



**REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS
HISTORIC BASEBALL GRANDSTAND RESTORATION**

BACKGROUND

The Village of Spencer, located in the northwest corner of Tioga County, NY, has a beautiful municipal park, Nichols Park, with a collection of historic resources ranging from the 1800's to the 1950's. The prominent feature is the historic baseball grandstand, originally constructed between 1919 and 1920. This baseball grandstand has fallen into some disrepair, and the Village is pursuing historically-sensitive restoration of the structure. To that end, the Village Board of Trustees was recently awarded a Preservation League of NYS award to produce a Building Conditions Assessment report that includes recommendations on structural and appurtenance improvements to various features. This will result in a structurally sound grandstand that has been restored to true to its 1920's glory days.

PURPOSE

In order for the Village of Spencer to secure funding for the restoration construction, they must have quotations from contractors interested in doing the restoration construction. Please use the attached Building Conditions Assessment report when developing a quotation.

TIMELINE

Written quotations are due to the Village of Spencer at the address below by July 31, 2018. It is expected that construction will be performed and completed during the 2019 construction season.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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**CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT REPORT
FOR THE**

GRANDSTAND at NICHOLS PARK SPENCER (TIOGA COUNTY), NEW YORK

PREPARED FOR:
VILLAGE OF SPENCER
SPENCER, NEW YORK

PREPARED BY:
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SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

Funding for this consultancy has been provided by the Village of Spencer and the Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) program, a partnership between the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and the Preservation League of New York State. The TAG program is made possible with support from Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

APRIL 28, 2018

CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT REPORT
FOR THE
GRANDSTAND at NICHOLS PARK
SPENCER (TIOGA COUNTY), NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes observations made by Randall T. Crawford during a site visit to the historic Grandstand in Nichols Park, Village of Spencer, Tioga County, NY on April 11, 2018. These efforts have been assisted by Elaine Jardine, Tioga County Planning Director who is assisting the Village of Spencer Officials in securing funding for the baseball grandstand restoration, Village Trustee Tim Goodrich, Village Mayor Ken Sutfin, and Gil Knapp, Trustee and Deputy Mayor.

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It should be noted that this assessment is a limited overview and a more thorough investigation of some conditions will be necessary in order to develop rehabilitation scopes, drawings, and details sufficient for construction.

DESCRIPTION & HISTORY

Nichols Park, once privately owned, has been the site of a community picnic and other public events since the first decade of the 20th century. By the late teens the Village decided to acquire the property and it has served as a focal point for a wide variety of public activities ever since. The Grandstand was constructed in the 1920s and is the oldest structure in the Park.

The Grandstand was built in the form of a chevron, very shallow “V” shape, facing south towards the baseball field. One wing extends southwesterly while the other extends southeasterly from a center axis and the overall spread is about 135 degrees.

The interior face of each wing is approximately 42' long, the exterior faces are approximately 51" overall, and the ends are approximately 22'-6 wide to the roof overhang and the backstop screen poles. The end walls of the grandstand are approximately 17'-6 tall.

The structure consists of four principal components: (1) the bleachers and supports, (2) the roof over the bleachers and related supports, (3) screening and related supports, and (4) what this report refers to as the shed, a low one story extension at the rear (generally north) side of the grandstand including various exhibit spaces which extend back under the seating.

Much of the structure appears to be original though various components have been repaired in place while some, such as the screening and chain link doors, have been added more recently.

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of its generally weathered appearance the Grandstand was found to be in relatively good condition with notable exceptions requiring more immediate attention and many that should be addressed in the next few years. The most significant concern is that the lower portions of the exterior walls of the shed aren't raised above grade enough and are deteriorating as described below.

Note that the recommendations below are general and that more specific detail will be needed to define and direct actual construction properly.

