


*the* CHO



**Select Board Meeting**  
Wednesday, April 24, 2024

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This presentation to the Orleans Select Board was given on April 24, 2024, by Jay Stradal, Board Chair of the Orleans Historical Society (Centers for Culture and History in Orleans). Painting: “SS Pendleton Rescue” by Tony Falcone.

## **Our Purpose This Evening...**

### **Status report on CG36500 building project**

- 1. Review need, goals, funding sources, site status**
- 2. Show latest exterior concepts + surroundings**
- 3. Show interior designs**
- 4. Get your feedback, answer questions**

The CHO was invited by the Select Board to provide an update of its efforts to permanently preserve the famous CG36500 motor lifeboat in a building addition near its 3 River Road campus.

### Why Is This Project Needed?

- Boat is 77 years old – on National Register of Historic Places
- Public viewing limited to summer months
- Rising costs, fewer volunteers, more severe weather
- 42 years as caretaker: keeping it in the water is not practical
- Best protected and preserved long-term in its own building
- This need has been discussed since at least 2015

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The Orleans Historical Society/CHO has been the owner and caretaker of the CG36500 for more than 40 years, and for the past decade has been planning for the boat's more permanent preservation and protection out of the water for these reasons...

## Project Goals

1. Build a permanent “home” for the CG36500 in Orleans
2. Make the boat and its story accessible year-round
3. Exhibit the nearly 400-year history of lifesaving in Orleans and on the Outer Cape
4. Honor the finest traditions of the U.S. Coast Guard and predecessor lifesaving organizations
5. Attract visitors to Orleans and the CHO (economic growth)

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To more permanently preserve the boat for future generations, the CHO has established these goals.... As noted in goal #5, a “destination” attraction like the CG36500 building will bring more visitors to Orleans resulting in **economic growth** for businesses and the CHO.

## Project Funding, Sources

**Estimated cost = \$3.5 million total:**

- **Building: \$2.95 million w/ landscaping (per reputable builder)**
- **Museum: \$550K per designer (educational grant sources)**

Funding Sources	Amount	% of Total
Federal Grants	\$ 1,450,000	40%
MA State Grants	725,000	20%
Individuals + USCG Auxiliaries	725,000	20%
Private foundations	300,000	10%
Orleans CPC* (CG36500 preservation)	300,000	10%

\* Boat-related only, \$55,000 already received in 2023 cycle

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A well-respected area builder has provided a construction cost of \$2.95 million (including post-construction landscaping). Our museum design consultants have estimated an additional \$550,000 expense for displays and audio-visual components to help tell the story of the 1952 SS *Pendleton* rescue.

Because the CG36500 is listed on the **National Register of Historic Places**, the CHO is obligated to not just preserve the boat but also inform the public of the boat's historical significance—hence the museum that will be staffed by trained volunteer historians/docents.

The chart shows funding sources for the project. Note the Town of Orleans is being asked to support only **10 percent of the cost** through Community Preservation Act funds, which can only be used for preservation of the boat and not for other spaces. Also, the CHO has worked with several federal and state grant sources in the past so we know them and they are familiar with us.

Review Site Status

**Snow Library grant considerations**

The CHO would like to build an addition on the back of the existing Hurd Chapel to house the CG36500. Other sites have been explored but all pose considerable problems. Given that the Hurd Chapel has been deemed “historically significant” by the Orleans Historical Commission, an addition to it for the CG36500 has many regulatory, financial and operational advantages.

This does involve town property that has been identified as an alternative site in a Snow Library grant application to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for funding a new, up-to-date facility. **THE CHO IN NO WAY IS COMPETING WITH SNOW LIBRARY FOR THIS PROPERTY** and will await a decision later this fall by the Library Commissioners regarding the grant application. If the property is not needed for the library, CHO will then discuss a lease change with the Town for the land needed for the CG36500 building.

