

Door County Granary – Frequently Asked Questions, May 2023

The Sturgeon Bay Historical Society Foundation is open to answering all questions and encourages transparency surrounding the goals and benefits of the Door County Granary project. Please direct questions to Project Manager Nicole Matson at 920-241-6819 or nicole@doorcountygranary.org or SBHSF Board President Laurel Hauser at 920-493-0572 or lduffinhauser@gmail.com.

1. What is the Door County Granary?

Also known as the Teweles and Brandeis Grain Elevator, built in 1901, the Door County Granary is being repurposed as a public space on its original site in the heart of Sturgeon Bay within the newly developed west waterfront park. The Door County Granary is the last remaining structure of the turn-of-the-20th century agricultural economy that transformed Sturgeon Bay into a year-round community. Its presence on the westside waterfront tells a story that weaves together outlying farms, Great Lakes shipping, the Ahnapee and Western Railway, and the Shipping Canal – many of the pieces that made Door County the unique place it is today.

2. Who owns the Door County Granary?

The Granary is owned by the Sturgeon Bay Historical Society Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. It is located on public land owned by the State of Wisconsin, leased to the City and sub-leased to SBHSF. The land is not privately developable.

3. Who will benefit from the Door County Granary? How will it be used?

Residents of Door County and visitors to the area all benefit from the Door County Granary as a public amenity and historic structure on the public waterfront. The grain elevator will be a fully interpreted agricultural museum. It will also provide public gathering space, be a nexus for local, state and national trail systems, and offer public bathrooms for the west waterfront park. It will be available for private rentals and community events. As the last-standing wooden elevator on the Great Lakes, the Door County Granary has local, regional and national significance and will be an impressive landmark for all to see.

4. How is the Door County Granary project being funded?

The Door County Granary is funded through private donations and grants, at no expense to the City. The long list of donors includes many residents of Sturgeon Bay, Northern Door County and beyond. Because of its historical significance, the Granary has also been earmarked for congressionally directed spending funds administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

5. What has been accomplished to date?

The Granary has been listed on the State and National Registries of Historic Preservation. It has been cleaned top to bottom. A new foundation has been laid with 51 new underground pilings installed for support. A methane mitigation plan and permit has been negotiated with the State.

Shear support walls were built. Thirty old-growth wooden columns were refurbished and reinstalled and the top levels of the Granary were reunited with the ground floor. La Dallman Architects have developed design plans in compliance with the City, State and the State Historic Preservation Office. Work has been done and continues on interpretive design for the museum and on marketing and business plan development.

6. Who will maintain and operate the Door County Granary long-term?

SBHSF is responsible for completing, operating, and maintaining the Door County Granary. This includes providing and maintaining public restrooms for the west waterfront. Income from private donations, rental revenue and other sources will cover the cost of operations, as is the case with other non-profit organizations.

7. How was the public involved in the decision to include the Door County Granary in the west waterfront development plan?

In 2018, an Ad hoc West Waterfront Planning Committee was created to make recommendations to the City Council. Ten members met over a 10-month period and actively solicited public input through a survey, public meetings and two well-publicized community input forums held at Sturgeon Bay High School. The Ad hoc committee unanimously agreed on a plan to recommend to the Plan Commission and Council that included the Door County Granary. Public input was again sought before the City of Sturgeon Bay Common Council unanimously approved the West Waterfront Plan in August of 2019.

8. When will the Door County Granary project be completed?

Multi-million-dollar projects take time. The Door County Maritime Museum, Third Avenue Playworks, and the YMCA are examples of large capital projects that took many, many years to complete. The Door County Maritime Museum, for example, took five years from the announcement of its capital campaign to the opening of the Kress Tower. When it did open, work continued on some of the incomplete levels. SBHSF could not start fundraising in earnest or construction until it had a development agreement with the City, a sub-lease approved by the State, and methane-mitigation approval from the DNR. This happened in December of 2021. We are currently revising plans to combine what had been two phases of construction into one, allowing us to open all three floors of the Granary at one time. We expect to complete this expanded construction and hold a soft opening in late 2024 with a Grand Opening the following spring. We expect the installation of interpretive elements (museum displays) to continue beyond the opening.

9. Who is a part of the construction team?

Greenfire Management Services is the general contractor responsible for construction. Greenfire hires sub-contractors, such as Immel Construction, to help complete the work on site. LA DALLMAN, an award-winning architecture team, brings professional technical design experience, and Beane Engineering, as the structural engineer, ensures the Granary's integrity long into the future.

To find out more, visit www.doorcountygranary.org