



SHAPED BY HISTORY & ANCHORED IN NATURE

AUGUST 2021

ADAPTIVE REUSE - THE PATH TO PRESERVATION

At a recent FDRPC Board meeting, DHPC Chair Laura Lee gave kudos to the residents and the FDRPC, saying she challenges any other area in the state or even the Northeast to have accomplished as much preservation work as Fort Dupont has in a short amount of time. And it's largely because of adaptive reuse.

Adaptive reuse is the process of reusing an existing historic building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed. Across the country, it has prevented thousands of buildings' demolition and has allowed them to become critical components of community regeneration.

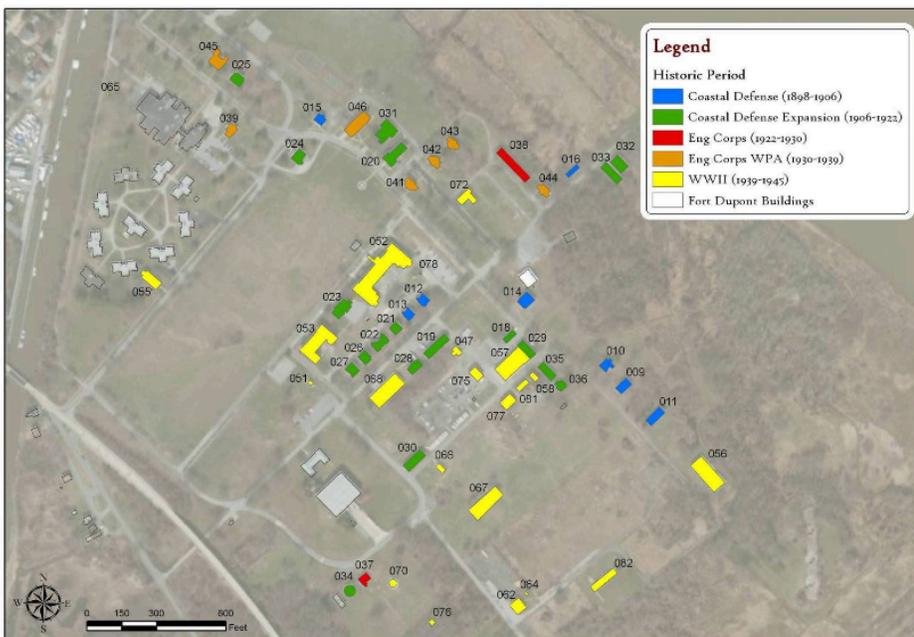
"Because we took the bold step of adaptive reuse," Laura said, "we were able to save these buildings. You can't just restore a building and leave it empty. Vacancy is the enemy of preservation. So far, of 11 structures, 7 of them are now occupied and bringing in rent."

That rent, along with new construction revenue, tax credits, and support from the state, is what makes these projects possible. This year alone, there will be three more buildings that will be saved and adaptively reused.

We have saved the former Chaplain's House and buildings 25 and 45 on Officers Row, and duplexes

42 and 43 on Quartermaster. It was building 45 that was floated over the river from Fort Mott, NJ to here in December of 1931. One of our residents was actually witness to that event!

And there are more to come. Take a look at our website to see some of the preservation work that's already been done: fortdupont.org/preservation.



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HEY, GEORGE!

...MORE

DID YOU KNOW?

OUR CHAPEL HISTORY

by Laura Lee

Laura Lee is the former park interpreter at Fort Delaware and Fort DuPont State Parks, and is currently on the board of the FDRPC. Have a history question Fort DuPont? Send it our way and she will endeavor to answer it.

Dedicated on Sunday, October 12, 1941, the post chapel was one of many frame buildings hastily constructed - never intended to last for decades. Dozens of such buildings went up on the post as America prepped to enter the war. Intended to be used by all denominations, the chapel once featured a triptych behind the altar painted by Nina Barr Wheeler, an artist also known for murals in the Tavern on the Green (NY) and stained-glass windows in the National Cathedral (Washington DC). A Fort DuPont Flashes newsletter of 1941 reported that in addition to Catholic services, Protestant and Jewish services were also offered.



After the post was turned over to the State, the chapel was used by various church congregations which most likely contributed to it still standing today - while other vacant 'mobilization' buildings on site gradually were demolished due

to poor conditions and lack of care. It is unclear where the artwork went but quite possibly it went to the Fort Miles post in Lewes DE. The plan for the chapel is to make it a community space, available for small events and meetings.

This June 1941 article commented that the building would be gray with white trim, however we did not discover anything other than white in the examination of historic paint on the building. The dimensions of the building confirmed our suspicions that the wing on the rear of the chapel was a later addition. It will be removed, and a new more serviceable addition will be added to help make the building a great resource for the community.

More Chapel updates at right.

Work on New **Fort DuPont** Chapel Will Begin June 16

Construction of a chapel to seat 360 soldiers will be started at Fort DuPont about June 16.

Bids for the structure, which will be erected on Elm Avenue, near Crescent, a short distance from the main gate of Fort DuPont, will be opened tomorrow at the office of the construction quartermaster.