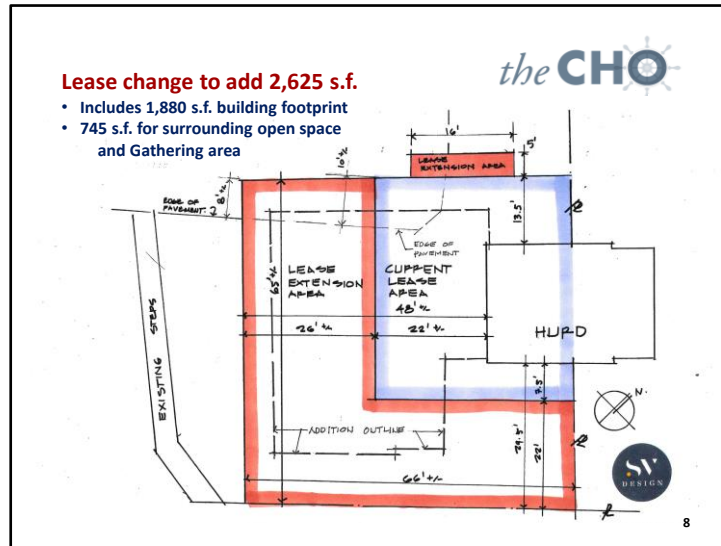
## Review Site Status Cont.

### Existing Town/CHO land lease:

- **Town/CHO land lease exists for part of Hurd Chapel**
  - 99-year lease signed September 18, 2019
  - 1809 s.f. at \$150/year + CPI (based on assessed value)
- **Authorized by special 2016 state legislation (H 3664):**
  - Allows for 99-year lease term, focus on town land adjacent to Hurd
  - Enables negotiations directly with Orleans Historical Society
- **Lease change needed to include new building site once library needs are addressed**

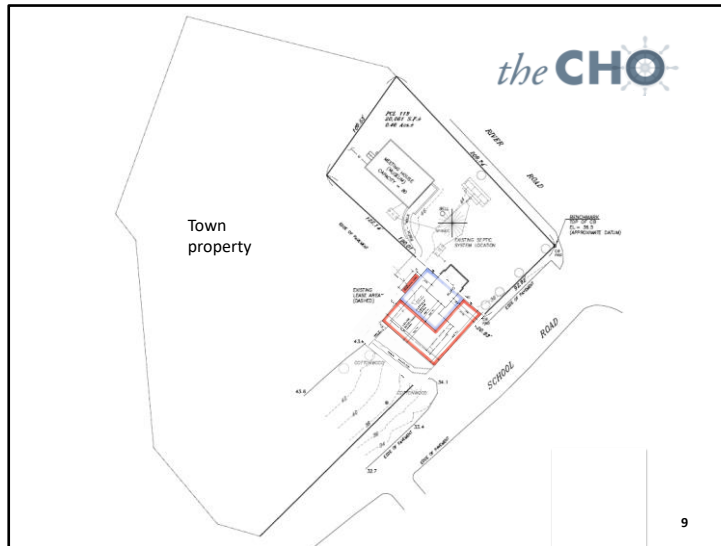
Such a land lease already exists with the CHO and the Town of Orleans. That lease, in place since September 2019, was authorized by special state legislation that allowed a 99-year term and the Town to negotiate only with the Orleans Historical Society/CHO. That legislation is still valid.

A change to this lease to include the land for the CG36500 building addition, if not needed for the library, would require approval by voters in Town Meeting.



Here's the land we are talking about. The blue square shows the existing 1,809 square-foot lease space, on which part of the Hurd Chapel sits. The red L-shaped area, an additional 2,625 square feet, is the land needed for the CG36500 building addition. This includes surrounding open space and an outside “gathering area” on the School Road side of the Hurd.





In the context of the entire 91,809 square-foot Town parcel, the CHO would be leasing a total of 4,434 square feet -- less than **5 percent** of the whole property.

## Latest Exterior Concepts

### Accepted Historical Commission changes

1. Exterior cedar shingles now natural, weathered gray
2. Downscaled corner windows in keeping with Hurd
3. Rectangular parking lot entrance instead of round

### Incorporated requests from Town officials:

1. Keep traffic off School Rd. (enter from parking lot side)
2. Keep footprint small, stay to east of existing stairs/walkway
3. Have boat visible from School Rd. via windows, lighting
4. Respect old-growth trees, replace with new greenery
5. Consider "gathering" space in front of building on School Rd.