1. Bleachers

The bleachers are constructed of eight rows of wood planks and footboards (See photos 12-14) whose ends sit on stepped support frames (See photos 15, 16) made up of wood 2x6s somewhat similar to trusswork. These stepped supports sit on 8" wide concrete grade beams (assuming that they don't extend to below frost) and are spaced roughly eight feet apart with a mixture of earth, weeds, and crushed stone at grade between them.

In general grade slopes gently down from the west end of the bleachers to the east end, dropping roughly 18" in all. The tops of the western three or four of these grade beams sit a couple of inches below grade (See photo 16) and as a consequence the bottoms of the stepped wooden supports bearing on them are exposed to moisture that has led to varying degrees of deterioration.

Some of the pieces comprising these stepped supports have split, deteriorated, or otherwise failed (See photo 15) and been replaced or reinforced with newer pieces of wood. These repairs are generally sufficient structurally, but aren't always consistent with the historic character of the bleachers.

The seats are typically wooden 2x12s and the foot boards are 2x8s. In some instances these have been replaced with new rough-sawn 2" thick boards. Originally these boards spanned a full sixteen feet, but where parts have been replaced they're only eight feet long and the change in thickness is awkward.

(Note that most of the framing in the structure is older and of older dimensions. For example, a new construction grade 2x12 would measure 1 1/2" x 11 1/4" whereas older ones were roughly 1 3/4" x 11 1/2" or 11 3/4". Besides the dimensional difference, the older wood itself tends to be stronger than current materials.)

These seat and foot boards, though historic, don't provide sufficient support for their intended purposes and sag badly when walked on. When some of these boards have been replaced the Village has used thicker members to improve their overall strength and sag less, but these don't match the others or the historic conditions.

Four foot widths of the seats and foot boards at the ends of both wings of the bleachers (See photo 13) have been designated as steps (albeit steep steps) and are painted red to differentiate them from the actual seating. Handrails consisting of wood 2x4s with their narrow faces "up" have been installed at one side of these routes, but they aren't readily graspable.

Adjacent to the center line between the east and west wings additional steps have been installed in the 4' wide area noted above, apparently in an effort to make it easier and safer to access the lower rows of seats (See photo 12), but they're still difficult and somewhat dangerous, especially since the handrails don't extend down past the last roof support post.

There are no provisions for wheelchair viewing under the grandstand roof. Technically this could be considered a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) though dispensations are permitted for historic structures.

See the separate discussion of the 1x wood board partitions and ceilings below the upper four rows of seating that form the interior walls of the shed spaces.

The rear and end walls of the bleachers consist of wood stud walls (in line with the roof posts and stepped supports for the seat and foot boards) covered on the exterior by wood shiplap siding with a 5" reveal (See photos 2-8). This siding has been repaired nominally in several areas, but is generally deteriorated and in need of more comprehensive repairs and repainting.

Recommendations

- 1.1 Excavate a few inches between the stepped bleacher concrete supports and install gravel to below the level of the concrete so that rain and melting snow can drain away without deteriorating the bottoms of the wooden supports.
- 1.2 Reinforce the seats and foot boards by screwing wood 2x2s to the center of the undersides for the length of each board to stiffen them. This is easier than replacing them and will allow retention of the historic materials. Test the 2x2 solution and if additional stiffening is preferred try a 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" steel angle secured to and under the back edge of the boards instead.
- 1.3 Make additional repairs to the framing of the stepped supports as necessary and match the original construction as closely as possible, including in the dimensions of the wood members used.
- 1.4 Repair deteriorated, damaged, or poorly repaired framing, siding, and related trim to sound condition matching the original materials and construction. See separate discussion of repairs to the shed walls.
- 1.5 Consider options for adding intermediate steps in the red-painted access sections to make climbing easier.
- 1.6 Consider alternative provisions for wheelchair seating outside the grandstand. The lower seats could be modified to provide sufficient room, but functionally and legally these viewing spaces would have to be at least 3' wide by 4' deep from the face of the lowest seats which would greatly alter the historic character of the bleachers.
- 1.7 Install steel pipe handrails with metal brackets projected on the faces of the current 2x4 "handrails" and extend the bottom portions a foot or more to provide additional support at the lowest level. Round pipe, 1 1/2" maximum ID, is much more graspable than the 2x4s.

