

New and Extensive Topographic Survey of State Capitol Grounds Currently Underway

The nonprofit State Capitol Foundation and its membership arm, The State Capitol Society, are continuing their efforts to improve both the restored 1840 State Capitol and historic Union (Capitol) Square, the grounds on which it stands. Union Square, dates to 1792, the year of Raleigh's establishment and was the site of the first State House, the first "permanent seat of State government" in Raleigh, from 1794 to 1831.

Through the efforts of Ms. Melissa Beard, Executive Director of the North Carolina Society of Surveyors, Concord Engineering and Surveying, Inc. of Concord, N.C. is providing, at no cost to either the Foundation or to the State, an up-to-date and extensive topographic survey of the capitol's grounds that will be used to enhance the grounds surrounding the capitol. A Raleigh landscape architecture firm, Little and Little, Inc., is also providing a plan for redevelopment of the southern grounds of the capitol including the partial re-creation of an 1856 brick-paved plaza surrounding a bronze copy of Houdon's statue of George Washington as well as its fronting staircase. Those early landscape features were original to the placement of the capitol's first outdoor sculpture. It replaced the 1820 marble statue of Washington by Antonio Canova that had been destroyed in the 1831 State House fire. Both of the landscape features (plaza and stair) were removed in the mid-1920's during a redevelopment of the capitol's grounds by the Olmsted Brothers firm of Brookline, Mass. (descendants of the noted landscaper Frederick Law Olmsted, the mid-nineteenth century designer of New York's Central Park, the Biltmore Estate, etc.) Susan Little said, "This generous donation by Concord Engineering and Surveying, Inc. will allow us to undertake capitol grounds improvements that ultimately will serve to provide visitors to the capitol with a new appreciation of historic Union Square. The survey also will serve to locate and to document many of the landscape's features and will improve our knowledge of the square's evolution as a public park."

Survey data that is collected on the grounds will be converted into a scaled CAD plat that will provide up-to-date information necessary to enhance the historic capitol's setting. The work will assist the State Capitol Foundation in its dual missions of education for the 1840 capitol's visitors and in its continuing restoration and preservation of North Carolina's most historic building.

Contact: Carol Henderson, Capitol Administrator @ (919) 733-4994 or Raymond Beck, Capitol Historian & Researcher @ (919) 733-4994. **CONCORD ENGINEERING & SURVEYING, INC. at 704-786-5404 (Alex Rankin, President, Jim Craddock, Survey Project Manager, Hollis Nixon, Marketing Director).**

Photograph Captions

1. State Capital 1 – Carl Young of Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. sets up the instrument on the East grounds.
2. State Capital 2 – Darrell Helms of Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. concentrates as he reads the rod through the instrument.

3. State Capital 3 – Antonio Flowe of Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. holds a level rod while measuring the elevation of the storm drains on the North grounds of the capital.
4. State Capital 4 – David Haywood of Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. records the position of the statue of President Andrew Johnson.
5. State Capital 5 – Rain, sleet, or a foot of snow...Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. ready for action alongside the George Washington statue on the South side of the capital.
6. State Capital 6 – Carl Young & David Haywood of Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. measure the capital building.
7. State Capital 7 – Carl Young of Concord Engineering & Surveying, Inc. prepares a Leica TCRA 1103 Robotic survey instrument to brave the elements during the snow storm.