



Richmond Library Assessment
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Background: Hunger Valley Construction (HVC) was asked by the Library Commission to assess the Richmond Library following restoration work conducted on the lower sections of the towers in the Summer of 2023. This work included rot repair, spot painting repairs, and restoration of the historic windows.

Painting: HVC strongly recommends that the library be painted within the near future. If the whole building cannot be painted due to budgetary restrictions, I would recommend focusing on the two towers and main façade, following additional rot repair on the towers. Painting should include hand-scraping (never power-washed or sand-blasted), sanding, quality primer, and two finish coats applied by brush or roller (never sprayed). A painting maintenance schedule should be developed to ensure the woodwork is perpetually protected.

Because HVC is restoring the windows and restored a large amount of wood rot, I would keep the previous painting estimate moving forward.

Estimated Cost for Painting: \$93,000

Woodwork: The work done in the summer of 2023 covered the worst areas of rot on the towers and steps were taken to prevent further damage. There are several areas on the upper towers that will need similar repairs to the lower sections. This work will include patching where possible and replacing in-kind for larger sections. Most of these repairs are needed where snow and rain sit against the building. This vulnerability cannot be eliminated due to the building's characteristic design but could be alleviated by repairing, using premium primers and paints, and periodic maintenance. Insulating the attic space could help reduce the amount of wet snow against the towers.

Other noticeable repair needs occur around the many applied decorative features on the towers and front facade. I believe this has occurred due to deferred maintenance and water being able to get behind the trim and rot the nails and wood. Again, painting and caulking will prevent further damage after repairs are done. One visible deteriorated feature is the cross on the front gable. The damaged section appears to be on a



previously replaced section, further evidence that quality materials should be used and maintained on all future restorations.

The woodwork around the rest of the building appears to be in moderate to good condition. The corner where the north tower meets the northern side of the main block will need the most substantial repairs. This work will include removing rotten siding, investigating the condition of the sheathing, and replacing in kind. Smaller items include replacing wood trim on the northern side of the main block and soffit vent on the northern main block.

Estimated cost for woodwork repairs on the upper towers: \$18,000-\$23,000.

Estimated cost for woodwork around the main block: \$9,000-\$12,000.

Roofing: All recommendations on the slate roof were offered by Jeff Spencer of Stewardship Slate. These recommendations are broken into two separate categories: restore and replace, for two separate areas: upper towers and main block. Because Jeff was unable to clearly identify the origin of the existing slate, it was difficult to make a definitive determination on the total lifespan of the material. To make a more accurate recommendation, Jeff would need to take a sample of the existing slate and send it off for identification by experts.



Jeff's estimates for the slate roofs are as follows:

Upper steeples

- Restoration of upper steeples to include replacement of all broken and missing slates, replacement of metal roofing on steep gable portions of south steeple, replacement of step flashings as needed, painting of finial.

Estimated Cost: \$47,500.00

Main roof restoration

- Replace all broken and missing slates.
- Secure all loose slates.
- All replacement slates will be black but may not be an exact match to the existing slates.

Estimate Cost: \$60,500.00

Main roof replacement

- Remove existing slate roofing, copper snow belts, and all flashings.
- Repair sheathing as necessary.
- Install synthetic underlayment.
- Install new copper standing seam snow belt.
- Install new Vermont quarried slates.
- Install new flashings at sidewalls and ridge.
- Use 20 oz copper for snow belt and all flashings.

Estimate Cost: \$235,000.00

Assessment of existing slate on main roof

- Remove 4-6 existing slates on north face of main roof.
- Replace removed slates with slates matching in size, color will be matched if possible.
- Deliver original slates to Clay Heald of New England Slate for identification.

Quote: \$2,000.00

Front Stairs: The front stairway is in poor condition and should be deconstructed and replaced. Based on expert opinion, the stairs should not be superficially repaired because this has already been attempted and the stairs have subsequently failed. The sub-straight of the stairway is failing and needs to be engineered and replaced.

The Library commission has two options for replacement, replace in kind or to design a new stairway that provides access and is integrated to the street. It is unlikely that the original stairway had bluestone treads, but the original form was likely similar to what is there today. We do not know how it was accessed by Bridge Street so the following estimate does not include a walkway. Without evidence, I would recommend replacing all the surface materials in kind with a new engineered concrete base. Because this stairway is a fire exit, this plan would include making the stairway more code compliant by having a more consistent rise and run for stair treads.

Estimated cost to replace in kind: \$60,000-\$70,000.

Another option would be to deviate slightly from what is there now with something that meets the needs of the library and is better integrated with the proposed plans for Bridge Street. This plan could include any number of possibilities and would likely need to be designed and engineered by architects.