2. Roof & Supports

The roof above the bleachers is supported by built-up wooden posts generally comprised of several wooden 2x6s secured together (See photos 11-14). This is an effective form of construction that minimizes the number of different framing members needed and which produces a stronger member than a single, say, 6x6 which would be more vulnerable to splitting and twisting.

These posts are integral with the stepped supports and extend up to carry a ridge beam which supports the roof rafters (See photo 11). The roof rafters are wood 2x6s (1 5/8" x 5 5/8") at 24" on center running front to back supporting 1" nominal tongue & groove wood sheathing and corrugated metal roofing with larger ribs every foot or so. The rafters (or

separate tails) extend beyond the face of the rear wall and front beam to support the roof overhang. Diagonal wood bracing reinforces the connection between the posts and the roof framing.

The roofing appears to be galvanized steel that has been painted over the years with an “aluminum” coating, a silver colored bituminous product that’s commonly used for such purposes (See photo 1). This type of roofing is fastened with screws or sometimes nails down through the top of the rib which can lead to deterioration and leaks.

Recommendations

- 2.1 Inspect the metal roofing at close hand and secure and seal any compromised fasteners. Consider coating the roofing with an elastomeric product such as AcryMax which can be reinforced with a mesh fabric to span small holes or damage.
- 2.1 Check all roof framing at close hand to identify any minor splits or other problems and make repairs as necessary.

3. Screening & Supports

As a practical safety measure, at some point the Village elected to install backstop screening to protect those in the bleachers from errant baseballs (See photo 1). This screening is supported by five 8” diameter (tapered) wooden poles spaced equally from the western side of the bleachers to the eastern and extending well above the roof line.

The southern faces of the grandstand from the ground up to 9’-8” are protected by 2.25” chain link fencing and from there to about 10’ above the edge of the roof is a black string mesh roughly 1.5” x 1.5”. The chain link is in relatively good condition while the string mesh is severely damaged. Numerous tears in the mesh were noted at the roof line where it whips against the corrugated metal edge and portions have pulled away from their supports in other locations.

The poles are embedded in the ground and appear to be in reasonable conditions though several exhibit normal checking and what seems to be woodpecker damage. The tops of some of these poles are badly weathered and vulnerable.

At the east and west ends of the walkway between the backstop screening and the lowest bleachers seating the Village has installed large, hinged doors of chain link and steel pipe for security following previous incidents of vandalism (See photos 2, 6). These doors are in good condition and are padlocked from the exterior when the grandstands are not in use.

At the end and rear walls of the grandstand additional screening has also been added at the open sides, presumably for safety rather than security (See photos 2, 6). This screening is older and rusty.

The upper portions of the backstop screen poles include miscellaneous lights, speakers, wiring, rusty brackets, and a flag pole that weren’t accessible for this assessment.

Recommendations

- 3.1 Replace the string screening with chain link similar to the lower portion and secure it carefully to the poles.
- 3.2 Replace the screening in the end and rear walls with new galvanized mesh.

- 3.3 Provide protective caps over the tops of the backstop screening support poles. Check the condition of the poles for their full height and secure any split or otherwise damaged portions as necessary. Consider treatment to inhibit insects that attract the woodpeckers.
- 3.4 Inspect the miscellaneous items at the tops of the poles to confirm that it's necessary and in sound condition. If not, consider removing it.

4. Shed

The shed and its interior spaces suffer from a variety of problems relating to drainage and moisture damage as well as to a lack of structural integrity.

