



**Historical Societies Convening 3  
June 3, 2019  
New Canaan Museum & Historical Society  
Report & Next Steps**

**1. BOARD DEVELOPMENT/FUNDRAISING**

**The goal** for this group was to find ways to create more integrated boards.

The group's **plan** was to create a **Best Practices**/Board Expectations/Board Responsibilities document that would include recommendations such as: having board retreats and training sessions as well as more social events. They would collect examples from other groups and would set up a Google Drive set of documents. The group was reminded that there were a number of key resource organizations, such as [BoardSource](#), and coaches such as [The Board Coach](#), Michael Davidson.

**2. MARKETING**

**The goal** for the marketing group was to find the most effective way to promote our organizations to gain regional and national press coverage and create a tool for development

The plan was to:

- Build on the idea of shopping local with a “Look Local, FC” and/or “Historic Fairfield County” campaign
- Build a map/passport with “look local” stamp: the map would be an entry ticket
- Work with the Dept of Tourism; create better commercials for FC heritage; see this as a strong development tool.
- Look into Nonprofit Advertising on MetroNorth billboards (and look into Police Dept assistance)
- Would include reciprocal membership (this would become a benefit of membership in each)
- Maybe an initial incubated program of CAFC?

**This plan needs:** a logo; and quotes for maps and stamps.

**3. MEMBERSHIP**

**The goal** for the membership group was to figure out how to best retain and increase membership of societies.

**The plan** was to:

- Assess demographics (who don't you have and who you want)
- Determine what the access points to membership are (why join)
- - what are the best carrots that lead to joining?
- - what events can be free-of-charge to generate goodwill
- Figure out the best ways to extend into the community (get out of your building – interpret “history” widely; do exhibits off-campus; travel micro-exhibits; have food trucks as a draw.
- Make BIG, eye-popping banners (like New Canaan's giant shoe; pink flamingoes)
- Reconsider membership renewal times (one single date a year)
- Consider a name change History Center not Society, or Museum
- Appear to be (and be) more inclusive. Opportunity to re-brand.

**Needs** for this membership plan included:

- an engaged board and staff
- financial and time resources
- a realistic timetable
- better demographic tracking; usage; specific engagement and feedback

**A timetable** for this plan

Changing membership would probably take 1-2 years (Stamford did it in 18 months)

Tracking daily visitors: 1-2 months

Extending into the community: can start right away - with a banner, interesting artwork and putting a table outside)

#### **4. PROGRAMMING & EXHIBITS**

**The goal** for programming and events was to determine how to generate multigenerational interest, be relevant to more people, and be conscious of diversity.

**The plan** was to:

- Find ways to make exhibits more interactive - enabling touching exhibits and generally making them more accessible and interesting
- Work with students and schools: find new ways to engage them or go out to them
- Program “super-fabulous” speakers - and pool money from several societies to afford them.
- Collaborate with other non-history community organizations – PTAs hospitals, libraries, places of worship
- Program to honor and acknowledge long-serving or heroic local people (+other events to get in a different crowd)

**Needs** for this membership plan included:

- getting better demographic information
- surveying the population of the town using town’s ballot list (email or mailing addresses) [depends on relationship with town] .