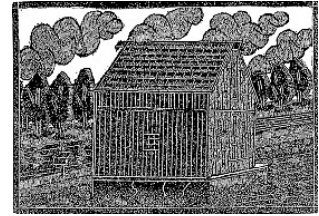


For Immediate Release
December 15, 2020



VAN WYCK-LEFFERTS TIDE MILL SANCTUARY RECEIVES GRANT FROM ROBERT DAVID LION GARDINER FOUNDATION

The Van Wyck-Lefferts Tide Mill Sanctuary is proud to announce that the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation has awarded it a grant of \$97,137.50 to help restore one of the earliest industrial buildings on Long Island. The matching grant will help underwrite the cost of vitally important repairs to the 223-year-old tide mill building and the dam on which it sits, both of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The grant will fund restoration of the earthen dam, installation of a new roof on the mill building, as well as interior structural repairs. Work is expected to be completed by the middle of 2021. The next phase of the restoration project will include shoring up the bulkhead which protects the mill's stone foundation and restoration of the bridge over the spillway that connects the north and south sections of the dam.

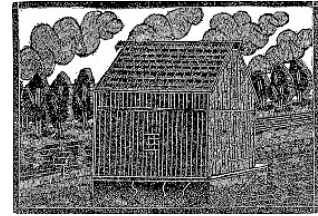
The mill is considered one of the best preserved eighteenth century tide mills in the United States and is one of only ten surviving examples of tide mills in the northeast from Virginia to Maine. The funding from the Gardiner Foundation will help to ensure the continued preservation of this remarkable structure, which was built in 1797 and continued to serve local farmers for the next three quarters of a century.

The Van Wyck-Lefferts Tide Mill Sanctuary, Inc., was formed in 2014 to assume ownership from The Nature Conservancy of the tide mill, the dam, and the mill pond to insure the future preservation of this significant pre-industrial factory. The not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization is dedicated to the preservation of the mill and to maintain the preserve as a sanctuary for native and migratory waterfowl and as an important contributor to the bio-diversity of the surrounding area.

Prior to the pandemic, the mill was open for guided tours through the Huntington Historical Society, which works closely with the Van Wyck-Lefferts Tide Mill Sanctuary, to ensure that this historic treasure, which is accessible to the public only by water, is shared with as many people as possible. The Town of Huntington provides a launch boat to ferry visitors to the site from Gold Star Battalion Beach.

According to the National Register nomination, "The Van Wyck-Lefferts Grist Mill is the best extant example of a tide mill with its original machinery surviving on Long Island. Operated until the late nineteenth century, the mill is highly significant for its structural and technological integrity."

For Immediate Release
December 15, 2020



VAN WYCK-LEFFERTS TIDE MILL SANCTUARY RECEIVES GRANT FROM ROBERT DAVID LION GARDINER FOUNDATION

In the words of T. Allan Comp, National Park Service Chief Historian in 1984: “In the seven years I spent as a Senior Historian of the Historic American Engineering Record, the Van Wyck-Lefferts mill still stands out as a remarkable survivor, perhaps the only one of its kind to still remain with so many of its original features.... Mills served us in their first century of existence, survived our neglect in their second, and now depend on our attention to bring them into their third century as living historical monuments. To let any of those valuable cultural resources suffer any further neglect is almost unthinkable. To let the Van Wyck-Lefferts mill, the only survivor of its kind, suffer the same neglect is even worse. Tide mills once occupied almost every possible site up and down the East Coast. Today none survive with the historical integrity found in the Van-Wyck-Lefferts mill. The mill is a remnant of a past long-vanished from Long Island, our only access to the actual craftsmanship and technology of pre-industrial America.”

The mill building is a three and one-half story gable roofed, timber frame wood structure located on a 400’ long earthen dam. Both the dam and the mill were built in the 1790s and survive remarkably intact. Unlike stream fed mills, a tide mill impounds water from the tides to turn the wheel that powers the mill.

The Van-Wyck-Lefferts mill was the last of three tidal mills built in Huntington. The mill ceased operations around 1870. The mill and dam remained on privately owned land until 1969 when it was deeded to the Nature Conservancy. In 2019, the Nature Conservancy deeded the property with its existing mill and dam to the Van Wyck-Lefferts Tide Mill Sanctuary. Richard Hamburger, President of the organization, stated, “The mill is a historical treasure that both delights and inspires. The Board of Directors is deeply grateful to the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation for this generous matching grant as we work to design and develop programs to increase public access, awareness and enjoyment.”

Press Contact:
Richard Hamburger
631.694.2400
rhamburger@hmylaw.com