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PART I

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

MARBONNE HOUSE AND CHAISE HOUSE
(Buildings No. 7 and 8)

SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

APPROVAL SHEET

APPROVED: _____ Date _____
Director

RECOMMENDED: _____ Date _____
Regional Director

RECOMMENDED: _____ Date _____
Chief, Eastern Office of Design & Construction

RECOMMENDED: (sgd) Arthur L. Sullivan Date 2-19-65
Superintendent

PART I

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA SECTION

NARBONNE HOUSE AND CHAISE HOUSE
(Buildings No. 7 and 8)

Prepared by: Arthur L. Sullivan
Superintendent

Date: January 65

A. NAME AND NUMBER OF STRUCTURES:

Narbonne House, Master Plan Building Number Seven (7) and
Narbonne Chaise House, Master Plan Building Number Eight (8).

B. PROPOSED USE OF STRUCTURES:

We propose, ultimately, to furnish and exhibit the Narbonne House to reflect the 17th century way of life of a working Colonial family of modest means. We propose to utilize the Chaise House as an exterior exhibit only.

C. JUSTIFICATION OF USE:

As indicated in the Master Plan, the Narbonne House is an extremely rare example of 17th century architecture. This factor alone is justification for exhibition of the structure. More important, however, is the interpretive value of the building as it relates to the park maritime story which can be traced to the early beginnings of Salem in the 17th century. The Derby House, Hawkes House and Custom House are used to further the interpretation of the 18th and 19th century aspects of the park story; the Narbonne House will serve this function for the 17th century.

D. PROVISIONS FOR OPERATING THE STRUCTURE:

The structures will be maintained and operated with regularly appropriated funds.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS:

No cooperative agreements exist nor are any proposed. However, the purpose of the Salem Maritime Historical Association, founded as a corporation under the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 180

of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is to further the development and interpretation of this site. We may look to this organization for some financial assistance in procuring furnishings. An estimated \$300 to \$500 annually could be made available for this purpose.

F. PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY:

It would be imprudent at this time to render a determination as to how extensively we may want to restore the Narbonne House and Chaise House, as the structures contain 17th, 18th, 19th and even 20th century elements. This determination should await further historical and architectural investigation. However, the structures are in a fragile condition and basic stabilization is in order to arrest deterioration. The following measures are proposed: treatment of structures for insect infestation; stabilization and waterproofing of foundation walls and chimneys; structural stabilization, including treatment of members for dry rot; roof repairs; repairs to existing utilities; repair of exterior elements, including clapboards, cellar bulkhead, doors and windows; fence repairs; exterior painting.

G. PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE:

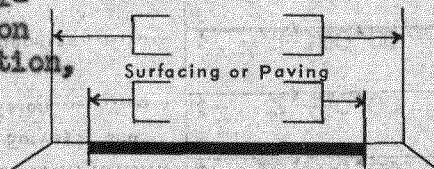
The construction costs for the work outlined above would probably not exceed \$18,260. (See attached PCP)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION PROPOSAL

Statement of requirements, proposed work and construction data, justification, etc. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

The Narbonne House and Narbonne Chaise House, outstanding survivals of the 17th and 18th centuries, are new acquisitions and are in a fragile condition. Basic stabilization of the structures is urgently needed to arrest deterioration, to render the buildings safe and weathertight, and to facilitate architectural investigation of the structures as preliminary to their ultimate rehabilitation and restoration.

Length _____ Miles _____
Finished width shoulder to shoulder

2. Land Status (if Govt.-owned, what agency), Water Rights, Research, Etc.

Government-owned.

PCP Data Prepared by (Name, Title & Date) <u>George Wrenn 12-23-64</u> <u>Architect</u> <u>Arthur L. Sullivan</u> <u>Superintendent</u> <u>12-23-64</u>		4. Cross-reference PCP's to this Project: PCP numbers of previously completed portions:	6. CLASS <u>C</u> ESTIMATE Construction..... \$ <u>18,260.00</u> Plans, Surveys, & Supervision..... <u>2,640.00</u> Contingencies..... <u>1,100.00</u> SUB TOTAL <u>22,000.00</u> Exhibits, Audio-Visual Installations, etc..... <u>3,000.00</u> Hist. & Arch Res. <u>25,000.00</u> GRAND TOTAL \$
5. Construction by: Day Labor ☒ Contract ☒ Work supervised by: Park ☐ Reg. ☐ Design Office ☒			
7. DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES No To 1 Director 2 Reg. Dir., NERO 2 Chief, EODC 1 Supt, Salem Maritime		8. Recommended by Park Office (Signature, title, date) (sgd) <u>Arthur L. Sullivan</u> <u>Arthur L. Sullivan, Superintendent</u> 9. Approved by Regional Office (Signature, title, date) <u>January 5, 1965</u> 10. Reviewed by D&C Field Office (Signature, Title, Date)	
11. Location within Area or Termini <u>71 Essex Street</u>		12. Master Plan No.	13. Bldg. or Rt. # and Sec. <u>Bldgs. 7 and 8</u>
14. Region <u>NE</u>	15. Park <u>Salem Maritime National Historic Site</u>		
Project <u>Stabilization of Narbonne House (Bldg 7)</u> <u>and Narbonne Chaise House (Bldg 8)</u>		17. PCP Index No. <u>B-18</u> 18. P. S. & S. by BPR ☐ NPS ☒	
		Essex (County) <u>Massachusetts</u> (State)	

