

Request for Proposal for Architectural and Engineering Services for Palmer-Warner House, Barn, & Landscape Improvements

Connecticut Landmarks (CTL) is planning improvements to the Palmer-Warner Property in East Haddam, CT, aimed at creating a visitor experience that will appeal to a variety of audiences seeking to better understand historically excluded LGBTQ history in the state, in addition to the history of the lower Connecticut Valley in the 18th and 19th centuries, American decorative arts, and the history of historic preservation. To this end, CTL seeks proposals for a firm to design a visitor center in the reconstructed barn and carriage house, to include retail, exhibit, and programming space in addition to mechanical systems, restrooms, and back-of-house space, as well as provide construction administration services for the first phase of construction (Phase I). The successful respondent will oversee all design and implementation of this work as detailed below.

Background

Founded in 1936 as the Antiquarian & Landmarks Society, Connecticut Landmarks is a statewide network of twelve significant historic properties that span four centuries of New England history. Connecticut Landmarks stewards a portfolio of historic house museums and landscapes to inspire public interest in, and a deeper understanding of, the state's complex past. CTL engages visitors to find deeper meaning in complex stories that inspire them to take action in their communities. CTL operates with an annual budget between \$1.5MM and \$2.0 MM with seventeen (17) year-round staff and upwards of forty (40) part-time and seasonal staff with sites in seven host communities across the state. The funding for CTL is derived from endowments, fundraising, membership, and grants.

The Palmer-Warner House, located in East Haddam, was built in 1738 by John and Mehitable Warner. Their sons and grandsons created a thriving blacksmithing business that crafted elaborate iron hardware that can be seen in the Palmer-Warner House and on the First Church of Christ in East Haddam. Examples are also held in various museums, including the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford

In 1936, preservation architect and CTL founding member Frederic Palmer purchased the house with his mother, Mary Brennan Palmer. Palmer had been educated at Harvard in the 1920's, and done archeological work in France. His two uncles were pioneers in the collection of American decorative arts, and their collections become the formative core of the Metropolitan Museum's holdings. From the mid-1940s until his death in 1971, Palmer lived there with his partner Howard Metzger, who continued living in the house until his own death in 2005. Palmer, working from his office on the third floor of the Palmer-Warner House, restored historic houses in CTL's collection, and other museums and properties throughout the state. He also designed new elements for historic buildings, such as the main staircase at the Goodspeed Opera House. He and Metzger collected antiques and art, hosted social gatherings, and enjoyed life in East Haddam through the second half of the twentieth century. CTL is fortunate to have their collection of furniture and decorative arts, their diaries and letters, and the documentation of the house's history that Palmer and Metzger gathered to tell the story of the Palmer-Warner House. We seek to be a setting to share multiple viewpoints, encourage visitors to share and document their own history, foster conversations around inclusion, individuality, privacy, and privilege. The Palmer-Warner House will be a place to explore underrepresented LGBTQ+ stories through the lives and relationship of Palmer and Metzger.

Scope of Work

Since 2005, the organization has been preparing for conversion of the property to a museum site. The first major steps were focused on managing the collections and stabilizing the house and barn. (See attached map). A public and scholarly input process was held to determine the interpretive focus. Concepts were developed as to the site experience and a list was refined collaboratively by staff, who prepared a preliminary facility plan for the site. (See attached.) This list includes, but is not limited to:

- Parking (both bike and car)
- Site movement, access to the house and facilities
- Bathrooms
- Storage (program materials, staff supplies, limited collection items)
- Staff spaces (office, small kitchen area, lockers/storage)
- Exhibit space (exhibit design still to be determined, will require ability to have a collection-sympathetic environment)
- Infrastructure (HVAC, electrical, plumbing, fire, collections management, sustainability) and infrastructure storage
- Access (ADA and non-ADA) around the property
- Restored landscape (based on historic designs and plans)
- Connection to the fields and potential interpretive trail
- Potential targets such as LEED certification—if possible

In 2022, Connecticut Landmarks was awarded a state bond to start the process of implementing the design portion and a preliminary infrastructure portion of this project (Phases I & II), which is split into three total phases:

- Phase I – design and construction of preliminary infrastructure (parking, mechanicals, access hardscaping)
- Phase II – interior design and construction of the carriage house visitors center
- Phase III – future restoration of the historic house, which will be managed by CTL directly

The proposed design process will start with initial concept and schematic designs, permitting, and gaining approvals (DECD, State Preservation Office, Zoning Board of Appeals, etc.) before moving to construction documentation in Phases I & II.

CTL intends to commission one firm to provide all design, permitting, and bidding services necessary for this project's Phase I development. This firm will provide these comprehensive services through the firm's capabilities and sub-consultants, as needed. Note that this project will likely require the disciplines traditionally included in historic architecture contracts, including architectural, structural, mechanical, electrical, civil, landscape, and equipment. Personnel with appropriate expertise are required. Other expertise areas, such as program scope development, cost estimating, code research, and interior design, as needed for the project's complete design, may be required. The architectural and engineering team will provide oversight for this project's implementation, including managing the budget and reporting to the State of Connecticut.

The mid-18th century barn, constructed in two stages 12 years apart, was recently meticulously and responsibly deconstructed and rebuilt, now with a concrete floor slab over the earthen original surface. The renovated structure is viewed as the best adaptive reuse solution for a guest experience from which visitors will connect with the house, the landscape, and community. Expertise in sensitive contextual design—with a strong background in sustainability—is expected. Engineering experience with water runoff, solar or sustainable energy, and accessibility will also be necessary. We anticipate a small group of staff and Board of Trustee members will serve as a working committee during this process.