Will Be 95 Feet Long

The building will be 95 feet long by 37 feet wide, and will have a steeple. No provision has been made for a bell, but there will be an organ in the chapel.

The building will be completed within about 60 days and at that

time will be ready for dedication and use.

The new chapel will be painted grey with white trim. It will be prepared for conduction of services of any denomination.

Type Is Military

The chapel is of a standard type designed for military posts by War Department engineers. It is to be of semi-permanent construction, similar to the new barracks constructed at the fort.

The location of the chapel is in the "old part" of the fort reservation, in line with the permanent buildings, across Elm Avenue from the parade ground.



ADAPTIVE REUSE - FORT DUPONT CHAPEL



At left, the current un-restored interior of the chapel. Quite impressive for a small structure. Above, the roof work has already begun. Below, an artist's rendering of the chapel's planned exterior.



CURRENT CHAPEL UPDATES

1. Chapel work is underway with new roof, restoration of windows, new siding, parking lot and landscaping.
2. Additional work will include a new addition on the back of the building that will include restrooms, storage, kitchen and mechanicals.
3. Interior will be refinished and will incorporate the existing historical features and fixtures.
4. Chapel will be available for weddings, meetings, receptions, community and special events.



MEET MARK WISE...

...the new Park Superintendent at Fort Delaware/Port Penn/ Ft. DuPont. Prior to his arrival here, Mark spent time in Alapocas, Wilmington, Bellevue and Fox Point State Parks as the Volunteer and Intern Manager. Mark twice "escaped" from Fort Delaware as part of a triathlon, and you may see him running and biking in the area that has long been a favorite training location with his wife Amy.

PETS & PEOPLE OF FORT DUPONT

Meet George, owner of Samuel & Roberta DeLeo. George's story starts in Tijuana. He was rescued from a kill shelter by a woman in Bucks County. After he was incompatible with her other dogs, she surrendered him to the Lahaska SPCA. The DeLeos rescued him in December, 2011. He's a chihuahua/dachshund mix, about 12 years old, big heart in a small body. They said they've discovered he'd fight to the death to protect his family. Which means he's usually on the offensive when he meets other dogs. But the sweetest dog around when he knows you. Best dog they've ever had, they said.



Want to share with your neighbors? Forward your info or pet info to cpini@fortdupont.org.

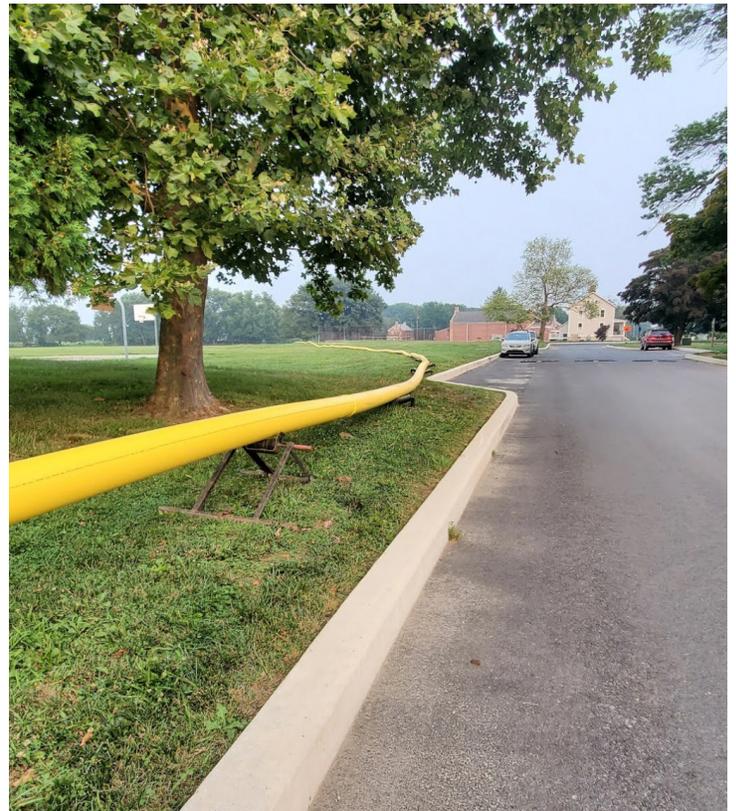
Residents:

Do you have questions or concerns? Email them to Terry Buchanan, our Director of Communications at tbuchanan@fortdupont.org.

Additional contact info can be found online at: fortdupont.org/ContactDirectory

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

- Gas Lines** - the main gas line to the Fort. Residents who opt to convert to natural gas will be contacted individually by Delmarva Power in the near future.
- Preservation** - Building #43 is getting a new slate roof. All new railings have been installed at Battery Elder. External restoration of the Theatre continues, and masonry work will start shortly on the PX and the former Hospital Administration building.
- Home Sales** - The Model Home/Sales Office in the Canal District is now closed, as there are only two lots remaining for sale, located behind the chapel.
- Streets** - The remaining roads in the Canal District will be top coated in the spring when construction of the housing and roundabout are completed.



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A HISTORIC WATERFRONT COMMUNITY
IN DELAWARE CITY, DE

FORTDUPONT.ORG