CLASS ☐ (A) - Estimate based on working drawings
 CLASS ☐ (B) - Estimate based on preliminary plans
 CLASS ☒ (C) - Estimate based on similar facilities in other parks

ESTIMATE

Item	Quantity	Cost
Stabilization and waterproofing of foundation walls and chimneys.		\$ 4,200.00
Structural stabilization including treatment of members for dry rot.		9,100.00
Temporary repair of existing modern roof to render structure weathertight for a limited period.		700.00
Treatment of structure for powder post beetles, carpenter ants and termites.		900.00
Repairs to existing utilities to render them safe until such time as they are removed or replaced.		800.00
Repair of exterior elements including clapboards, cellar bulkhead, doors and windows.		1,260.00
Repair of boundary fences.		300.00
Exterior painting.		1,000.00
Total		\$18,260.00
Historical research \$ 600.00		
Architectural research <u>2,400.00</u>		
Total . . . \$3,000.00		
Estimate Totals		
Construction.....	\$	18,260.00
Plans, Surveys, and Supervision.....	\$	2,640.00
Contingencies.....	\$	1,100.00
SUB TOTAL	\$	22,000.00
Exhibits, Aud.-Vis. Installations, Etc.....	\$	3,000.00
Hist. & Arch Res.		
GRAND TOTAL	\$	25,000.00

H. PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS:



Above

Narbonne House and
Chaise House view from North
(1965)



Left

Narbonne Chaise House
view from North (1965)

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
PART I
HISTORICAL DATA SECTION
ON
THE NARBONNE HOUSE
SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Prepared by
Daniel R. Kuehn
Historian
November 1964

A. Local Tradition and Hearsay:

Local tradition has it that the Narbonne House was built in or before 1680, making it one of the oldest dwellings in America.

The house is presumed to have been built by the Narbonne family, hence the name. According to a recent newspaper clipping of unknown origin:

Of the Narbonne family, there is but scanty mention in the records, and so it may be presumed that they pursued the even tenor of their ways in the colonial and witchcraft and later periods, contributing to Salem's history a dwelling that had stood fast two centuries and a half, which feat in construction may be a challenge to modern builders.

This same clipping states another local belief:

It may be that a store was once kept in this old house, for there is some legend of that, and it is supported by the records of the old Salem custom of keeping shop in the house, as for instance, Aunt Hepzibah's shop in the celebrated House of the Seven Gables.

The store was presumably located in the east side lean-to portion of the house.

A final tradition is that the architectural style of the house is that which is popularly known as "salt-box."

B. Resume of Knowledge of the Structure:

Of some seventy-five 17th century houses in Massachusetts, less than twenty date from before 1675. Three of these earlier houses are located in Salem: the Pickering House, the House of Seven Gables, and the Narbonne House. The exact date of construction for the

Narbonne House is not known precisely at this time but can be set with reasonable certainty between 1669 and 1672.

Its primary significance is architectural. Often in the 17th century houses were constructed in a one room plan with a chimney at the end, and as the household grew, additional space was added to this original "half-house". The Narbonne House was constructed this way and still retains its basic "half-house" character, one of only a half dozen 17th century Massachusetts houses which do. Much of the original, finely carved frame is still exposed, the stairs are original, 17th century trim and hardware survive in several places, and there have been few if any of those radical changes which obscure the basic character of an early house.

There have been four major additions to the original house, and their order of addition seems fairly clear although exact dates must await further research and possibly architectural exploration. The south gambrel-roof ell consisting of a lower room and chamber above was the first addition. The northern half of the lean-to was the second. Both of these additions may have been made prior to 1695. The last two additions consisted of extending the lean-to south to cover the wall of the ell and extending it north to bring it flush with the north wall of the main house. These last two additions may have been completed before 1800. The original north end wall of the lean-to was removed at this time and the enlarged space became a "cent shop". The wide shop door opening to the street still survives.