In general the outer walls, which are wood 2x4 construction faced on the exterior (only) with the typical shiplap siding, lack a continuous structural sill so that portions sag, especially at door openings. Also, the framed headers at the doors and the very wide service windows aren't strong enough to prevent their sagging too (See photo 19). In some locations the top of the wall, where it meets the roof framing, tilts outward.

At the northwestern end of the structure, except for a shallow drip line, the blacktop driveway and grade are slightly above the bottom of these outer walls and surface water (in conjunction with roof runoff) has contributed to deterioration (See photo 3).

Since grade slopes down to the southeastern parts of the shed and the concrete grade beam supporting that end keeps the framing above ground level this is less of a concern there (See photo 6).

At both wings of the shed, rainwater coming off the roof hits the ground and splashes back up against the exterior walls leading to additional deterioration (See photo 5).

Inside the shed spaces the stepped supports carrying the bleachers above provide natural divisions. Some have been left open while others have been incorporated into full partitions.

The shed space doors are plywood with flat wood 2x4s at the perimeters (See photos 3, 20), surface mounted hinges, and hasps with padlocks. The doors are somewhat flimsy and inconsistent with the character of the structure.

The floors within the shed spaces are blacktop, roughly placed but generally effective for the intended purpose (See photos 20, 22, 24). In most areas, however, the blacktop extends above the bottoms of the wood framed walls leaving them vulnerable to water damage.

The roof of the shed projects out beyond the rear wall of the bleachers and consists of wood 2x4s at 24" on center, 1" tongue & groove wood board sheathing, and the same metal roofing as the main roof. A number of these rafters have split or otherwise deteriorated (possibly due to winter ice falling off the higher roof above) and been haphazardly reinforced (See photos 10, 21).

Water from the upper roof drops onto the shed roof and the splashback causes damage to the rear wall of the bleachers (See photo 5). As a consequence the Village has extended metal flashing up the face of the wall more than two courses of siding, but the joint is not fully protected by counter flashing and water can get behind it.

Below the bleacher seats and roughly half way between the lower ones and the upper ones is a vertical partition consisting of 1" nominal tongue & groove boards set vertically (See photo 12). This forms the interior wall of the spaces within the shed. A ceiling of similar construction extends from this partition sloping upward below the upper half of seats (such that items dropped from those seats will slide down into the space beneath the lower seats).

These partitions and ceilings are in relatively good condition except at the bottom of the former where they contact potentially wet earth and have deteriorated to some extent. In other instances the boards have been damaged by vandals and have been replaced to match though haven't been painted yet.

Recommendations

- 4.1 Excavate a trench between the drive and the building at the southwest and northwest sides of the shed. Install a subsurface drain line to daylight (location to be determined) and cover it with crushed stone leaving a shallow trench. Span the trench with pressure treated decking even with grade and spaced so that surface water flows into the trench. This will minimize water damage to the bottom of the walls. (A similar treatment could be considered along the northeast side as well.)
- 4.2 With temporary support, jack up the outer walls to be even and plumb, including the roof line, then reinforce the headers at the interior. Repair or replace framing members as needed at the bottom of the walls. Install wood collar ties from the top of the outer walls (alongside the roof framing) back to the posts that support the back wall and roof of the bleachers to keep the shed walls from tilting outward. Provide a continuous pressure treated wood sill for the wall.
- 4.3 Construct a concrete grade beam, periodic concrete supports (closer together than the existing ones), or a full foundation to provide continuous support for the wall. At the northeast wing, grade to below the level of the concrete (to keep surface water away from the wooden portions) and create a shallow swale to direct surface water away from the building. Coordinate with the trench and drainage at northwest side.
- 4.4 Repair damaged and deteriorated portions of the interior partitions and stepped supports within the shed spaces.
- 4.5 Repair the lower portions of the 1" thick partitions below the bleachers in conjunction with repairs to the shed's exterior walls.
- 4.6 If at all possible, remove the blacktop and provide new concrete floors inside the shed spaces, detailed to avoid water damage to the wood framing systems.
- 4.7 Add sisters matching the current rafter tails to reinforce the extended shed roof and modify the eave to accommodate half round galvanized steel gutters to control roof water and minimize splashback damage to the exterior walls. Reduce the width of the service windows in some locations by 6" to accommodate periodic downspouts from the gutters.
- 4.8 Consider replacing the shed room doors with new board & batten doors using tongue & groove boards to match the shed's typical construction and character, and replace all hinges and hasps.

