

Category C, William D. Smith Memorial Award - Award
Sandwich Town Hall in Sandwich - McGinley Kalsow & Associates,
Inc.



Photography by: Christopher Ripman / Ripman Lighting Consultants

Site Description: Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this small Town Hall was the first town hall constructed in the Commonwealth in 1834 following state legislation separating Church and State. With four risers at the granite stairs and one more at the entry doors, the Town Hall was not universally accessible and had lost its historic pastoral image. With a creek to the side of the building and a mill and mill pond behind the building the site options for accessibility were very limited. The rear door was technically accessible, however it was not in common use by the public.

Project Goal: The goal was to design an entry experience for all building users that was not only universally accessible, but also integrated seamlessly into the Greek revival portico, and provide a landscape separation from the state highway. In addition, restoring a dignified setting to the town hall and integrating accessibility throughout the historic interior public spaces, including offices, auditorium, stage and restrooms were equally important to restoring deteriorated and replicating missing historic elements.

Design Solution: Relocating the granite stairs five feet allowed their visual and historic importance to remain while making the building fully accessible. Raising the portico floor level to match the first floor elevation by shortening the Doric columns by 7" did not visually change the proportions of the portico or 22' high column, created space for a sloped walk adjacent to the front wall of the building. After restoration of the original entry doors and door surround, the active front door was retrofitted with fully accessible hardware. An energy efficient overhead traction elevator was installed at the front of the town hall to provide access to the auditorium level, where the horse hair plaster, elaborate stenciling, central chandeliers, paint colors and maple floors were restored. The auditorium, which once showed silent movies, returned to active civic use after having been closed to the public for over 60 years because of structural issues. Full accessibility included a lift to the stage level and four new fully accessible restrooms.



From left to right: David Lager (NETCO, Owner's Project Manager); Ryan Foster (McGinley Kalsow & Associates Inc., Project Manager); Doug Manley (McGinley Kalsow & Associates Inc., Project Architect); Donald Lang (Chairman, Architectural Access Board); and Thomas Hopkins (Executive Director, Architectural Access Board)