



Photo by Dana Kacedon

READY TO RENOVATE — Architect Susan M. Rochelle will draw up renovation plans for 47 Leigh St., which the town wants to make into offices for its water and sewer company employees and storage for the Historic Commission. The town has struggled over what to do with the house, which is beside the Municipal Building, for 12 years.

Clinton Hires Architect For 47 Leigh St. Project

By Bick Treut

CLINTON — After 12 years of fits and starts, it appears that the 47 Leigh St. project is under way.

The town's building and grounds committee selected Milford architect Susan Rochelle to plan the renovation of the house next door to the Municipal Building.

Ms. Rochelle said she is "very happy they selected me. It's important that this building be preserved and it's a pleasure to work within the local community."

The house will be transformed into offices for the water and sewer companies, freeing up space in the Municipal Building. Water and sewer records will be stored on the second floor and a room will be used to store Historic Commission items.

In designing the renovation, Ms. Rochelle says she will "maintain as much of the historic fabric of the home as possible." If a part of the building needs to be changed to accommodate existing building standards, "it's best to do it in a way where you can see where the change occurred," she said.

The decision to hire Ms. Rochelle was announced at the Sept. 13 Town Council meeting by Councilman Rick Christenson who said that two of the three bids received for the project

Commission very well, and provide for a smooth project."

Ms. Rochelle will be paid \$36,000 for her services.

Several years ago, council considered using the building as a police station, but the idea was ultimately rejected due to cost. "It was a much grander and more involved project," said Mayor Holt. In October 2002, the town scrapped the project after the lowest bid came in \$238,000 higher than expected.

Among the projects designed by Ms. Rochelle are alterations and additions to St. Thomas' Episcopal Church near Pittstown, which is listed on the National Historic Register. She designed the altar renovation at Clinton Presbyterian Church and drew up plans for improvements to several Center Street homes.

The 47 Leigh St. house was built by John Leigh, for whom the street is named. It was part of his farm.

Town Council considered razing the building in the late 1990s.