- 4.9 Consider adding counterflashing to protect the top edge of the flashing where the shed roof meets the rear wall of the bleachers or run the flashing up behind a course of siding at least a full higher than it currently extends.

5. Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing

There are no mechanical or plumbing systems in the structure, but it does have an electrical system and loudspeakers as well as cable (See photos 23, 26). No obvious problems were noted, but the system was not investigated in detail. The electrical service enters overhead from the northwest and a subpanel was noted in the first bay of the shed there. Most if not all wiring is surface-mounted Romex. Most if not all outlets are GFI-protected. Switches couldn't be located for the ceiling lights in several of the shed spaces and these fixtures consist of open sockets with bare incandescent bulbs (as do those at the ceiling of the bleachers). No fire or smoke detectors were noted.

Recommendations

- 5.1 Have the existing electrical system (including distribution, devices, and fixtures) inspected by a qualified electrician to verify their condition and safety.
- 5.2 Replace all open socket light fixtures with protected ones using either lenses, shades, or cages to reduce the potential for accidental breakage and related damage or injury.
- 5.3 Consider replacing all bulbs with more energy efficient versions.
- 5.4 Consider installing at least battery operated (though preferably hard-wired and connected to a monitoring station) fire & smoke detectors with alarms in the shed spaces and perhaps even the bleachers.
- 5.5 If the grandstand's exterior lights aren't connected to motion sensors consideration should be given to doing that for security.

6. Other

In front of the bleachers themselves and behind the backstop screening is a blacktop walk roughly five feet wide. It's somewhat rough and weeds grow up through various cracks (See photo 12).

Between the backstop screening poles, pressure treated wood 6x6s have been placed at grade, set partly into the ground and forming an edge to the blacktop walk.

In general the grandstand is weathered and would benefit greatly from a thorough and careful re-painting.

Recommendations

- 6.1 Remove the weeds and patch the cracks for now. As funds permit, consider replacing the walk with new blacktop or possibly adding a topping to the existing.
- 6.2 Verify the condition of the 6x6s between the poles and replace them as necessary.
- 6.3 Carefully repair, prep, and repaint all currently painted portions (and repairs or replacements) of the entire structure. Have the existing paint tested for possible lead

before doing any work and if lead is present comply with all applicable safety procedures.

- 6.4 Replace all padlocks at the grandstand and perhaps at the park with new ones using a common master key.

7. Additional Recommendations

- 7.1 All replacement materials should match the originals in type, size, and appearance as closely as possible. For example, replacement 2x6s should be the same size and surface texture as the originals. Do not use the undersized and overly smooth wood commonly available from lumber yards today
- 7.2 Use stainless steel or hot dipped galvanized fasteners for all work at the Grandstand
- 7.3 Consider having an environmental assessment done at the Grandstand by a qualified consultant to identify any possibly hazardous materials such as asbestos..

8. National Register Status

- 8.1 It's recommended that the Village consider making the effort to have the park listed on the National Register of Historic Places, being careful to understand the applicable benefits and obligations correctly. It's a common misconception that if a property is listed no alterations can be made, or at least not without great difficulty and this is incorrect.

If a property is listed and state or federal funds are to be used for alterations the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) must review and approve the proposed work. If no such funds are involved than no such review is required. Furthermore, these reviews are not terribly difficult and their objective is to ensure that proposed changes do not adversely affect the inherent significance of the property which would, presumably, be in the Village's best interests as well. In the case of Nichols Park, for example, it's likely that there would be no issues with the construction of a new, compatible toilet facility though paving several acres of open lawn for parking might be a concern.

