apartment above it). Then we could create a (smaller) museum in the house. All told, it would cost around \$850,000. We have the piece of land available for purchase – (the 2/5 of parking lot property which was sold by the Christian Science Church 4-5 years ago to a man who never built on it, and who has it on the market right now). I've already contacted an internationally known preservational architect (who would have moved the Gedney Farm House, if the Rye Neck superintendent and Board hadn't demolished it) and he will gladly move the house for us. But having funds for the land and the move alone, (and then later raised funds to restore it and create the Museum), the cost would still be around \$500.

Another thought was floated by a Committee member which we are working on – convincing the Mamaroneck Village Board and other Village officials to allow us to move the to some appropriate area on Harbor Island, where it wouldn't block the view of the harbor (which was understandably the objection to moving it next to the School House). Either place – the Church parking lot or Harbor Island – would mean only a very short move. If it were moved to Harbor Island, the Village would continue to own the land, but the Historical Society would be responsible for maintaining the house. If optimally for the Historical Society, it was moved to the parking lot, we'd be autonomous, and could fix up and rent the one large 2nd floor apartment to have a source of income. If moved to Harbor Island, we discussed the possibility of renting upper areas as office space (doubt if we can rent space to live on public property).

Either way, we will need to have funds for maintenance, since the restaurant cannot continue (the kitchen and apartment over it would be removed from the original frame – they were added some time ago).

Note: There was a great article on the DeLancey-Cooper House that is in this week's weekly Freeman's Journal, one of the two Cooperstown papers. The writer interviewed me when I was up in early July. Only problem was there was no contact information needed. Hope they will do a follow-up. If you're interested, google "FreemansJournal.com in Cooperstown, NY" and look for July 23rd edition. It's on the front of the second section, pictures and all, and inside.

If anyone knows someone who could consider even a major portion of the \$500,000 we will need to save and move the house, please, please, let me know! We have tried so hard, but are facing a steep uphill challenge these next 2 1/2 weeks. I haven't lost hope...but I would love to see some evidence that someone with means has a grasp of how incredibly important an Historical Museum would be for Mamaroneck as well as saving our oldest large historic 1792 home.

Thanks to everyone for your interest and support.

Best, Carol