

# **David M. Hart Enterprises**

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The Newport Daily News  
Attn: Editor

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing with respect to the proposed Visitors Center at the Breakers, which I understand will be coming before the Newport Historic District Commission Tuesday evening, August 27, 2013.

I am an architect who has practiced in Massachusetts and elsewhere for well over 30 years, concentrating on historic preservation projects.

During my work at the Preservation Society of Newport County I became quite familiar with the Breakers property, having examined the interior, exterior and grounds, and having climbed and examined the roof surfaces.

The proposed Visitors Center addresses many much needed services at the Breakers complex:

1. It serves to introduce visitors to PSNC and the Breakers.
2. Provides visitor amenities such as restroom facilities and café.
3. Will result in no potential adverse effect on the visual aspects of the Breakers.
4. Minimally visible from Ochre Point Avenue, and screened from the Breakers.

More importantly, in my opinion, it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties, specifically - "Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color."

Well-designed visitors centers are important contributors to the continued feasibility of maintaining historic house museums. There are many examples of visitors centers located in historic house museum complexes. The visitor centers cited below are all newer (or rehabilitated) structures in close proximity to the historic structures, and are designed to provide an introduction to the historic complexes, as well as provide restroom facilities and food services and gift shop. Some examples in New England include:

Strawbery Banke; Visitor's Center; Adjacent to Main Gate and historic houses. Also gift

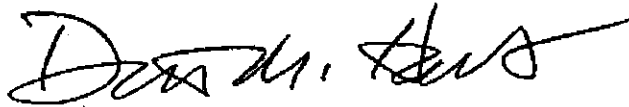
shop, Portsmouth, NH. (Currently being expanded)

Old Sturbridge Village Visitor's Center; Adjacent to Main Gate and historic houses. Also gift shop, café, Sturbridge, MA.

Shelburne Museum Visitor's Center (an adaptive use of an earlier building); Adjacent to Main Gate and historic round barn. Also gift shop, and adjacent to a brand new Center for Art and Education, Shelburne, VT.

Attached are descriptive graphics of the three museum examples.

I am hopeful that the Commission will approve as submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Hart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David M. Hart, AIA

(Cell phone for verification 978 395 6381)