It should also be noted that these limitations apply to properties that have been formally determined to be "eligible" for the National Register, not actually listed, and Nichols Park already has been so there would be no difference between current obligations and those that would apply if the site were listed.

On the other hand, being listed makes the park eligible for various funding opportunities available to such recognized historic properties.

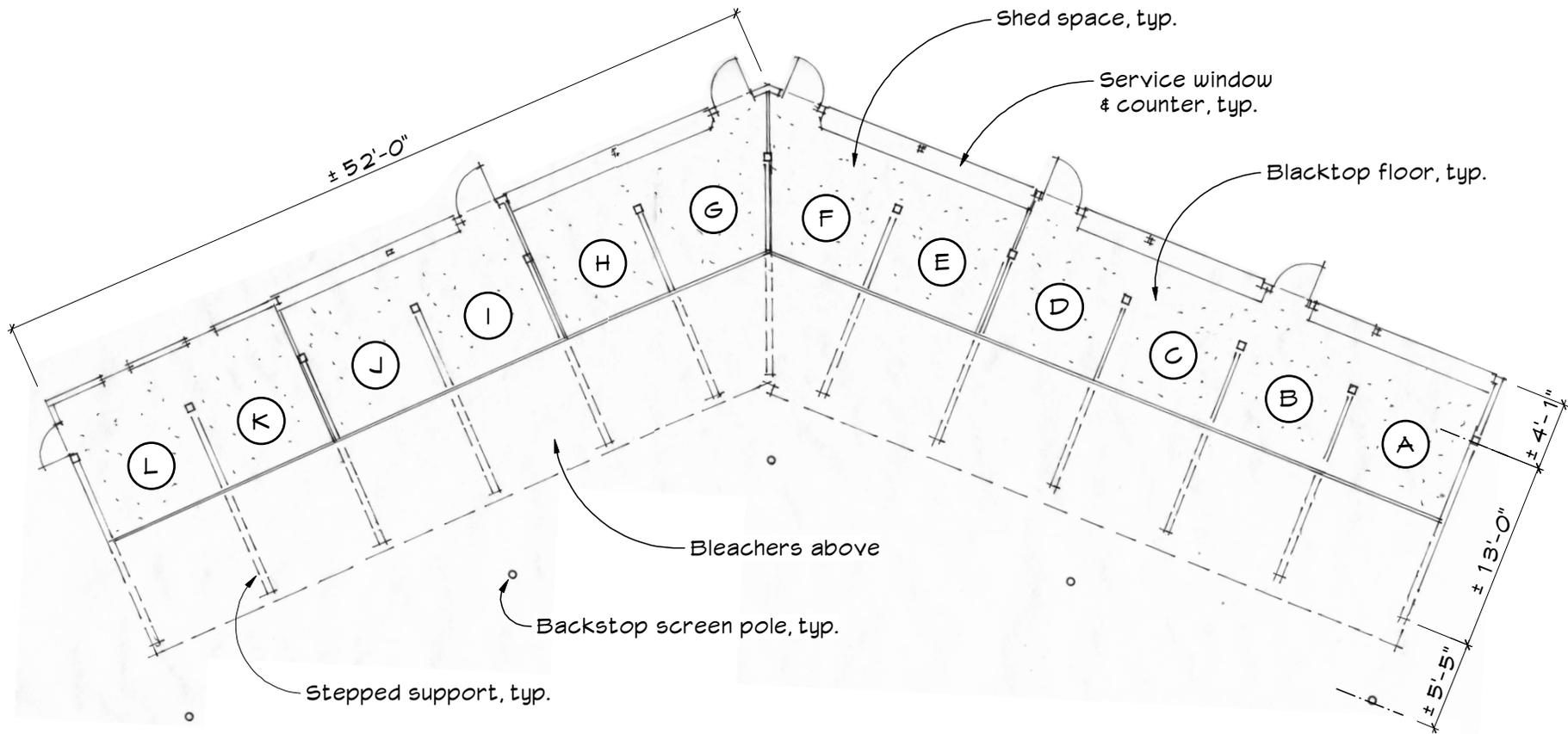
CONCLUSIONS

