

Timeline: William Green Farmhouse

1712

The land on which the farmhouse stands was deeded to William Green in 1712 by Daniel Cox.

1717

Some people date the house to 1717, but Short and Ford prefer a date closer to 1730. The roofline of an older structure, probably dating to 1717, is part of the current farmhouse/

Circa 1717 to 1730

The oldest remaining section of the house was built, using fine Flemish bond brickwork.

Circa 1776:

Washington's troops slept here. Historic documents state that at various times during the American War, the Light Horse of Washington's Army billeted on the Green plantation.

Circa 1750 to 1790

The second oldest section of the house was added as the Green family grew.

Circa 1830

The third building stage, a two-room-deep brick addition to the west, nearly doubled the size of the house.

July 1960

The Green Farmhouse and land (Block 215, Lot 155) was purchased by TCNJ, then Trenton State College, from the Green family (Blackwell or Arendt). It was the understanding of the family that the College would preserve the farmhouse, although this was not written into the deed.

1970s

The farmhouse was last used in the 1970s by tenants of TCNJ, then closed and not maintained.

1973

The Green Farmhouse was name to both the State and National *Register of Historic Places*.

August 1976

Short & Ford, Architects and Heritage Studies, Historical Consultants, prepared an historical study on the farmhouse, as well as a cost analysis, *National Register of Historic Places*

1980s and 1990s:

Various civic groups worked with TCNJ in an effort to preserve the farmhouse. The William Green Farm House Task Force of the College of New Jersey was set up as a joint town-gown committee to work on the preservation of the Green Farmhouse.

2000:

- The Friends of the William Green Farmhouse were founded in 2000 to restore and preserve this National Register building. This group included many of the members of the earlier Task Force. Vi Cox gave us the vision for this effort on her deathbed in 2000.
- The Friends began work with Assemblyman Gusciora to introduce a bill, as a special appropriations request, to get funding for the complete exterior and interior restoration of the Green Farmhouse

2001

March 2001

At a meeting with TCNJ and the Green Trustees, TCNJ Vice President Al Bridges learned that Enoch Green used slaves on his farm in Deerfield, NJ, which were purchased. There was no evidence that slaves ever lived on the Green farm. Eminent African-American scholar Giles Wright stated that simply because a site is associated with slavery is not a reason to preclude it from gaining funding and being restored, as long as slavery is not being celebrated. He believes that slavery is a non-issue for houses from this period, since virtually all of the houses from this era which have survived nationwide are associated with slavery. Despite this, Al Bridges pulled his support from funding for the Green project

May 23, 2001: The College held a press conference to announce proposed legislation sponsored by Reed Gusciora to raise \$700,000 for the house's restoration. The act was never passed, a combination of funding issues and lack of TCNJ support.

2003

The College was considered using the house as a coffee shop and drew up plans with Kitchen and Associates. This was based on the College planning to build an additional 3 town house dorms adjacent to the west side of the farmhouse. This was cancelled when the township planning board recommended placing the new parking lot near the house, and the three new townhouses near Pennington Avenue. TCNJ felt the Green Farmhouse coffee house use was no longer feasible since fewer students will live close to the house.

2004

The Friends became a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation in 2004.

2005:

Using the approximate 1730 construction date, the Green Farmhouse had its 275th birthday.

2006

Conditions assessment made by Farewell, Mills, and Gatsch

2007:

TCNJ funded a mothballing and stabilization of the house to ensure that no further deterioration occurs while funds are being raised.

2012

- Purpose: Alumni house: Finalized by TCNJ; April 25, 2012 from Greg Caiola and announced to Friends on April 2012
- Friends announced Alumni House purpose to our national membership in July 2012 via list serve and posted on our website in April 2012; held off on publicity campaign per TCNJ until cost estimate received
- Phased restoration approved (RFP issued June 2012; cost estimate completed August 2012)
- Friends applied for and received Charitable Organization Status.
- Cost assessment:
 - In February 2012, TCNJ decided to move forward with an RFP for full cost estimate.
 - TCNJ sent out the RFP in June 2012. It was awarded to MJA Construction Services of Mine Hill, NJ, a small firm specializing in construction management, facilities planning and construction estimating services. Friends donated \$500 toward cost.
 - MJA submitted the cost estimate to TCNJ in August 2012; the full cost is 2.6 million dollars.
- TCNJ developed a fund-raising timeline of 26 months including: developing an RFP (request for proposal), selecting and hiring an architect/engineer; developing a design process including state and county permits; obtaining awarding the bid, and actual construction.
- TCNJ requested that Friends delay fund-raising and publicity until spring 2013 because of the impact of Hurricane Sandy on TCNJ students.

2013

- Spring 2013 – asked to delay fund-raising again.
- August 2013: Greg Caiola told us that if we got a significant donation of \$300,000 or more, then TCNJ would discuss working together on the remaining funds. (August 2013)
- Greg told us that he had been working to get a letter of support from Donohue/TCNJ on the use and intention to go forward (August – November 2013). Greg Caiola died December 2013.

2014

- TCNJ reversed their decision (John Donohue, February 12, 2014. Friends were informed:
 - TCNJ has no money for the Green Farmhouse
 - Donohue does not feel that an alumni house is appropriate

- Donohue is not sure the College can do a phased restoration with funding raised in increments – said he would check with Curt Heuring in facilities to see if this feasible and also consult architect Michael Mills who did the stabilization (did not do so).
- Donohue said there would have to be cabinet-level approval for a phased restoration.
- We thought this had already been done when TCNJ gave us the phased restoration /funding timeline September 12, 2012.

2014-2015

- 6/24/14 - AM, BO, B met with Stacy Schuster. Asked TCNJ to consider long-term lease and/or letter of support so funds can be raised; promised fall response.
- Followed up with conference call to Stacy on 10/9/14 requesting status.
- Received 10/9/14 e-mail from Stacy stating:
TCNJ has engaged various senior level officials, including general counsel, in exploring whether and how the College can endorse a fundraising effort for the Green Farmhouse. She said the lease concept and other forms of agreement including the originally discussed endorsement letter will be considered and that governing board will be engaged as well, December at the earliest.
- 12/7/14 - Sent Stacy additional information including history and community statements of support to be considered by the governing board.
- 3/4/15 – AM asked Stacy for an update, citing an interview with the Ewing Observer.
- 3/6/15: received response from Stacy:

Unfortunately, the College has concluded that we cannot endorse a fundraising effort, or commit to any proposed future use, for the Green Farmhouse at this time. The College is preparing to enter into our first-ever comprehensive campaign this spring and believe an endorsement of a separate campaign for the farmhouse would distract from the focus on our strategic institutional priorities centered around providing educational excellence on an affordable, sustainable basis.

May 14, 2015: Most endangered:

Preservation New Jersey's top 10 most endangered historic sites in the NJ includes the Green Farmhouse: “a dilapidated farmhouse on the grounds of The College of New Jersey.”

August 17, 2015: Trustees meet with VP John Donohue

Results will be discussed by Trustees at September 18 meeting

Turnover/contact with TCNJ: 8 so far

We have experienced a high level of turnover, working Al Bridges, David Tiffany, Nancy Mansfield, Pete Manetas, Keith Dewey, John Marcy, Greg Caiola, and now John Donohue.

Cost of full restoration:

- 1976: **\$213,810**
(Short and Ford)

- 2001: **\$1,215,685**
(Gregory Bressler of TCNJ's Office of Facilities Management Planning)
- 2012: **\$2,023,334** (MJA Construction Services) 2012; modified to **2.6 million** by TCNJ architect Lynda Rothermel, Sept. 2012