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The CHO and its architect, SV Design LLC., has met with the Orleans Historical Commission, the Community Preservation Committee, the Town Manager and most department heads, as well as Select Board members individually. During those meetings, a number of CG36500 building design suggestions were made (listed here). The CHO has accepted these changes and has incorporated them into the building sketches that follow....

**Exterior Concepts + Surroundings**



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This is the view from in front of the CHO Meetinghouse looking toward School Road and Town Hall. The existing Hurd Chapel is in the foreground with the new entrance and CG36500 building addition beyond. Trees and shrubs are shown in scale proportion to the structures.

**Exterior Concepts + Surroundings** Cont.



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This is a view from the corner of the parking lot next to the CHO. You see the Hurd Chapel (white) in the background, the sky-lit entrance area in the middle and the building addition to the right. Exterior cedar shingles will age to a gray color on the new structure.

**Exterior Concepts + Surroundings** Cont.



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Looking from the Town Hall driveway across School Road, you see the new addition with the CG36500 visible through the large glass doors. The Hurd Chapel is on the right. Again, the existing trees are shown in scale, with additional greenery added to the front of the new structure and around the outdoor gathering area (along the brick wall to the right of the addition).

**Exterior Concepts + Surroundings** Cont.



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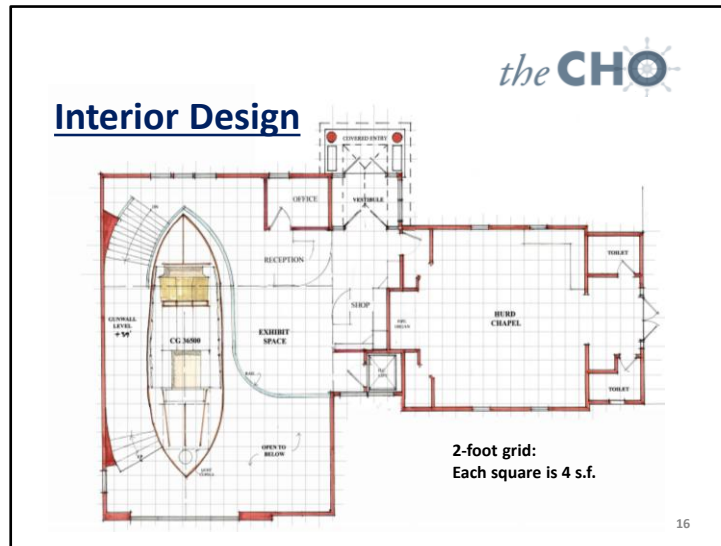
This view from a little further up School Road shows the addition on the left, the Hurd on the right and a glass connecting structure in the middle (a required building code transition between a historic building and an addition to it). In front of the glass connector and the Hurd basement door is the patio-like gathering space.

**Exterior Concepts + Surroundings** Cont.



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Looking from the corner of River and School Roads, the CG36500 building addition nestles right into the existing trees and landscape.



Moving to the interior designs, this diagram shows how the boat house addition and the Hurd Chapel are connected. Walking into the main entrance at the top center, on the left is a doorway into the Hurd where lectures, meetings, and exhibits can take place, with access to the two bathrooms. Straight ahead is a small museum shop (with a wheelchair lift behind it) and, to the right, is the reception desk. The remainder of this balcony area curves around the stern of the CG3650 overlooking it, with museum exhibits along the walls and parts of the railing.