Nichols Park is a wonderful asset for the community and appears to be both greatly appreciated and as well-maintained as volunteer efforts and limited funds can handle. The Grandstand itself is especially important to activities in the park and is particularly significant as a rare surviving example of a feature once found in many small towns so the Village's efforts to preserve it are to be applauded.

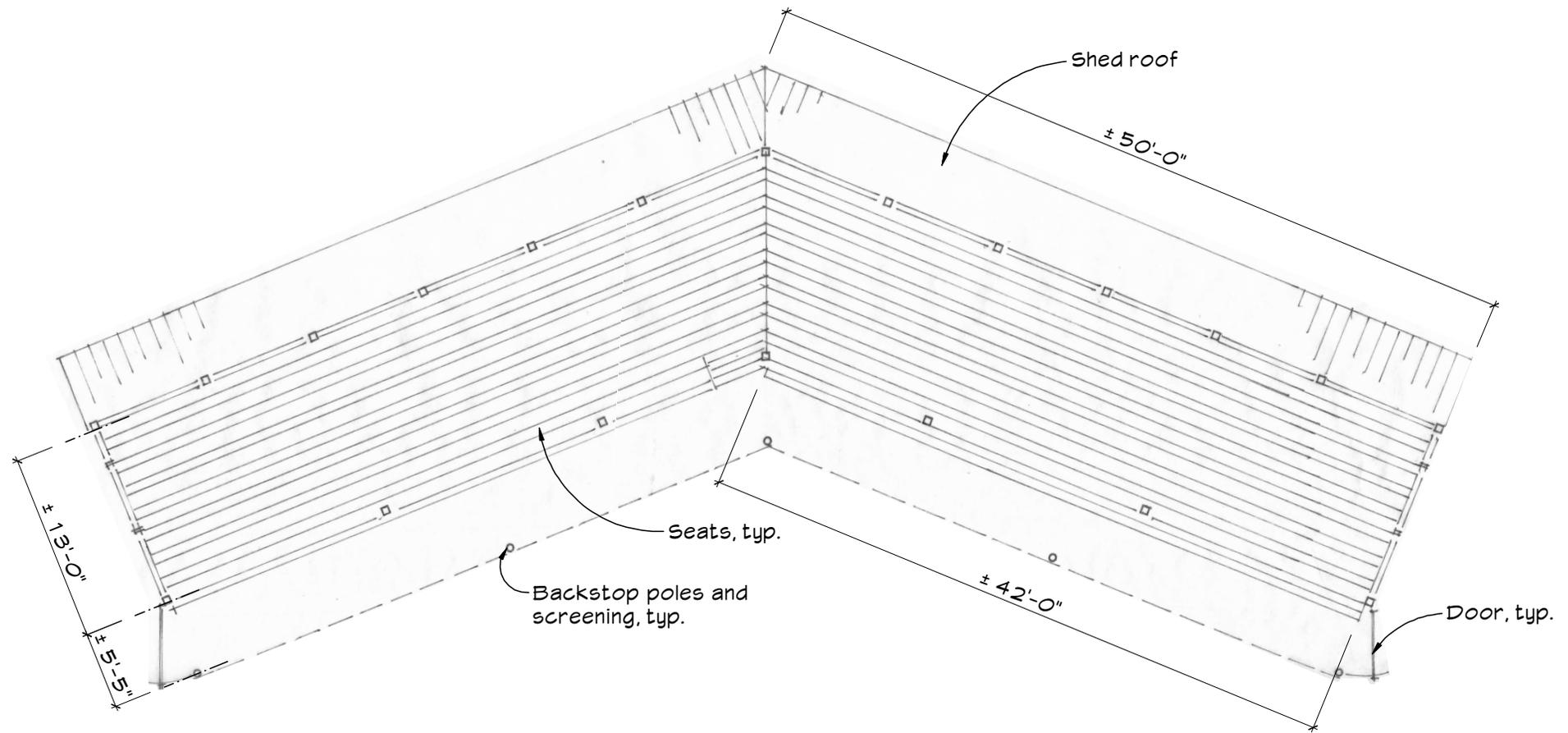
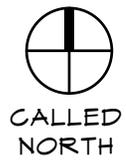
The Grandstand is reaching a point, however, where additional funding and more intensive repairs will be required to keep the structure viable and to ensure that it will survive to serve