None of the former occupants of the house were socially or economically prominent. All seem to have been so-called "common" people. Perhaps because the Narbonne House is not located on the shore not all of its occupants practised seafaring crafts.

Since the exact date of construction of the Narbonne House has not been established the first occupant is not definitely known. It may have been Paul Mansfield, "fisherman," who may also have been the builder. Mansfield owned the Narbonne lot in 1669 and conveyed it to Thomas Ives, "slaughterer," about 1672. Therefore, it is possible that Ives may have been the first occupant and the builder. A weaver and prominent deacon was the next occupant, followed successively by a tanner, a "shoreman", a mariner, a merchant, another tanner, a rope maker, and a "sempstress." From 1842 to 1948, the house was in the possession of the Narbonne family and it is from this family that the house got its name. In 1948, title passed to the Hale family, former tenants in the house. The United States Government purchased the Narbonne House in November 1964, and it is now part of Salem Maritime National Historic Site to be preserved for the enjoyment and edification of the American people.

C. Name of Architect or Designer:

Unknown.

D. Name of Builder:

Either Paul Mansfield, "fisherman" or Thomas Ives, "slaughterer".

E. Name of Owner in Historic Period:

The primary value of the house lies in its 17th century character; however, the later additions are also valuable and should be retained. Therefore, the historic period is from approximately 1698 to 1800. Many people occupied the house during this period and all seem to have been of the same socio-economic level. Without further research it is impossible to choose a most important owner.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
PART I
LANDSCAPE DATA SECTION
ON
THE NARBONNE HOUSE
SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Prepared by
DANIEL R. KUEHN
HISTORIAN
JANUARY 1965

A. STATEMENT OF EXISTING PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF HISTORIC CONDITIONS.

The Narbonne House yard has been largely overgrown with weeds which obscure evidence of historic conditions. At the present time there are approximately twenty trees on the property: three pear trees, two spruce, a Baldwin apple, and fourteen small maple trees. It is doubtful that any of these are historic.

The shape of the Narbonne lot today is virtually the same as in the historic period. Parts of the surrounding fence may be original, therefore. The hinges on the gate for the driveway to the chaise house are of an early style and indicate that the fence on the Essex Street side of the property may be original.

The existing walks and driveway are probably located as they were originally. They have undoubtedly been resurfaced.

B. BRIEF RESUME OF KNOWLEDGE OF WALKS, ROADS, PLANTING, FENCES, ETC. AT HISTORIC PERIOD, FROM READILY AVAILABLE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE.

In the readily available documentary evidence there is no indication how the property was landscaped during the historic period.

C. STATEMENT OF FURTHER RESEARCH AND ESTIMATE OF COST OF SUCH RESEARCH.

A study in some depth should be undertaken to determine how the property was landscaped during the historic period. Estimated cost of historical research and documentation of findings is \$200. Record photographs and drawings and partially completed construction drawings of the proposed work would cost an additional \$400. The services of a professional landscape architect would be required to perform the record and construction drawings.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
PART I
FURNISHING AND EXHIBITION DATA SECTION
ON
THE WARHONNE HOUSE
SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Prepared by

DANIEL R. KUEHN

HISTORIAN

JANUARY 1965

A. LIST AND BRIEF EVALUATION OF HISTORIC FURNISHINGS NOW IN THE STRUCTURE.

The structure is unfurnished.

B. STATEMENT OF PROVISION FOR DRAFTING A FURNISHING PLAN.

In order that the Narbonne House may be furnished as authentically as possible prior to exhibition, a furnishing plan is necessary. The research would be performed by the park staff and financed through M & P funds.

C. OUTLINE OF PROPOSED METHOD OF FINANCING ANY REFURNISHING.

Salem Maritime Historical Association exists to further the interests of this Site and with its assets can contribute between \$300 and \$500 per year toward refurnishing the Narbonne House. Some furnishings may be available through private contribution. The Essex Institute in Salem has a vast collection of early furnishings, items of which it has generously loaned to this Site in the past. As a temporary measure, items unavailable through other sources may again be obtained in this way. Government funds would be necessary to complete the project.

D. ESTIMATE OF COST OF ANY REFURNISHING.

\$20,000.