Anticipated consultant work will include:

- Project Monitoring Plan (as required by DECD)
- Concept design documents
- Schematic design documents
- Development of budgets, scopes of work, and plans around phased implementation
- Two project cost estimates will be required - one estimate upon completion of schematic design and one revised estimate during the construction document process.
- Construction documents, with bid information (structural, mechanical, electrical, landscape, civil engineering, equipment plans) for all phases
- Engineering documents for all phases
- Meeting with staff and the Board of Trustees committee to resolve questions
- Meeting with the Town of East Haddam in anticipation of permits (including a potential special zoning relief and master plan)
- Meeting with the State Historic Preservation Office as appropriate (CTL anticipates at least two submissions and four meetings)
- Meeting and communication with DECD representatives to provide plans, contracts, reports, budgets, bid details, schedules, monthly progress reports, etc. (CTL anticipates at least one meeting a month with DECD during the span of the project, with appropriate submissions at those times)
- Bid package for release and plan to manage the bidders to implement Phase I
- Construction Administration services, including construction meetings, on-site review, submittal review for Phase I

The organization desires to have construction begin in early 2024 with an anticipated completion date of Spring 2025.

The organization will consider alternative project development scopes as proposed by the respondents but should include reasoning behind adding or deleting from the above list.

Budget

This project is funded by the State of Connecticut through their bonding program. Architectural and planning costs are anticipated not to exceed \$300,000. If additional bond funding is obtained, the schedule and budget may be amended. Submissions may include potential “add on” work beyond base scope of work if consultant desires. Design work is anticipated to begin in Q2 2023. Please include a labor estimate and work plan with your materials.

RFP and Contract Award Timeline:

Distribution of RFP	May 5, 2023
Deadline for Submitting Questions	May 25, 2023
Responses to Questions	June 2, 2023
Submission Deadline	June 23, 2023
Contract Awarded	July 14, 2023
Design Start	August 4 2023
Design Complete	Q1 2024
Permitting/Approvals for Construction	Q2 2024
Phase I Construction	Q3 2024 – Q4 2025

Proposal Selection Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated and compared based on the following weight:

- Clarity of proposal and work plan, including preservation best practices (20%)
- Budget and costs (20%)
- Timeline (15%)
- Past experience in managing this type of project (10%)
- Success in completing projects, including adherence to schedule and budget (10%)
- Experience in the field and with historic properties and sustainability (10%)
- Diversity of firm leadership and of project team (5%)
- Experience with other local or similarly sized organizations (5%)
- Ability to establish an effective working relationship with the client (5%)

Proposal Submission

- Cover Letter indicating interest in project. Indicate name, address, phone number, and e-mail of contact.
- Description of Firm. Please include your experience with projects that are inclusive, and accessible,
- Similar Project Experience. Please include information on how these projects are relevant.
- Summary of Work Plan. Describe your plan for accomplishing the work: the activities, format, and timeframe required to complete the project. Provide a timeline that includes each phase of the project.
- Budget and Requested Fee Schedule. Include the cost and add-ons and the maximum fee for this project. Identify personnel and non-personnel items separately within the total budget.
- Statement of Project Team and resumes, if applicable.
- References. Contact information for two references.
- Responses to Contract Term Questions.

Contract Terms Questions

Please review the following questions and provide a response with your submission. Be aware that Connecticut Landmarks will be the sole owner of the work products. At no time can the contract be assigned without Connecticut Landmarks' consent. Service fees will not be changed without a joint agreement between both parties. Connecticut Landmarks retains the ability to terminate the agreement for any reason upon mutually agreed advance notice.

1. Will your firm be able to be in compliance with C.G.S. 4a-60 regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action?
2. Will your firm be able to be in compliance with C.G.S. 31-53c regarding prevailing wages and keep records to the same?
3. Is your firm a Minority and/or Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE)?
4. How available will the individuals assigned to this project work be? What back up will be provided if they are unavailable?
5. What is your employee turnover rate? (Team members proposed should indicate how long they have been with the company.)
6. What is your approach to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in your workplace and work, as well as community engagement, employees and hiring, and design (inspiration, values, etc.)?
7. Do you subcontract, outsource, or use affiliates for core/non-core services? If so, will they be bound to the terms of the agreement with Connecticut Landmarks? Will your company remain liable for subcontractor/affiliate acts and omissions?
8. Does Connecticut Landmarks have the right to approve or reject subcontracting, outsourcing, or use of affiliates?
9. Will you agree to be liable for your negligence, fraud, and willful misconduct?
10. What is your insurance coverage? Do you have liability caps? Contractors will need to maintain general liability (\$1,000,000), workers comp (statutory), automobile (\$1,000,000) as necessary.
11. Is your company subject to any litigation, audits, or other government actions? Have any vendors been subject to them in the past? If so, what were the results?
12. Is there any conflict of interest that might interfere with your objectivity?
13. Please provide a copy of your form of engagement agreement or contract.

Contact & Submission

Questions and final submissions should be sent to Aaron Marcavitch, Executive Director, 59 S. Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 01606 or aaron@ctlandmarks.org. No phone calls please.

Connecticut Landmarks provides equal opportunity in employment to qualified individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, civil union status, national origin, ancestry, disability including pregnancy, veteran's status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by applicable state or federal law. CTL reserves the right to not award this contract.

Attachments:

- **CTL Facility Planning Document**
- **Photographs**
- **Scaled Drawing of Barn**