future generations. Listing the park and Grandstand on the National Register of Historic Places would open the door to various funding options available to such resources and the Village is encouraged to consider these opportunities in addition to undertaking a sensitive, comprehensive restoration and rehabilitation of the structure as soon as reasonably possible.

END



1 SHED LEVEL PLAN
1 Schematic



1 BLEACHER LEVEL PLAN
2 Schematic



Photo 1: South face of grandstand looking north.



Photo 2: Southwest face of grandstand looking northeast.



Photo 3: Looking easterly, northwest face of grandstand at left. Note projection of shed.



Photo 4: Looking southwesterly towards northeast face of grandstand. Note how grade slopes down to the southeast corner.



Photo 5: Detail of door into shed space B. Note sag in wall at doorway as well as roof, splashback damage at grade and upper wall, and typical roofing.



Photo 6: Southeast face of grandstand, looking northwesterly.



Photo 7: Detail at upper portion of southeast face of grandstand. Note miscellaneous electrical and backstop screening pole.



Photo 8: Detail at upper portion of southeast face of grandstand. Note protective screening secured with unfinished 2x4s.



Photo 9: (left) Detail of flagpole at southwest backstop screening pole.

Photo 10: (below) Detail of deteriorated roof rafter tail with mis-matched reinforcing sister at shed.





Photo 11: General view at grandstand roof framing from below.



Photo 12: General view of bleacher seating looking northwesterly. Note red-painted steps at far end and vertical boards under seats at right forming back wall of shed spaces.



Photo 13: Bleachers from above looking northwesterly. Note red-painted steps with 2x4 handrails at center.



Photo 14: Looking southeasterly to interior face of southeast wall of grandstand. Note red-painted steps with handrail and wood truss supporting roof.



Photo 15: (left) Detail at face of typical stepped support for bleachers.

Photo 16: (below) Side view of typical stepped support for bleachers. Note that top of concrete grade beam is at or below grade encouraging moisture damage to the wooden support.





Photo 17: (left) Looking southeasterly in shed spaces A and B. Note stepped bleachers support and that underside of projected roof is unfinished while all other surfaces are painted.

Photo 18: (below) Looking northwesterly inside shed spaces C and D. Note counter and bottom-hinged, drop-down, service window cover at right.





Photo 19: Looking northeasterly to interior face of exterior wall at shed space D.



Photo 20: Detail at sill of shed space. Note that blacktop covers wooden sill.



Photo 21: Looking southwesterly inside shed spaces G and H. Note split and repaired shed roof rafters (unfinished).



Photo 22: Detail of typical deteriorated wood sill and lower wall inside shed space H.



Photo 23: Looking southwesterly inside shed spaces I and J. Note miscellaneous cable TV wiring (not other wiring coiled on nail in foreground).



Photo 24: Detail of blacktop inside shed space burying wooden partitions and contributing to deterioration.



Photo 25: Looking southwesterly inside shed spaces K and L. Note accumulated debris and repaired shed roof rafters.



Photo 26: Detail of electrical subpanel on southwest wall in shed space L with unprotected open socket light fixture and miscellaneous wiring, cable, and GFI outlets.