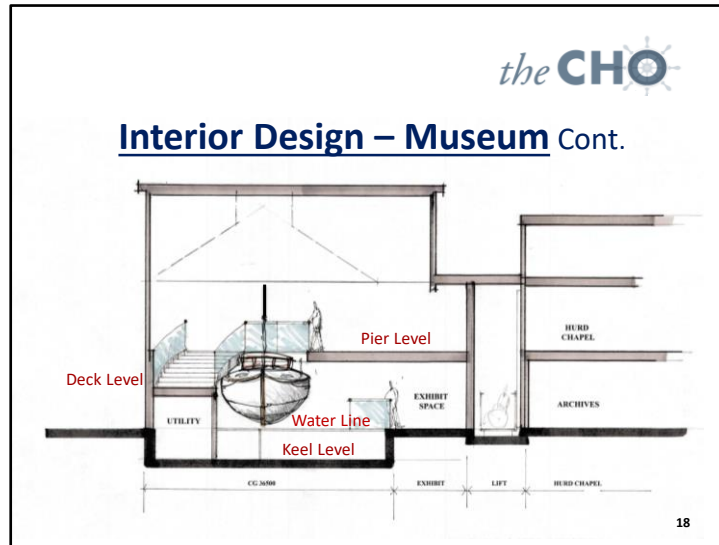
Moving counter-clockwise around the boat, a short set of stairs from the balcony leads to the deck level. On the outside wall is a curved mural/audio-visual screen. Another short flight of steps goes to the main floor/museum level where various exhibit areas will be located (these will be shown later in this presentation). A final set of stairs (not visible here under the balcony) leads to the keel level of the boat.

Note the grid overlay. Each square is 2 feet by 2 feet. Overall, the building footprint is a compact 1,960 square feet. Total floor space including balcony level is about 2,900 square feet.





Interior Design – Museum Cont.



Here is a cross-section diagram showing the four interior levels (labeled in red) and their relative height to each other. At the top center is the balcony or “pier” level, roughly equivalent to standing on the bulkhead at Rock Harbor looking down on the CG36500. This is the same level as the Hurd Chapel main floor.

Moving downward, on the left is the “deck” level that approximates the floating docks at Rock Harbor to which the boat is tied up. The main floor or “water line” is the view you would have looking up at the boat if you were in the water waiting to be rescued. Last, the “keel” level at the bottom is if you were looking underwater at the boat’s one-ton bronze keel and the Monel plating that protected the wooden hull during harbor icebreaking missions.

## Interior Design – Museum Cont.



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Putting it all together, our museum designers created this graphic of what the CG36500 and exhibit areas could look like in the new space. The CG36500 is the center of attention while the balcony and its display areas can be seen on the upper right. To the left of the boat on the deck level is the mural/audio-visual wall depicting the hulking stern of the *Pendleton* with a Jacob's ladder (rope ladder critical in the rescue) dangling alongside. This helps visitors envision the “David and Goliath” contrast in size between the ship and the CG36500 rolling violently in the churning seas.

More displays are shown on the main level, including a nautical map of the Cape on the floor showing where the *Pendleton* and sister ship *Fort Mercer* broke apart in the same storm and their halves subsequently drifted to the points of rescue. To the right of the boat and towards its stern is the short stairway down to the keel level where we see more exhibits about the boat's restoration.

Add to this the sounds of the howling wind and thundering 60-foot waves, along with the grinding steel hull of the *Pendleton* breaking apart, and visitors can get a multi-sensual feeling of what it must have been like during the “greatest small-boat rescue in Coast Guard history.”

**CG36500 Building Project Summary:**

**A secured site (lease change) plus  
strong Town support (CPC, Town Mtg. approval)  
is essential for any future  
Federal, State, foundation, private funding!**

**Feedback?**

**Questions?**

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In conclusion, while the CG36500 building is on temporary hold pending the outcome of the Snow Library grant application, the CHO and its project Steering Committee are continuing to finalize plans for moving forward. Before any formal fundraising can begin, the CHO must have a secured site and a strong showing of Town support through a lease change and Town Meeting vote, as well as additional Community Preservation Act funding.

Any federal, state, or foundation grant source, or a significant private donor for that matter, will want to see that the community understands and supports the importance of preserving and protecting the CG36500, a national treasure, for many generations to come.

For more information, please contact the CHO via email [[admin@orleanshs.org](mailto:admin@orleanshs.org)] or by calling 508-240-1329.