



2017 TFG
Conference

Historic Fabric & Reversibility Vs. Insulation & Air Sealing in Historic Timber Frames

Mason Lord

Hudson Valley Preservation Corporation

Sherman, CT

The importance of historic fabric and reversibility in antique timber-frame structures (historic preservation) can be at odds with the insulation and air-sealing goals of the contemporary timber frame structure (high-performance and efficiency). This talk will explore why the historic preservation folks have good reason to be hysterical and the high-performance folks have a right to be frustrated, and the difficulties of reconciling these opposing sides of renovation planning. If there is a middle ground, what is it? What are the compromises in strategy that will bring more energy efficiency without jeopardizing the long-term health and architectural details of the structure?

Stewards of buildings that have survived 150 years or more strive to maintain the architectural details and not compromise the structural integrity. These stewards tend to take a conservative approach, which often means doing nothing to improve comfort and energy efficiency. Energy efficiency advocates argue that part of what will allow a building to survive another 150 years is to bring them into the twenty-first century and meet the expectations of today's homeowners. It is our job as designers and builders to guide our clients to the best solutions of today, without long-term risks to a building's heritage, and to do so in a cost-effective way.

The presentation will review building science and how it drives the design and engineering of renovation projects. The tactics of hybrid systems of insulation will also be explored.

About the Speaker

Mason Lord

Founder and Managing Partner of Hudson Valley Preservation, Mason Lord began learning the techniques behind skilled craftsmanship from a young age, first by studying industrial arts in high school and working as a carpenter's apprentice during his summer breaks in high school and college. After obtaining a degree from Duke University, he apprenticed as a restoration craftsman with the National Trust for Historic Preservation at Lyndhurst.

Mason founded Hudson Valley Preservation in 1991 with a vision of integrating methodical assessment, design, and building execution, all while maintaining close client relations and a single line of communication. Mason's knowledge of, and passion for, quality construction has been critical for HVP's recognition as one of the top 50 remodeling companies in the "Fine Design" category by *Remodeling* magazine, as well as having received multiple Chrysalis and Home Building Association of Connecticut awards for a variety of remodeling projects.

Notable historic preservation projects include work on the Kent Historical Society's 18th-century Seven Hearths, South Kent School's 1742 Barnabas Hatch House, Pawling Historical Society's Oblong Quaker Meeting House, Landmark Preservation Society of Southeast's Walter Brewster House and Old Southeast Church, and Preserve New Fairfield's 19th century Hubbell House and The Parsonage. With a combined knowledge of architecture, engineering, traditional trades, and history gained from 30 years of experience with old and new buildings, Mason's approach revolves around acquiring a thorough understanding of the existing conditions and future potential embodied within each structure.