ARCHITECTURAL DATA SECTION

The Narbonne House is a clapboarded wood frame building set on stone foundations and has a large centrally located brick chimney which is now covered with stucco. The original (north) portion of the dwelling was probably built in the third quarter of the 17th century and consisted of a cellar, a large room on the ground floor with chamber and attic above, and a narrow entry and fireplace chimney at the southern end. This arrangement is known as a "half-house" as it was customary in the 17th century to build one section of house in anticipation of the later symmetrical addition. The House of the Seven Gables, also in Salem, started as a "half-house". To form a "whole-house" one simply added a similar unit (side-to-side); with the original chimney, stairs, and entry serving both the old and the new rooms.

The Narbonne addition is in the form of a story and a half "gambrel" rather than the two and a half story "gable" which would have matched the original house. There have been several major additions to the original, or "half-house". A leanto was added along part of the rear (east) wall before the "gambrel" appeared. Then there were two additions to the leanto, one extending the north wall to the street, and the other one extending the south wall to be flush with that of the "gambrel" addition. Thus the leanto additions have roof pitches in the same plane as the original leanto roof, and the plan of the house has become rectangular.

The oak sills, girts, summer beams, plates, and posts of the original house are exposed on each floor. These members show the hand tool marks and some are chamfered. The roof construction is typically 17th century with a system of principal and common rafters. The entire structural fabric appears to be in sound condition. An investigation must be undertaken to verify this, however.

There are many unusual features in the house. One is the carving of the shoulders of the posts supporting the summer beam in the "half-house" lower room. Another is the first house staircase, presumably original and composed entirely of wedge-shaped treads or "winders". The whole construction is enclosed with vertical sheathing which in the second story entry is handsomely moulded. A built-in cupboard in the leanto addition of the "gambrel" has a much earlier door with one half of a rare 17th century cock's head hinge, probably salvaged from some part of the original house. There is a very early door with handwrought strap hinges and a fine wooden latch which leads to the attic. An unusual arched closet is found at the left of the fireplace in the chamber of the "half-house" which presently serves as the toilet.

Oak clapboards formed the original exterior sheathing. Early clapboards can be seen in the leanto attic. The pine clapboards that exist today are in poor condition and many of them will have to be replaced along with some of the exterior trim. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles which are in need of repair. Wood shingles were undoubtedly the original roof cover and should be used again.

The original windows (which have not survived) would have been filled with fixed leaded glass and casements. Most of the existing exterior window frames and the wide muntins are typical of the second quarter of the 18th century. It can be assumed that the original leaded glass windows were replaced at the time of the "gambrel" addition. The two dormer windows and a new front door are 19th century alterations.

Originally there were no plaster ceilings in the "half-house". The underside of the floor boards of the room above would have formed the ceiling in each room. The inside finish trim of the principal rooms of the original house and the "gambrel" addition is 18th century and appears to be in good condition. This includes the folding shutters, corner cupboards, paneling of the fireplace walls, and most of the plastering. The mantels in the lower rooms and the stamped tin found in the leanto were introduced in the 19th century.

In conclusion, one should draw attention to the wonderfully unspoiled character of the structure and its details. Care must be taken in order that they may be preserved.

Today the Narbonne House is considered important as an expression of several families and different generations, a reflection of changing tastes and varying means; it could hardly be restored to any one period without destroying parts of the whole. In light of this reasoning, preservation of the whole is paramount. Exploration

will be carried on only to authenticate details of historical value and to determine the condition of the structure. As there is evidence of insect activity in the cellar, the entire structure will be checked and eventually treated.

The estimated cost of research required to complete architectural investigation for basic preservation and stabilization is \$2400.00.

Included in the research will be the investigation and recording of the Chaise House, an early 19th century carriage house or barn located to the southeast of the house. It is a two story wooden frame building with double doors, loft door, and a semi-circular gable opening on the north side. The exterior finish of wood shingles is covered in some sections with tar paper. The roofing is asphalt shingles. The building is in very poor repair and it is hoped that it will someday be restored as part of the historic scene.

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

West front and gable end, Narbonne House, 71 Essex Street, Salem,
Massachusetts.

Photo: National Park Service
Daniel Kuehn January 1965

Neg. on file at Salem Maritime NHS

ILLUSTRATION NO. 2

Narbonne House from the southeast, 71 Essex Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

Photo: National Park Service
Daniel Kuehn January 1965

Neg. on file at Salem Maritime NHS

ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

Front view of the Chaise House; Narbonne House, 71 Essex Street,
Salem, Massachusetts.

Photo: National Park Service
Daniel Kuehn January 1965

Neg. on file at Salem Maritime NHS