

Walden's Ridge Civic League Report to the Town of Walden November 11, 2025

Thank you for allowing us to report on recent developments at the Walden's Ridge Civic League.

We are progressing steadily with new siding on the auditorium. The construction crew is made up of Tim Webb, Byron Dorough, Kent Kersten, Allen Fethe, Roger Thiesfeld, Chris Garner, Hunter Dwyer and Mark Dwyer who meet every Saturday morning. Other than work by licensed electricians and helper Kris Kovinsky, all the labor is supplied by volunteers whose only pay is donuts and pizza.

Some tear-off of deteriorated shakes and tar paper began on May 21, 2025, when we found the original pine boards were painted green. The color was a surprise, since the only photographs we have of the original building are in black and white. It was no surprise that there is no insulation in the walls.

By May 24, we had removed the old ramp leading to the front door and discovered that the bottom portion of the walls was originally sheathed in horizontal boards with the base sloped out. By going back to the bones of the building, we are able to reconstruct the auditorium as it was originally. This is important as we are working within the guidelines of the National Register of Historic Places.

On September 19, board members Johanne Albright and Karen Stone travelled to Nashville where the Tennessee Historical Commission approved our application. It will now be forwarded to the National Park Service. Indications are the sought-after status may be granted before end of the year.

Any structural and wiring problems encountered during the siding project are being solved. The birds and squirrels are unhappy, but the Board of Directors is happy. We appreciate the generous help of the Town of Walden toward the current rehabilitation which is proceeding under budget. We welcome everyone to visit the site, especially after 9:00 AM on Saturday mornings, when the volunteer crew is hard at work. And, of course, more helpers – skilled or not – are welcome.

Replacement seats donated by the Tivoli Theater are stored on the stage inside the auditorium. When it is too cold to work outside on the siding, we hope to move inside, remove the old seats, and refinish the floor. Installation of seats is another big project that will rely on volunteers, so at this point we cannot anticipate a completion date.

Having two big changes occurring at the same time has disrupted some income-producing activities. For example, the band *As Isaac* cannot rent the hall this year for their two-evening concerts which for several years have completely filled both the auditorium and back-stage seating. However, our own *Merry Mountain Christmas* celebration will be December 19 with activities filling the space available. The traditional family-centered event is free of charge. Festivities begin at 5 and end at 8.

Smoke on the Mountain BBQ Contest on October 10 & 11 was very successful as a fundraiser and as a community celebration. Following immediately after, on October 16, we hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner along with the last Quarterly Membership Meeting of 2025. Membership is open to all residents of Walden's Ridge, and we invite everyone to join and to volunteer.

We are looking for new board members, especially for the offices of treasurer and secretary, so if anyone has a recommendation or would like to volunteer as a candidate, they would be welcome.

Mark Dwyer, WRCL President