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Waite Potter House: Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Application for Waterproofing of restored brick and stone chimneys

Anne W. Baker

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TOWN OF WESTPORT COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROGRAM FOR FY04

Project Submission Sheet

Community Preservation Committee

Submitter: Anne W. Baker

Submission Date 12/22/07

Submitter's address and phone number.

29 Drift Rd.

Westport. 02790

508 636 3272

Town committee (if applicable)

Westport Historical Commission

Purpose: (please select all that apply)

☐ Open Space

☐ Affordable Housing

☐ Historic Preservation

☐ Recreation

Project Name: Waite-Potter Chimney

Water proofing of restored brick and stone chimneys

Description:

Apply one application of SIL-Pro matte finish water proofing sealer to the brick and stone chimney to prevent freezing water to penetrate the new mortar in the recently restored Waite/Potter stone and brick chimneys. Three bids enclosed.

History

Built by Thomas Waite in ca. 1677. The Waite-Potter House is a unique 17th century structure known as a "Rhode Island Stone-ender" A Tudor-Gothic type of yeoman's cottage which has prevailed in part of England since the 15th century. A simple house, 18 feet by 18 feet, the west gable end built entirely of field stone, the chimney top capped with projecting stones, and a 12 foot wide and six foot high original fireplace incorporated into its inner side..

In 1728, Benjamin Waite sold the house and land to Robert Kirby.

In ca.1770 an addition with brick chimney were attached to the stone-ender at the west end of the original RI Stone ender.

In 1837 Ichabod Kirby sold the property to Restcome Potter.

Muriel Bibeau, direct descendent of the Potters, is the present owner.

Site view by appointment only. Contact -A.W. Baker

Significance

In 1903 Norman M. Isham (1864-1943) an architect and leading authority on colonial architecture, visited the Waite-Potter House and was so impressed by its extraordinary and rare features that he produced measured drawings followed by a 4 page report about the house.

In 1934 the Waite-Potter House was documented (measured and drawn by HABS. (Historic American Buildings Survey)) as it was considered to be one of the most important 17th century examples of early America architecture.,¹ HABS Survey no. 2-65. See footnote 1.

The hurricane of 1954 destroyed the post and beam frame of the house but not its rare RI stone-end chimney. Parts of its post and beam structure were rescued and are now installed in Little Compton Historical Society's Wilbour House

The nationally significant Waite-Potter site holds the essences of Westport History, and is the oldest surviving 17th century RI stone-end chimney in Bristol County.

Not only is it distinguished as Westport's earliest structure, but holds an honorable position on Westport's town seal.

As an historic and cultural resource Westport's responsibility to preserve the Waite-Potter stone-end is of critical importance—to the past, the present and for the future .

Footnote:

¹ (HABS (Historic American Buildings Survey) was established in 1934 by President Roosevelt' as part of the NEW Deal

HAB's purpose was to document American's important architecture so that the historic qualities of our early houses would not be lost, thereby preserving the past .
