

UConn Fails to Uphold Preservation Agreement

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The University of Connecticut is yet again displaying its blatant

disregard for historic preservation and the irreplaceable resources it is charged with maintaining.

In 2015 UConn proposed to demolish a collection of nine buildings on its Storrs campus that were listed on the National Register of Historic Places for a Recreation Center. These structures were fondly known as Faculty Row, or the Brown Houses, and served to house faculty members of the agricultural college that laid the foundations for the current university. Charles Lowrie, a prominent New York City Landscape Architect, designed UConn's master plan to include these human-scale structures following Frederick Law Olmsted's aesthetic. Seven were individually designed by the prominent Connecticut architect C.H. Preston and served as a focal point of the South Campus framing a view toward Mirror Lake.

After considerable public outcry to "Save Faculty Row" and lengthy negotiations with the State Historic Preservation Office the parties entered into a signed agreement (Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement) in 2017 to retain, rehabilitate and adaptively re-use 3 and 4 Gilbert Road in exchange for permission to demolish the 7 other Faculty Row Houses.

Not only did UConn destroy virtually all tangible evidence of its founding as an agricultural college, but it failed to uphold its promise to save the two buildings that would remain to signify it and serve to educate future generations. Since the agreement was signed in 2017 3 and 4 Gilbert Road were left to fall into disrepair (arguably due to a deliberate strategy of "demolition by neglect")

and now UConn seeks to destroy #4 (and likely #3 in the near future) for a 200,000 sf residence hall.

Please join us to encourage UConn to uphold its agreement with the people of Connecticut to retain what is left of our collective heritage on its South Campus. With a little creativity the buildings could be incorporated into UConn's master plan for this area and enhance its character.