



City of Greenbelt Limestone Relief

GREENBELT, MD

Greenbelt was developed as a utopian worker's housing project with Federal funding during the WPA period. In addition to providing small housing units for workers, the development included a central shopping plaza, community center, and library. In keeping with the didactic goals of the site, the community center and plaza were enlivened with limestone carvings celebrating democratic virtues. These included a series of reliefs illustrating the preamble of the US Constitution and an over life-sized sculpture of Mother and Child.

We were contracted by the City of Greenbelt to conserve the sculptures under a grant from the Maryland Historic Trust. After a thorough review by the Trust of all conservation methods and materials, each sculpture and relief was treated. Work included removal of paint and other deposits from the surfaces, cleaning of atmospheric soiling using the gentlest means feasible, repointing of failed mortar, and modest repair of material losses.

Among the more pressing concerns was the repair of cracks and fissures in the Mother and Child sculpture. An annual tradition of setting the work afire had severely damaged the historic surfaces and weakened the stone. Point loading had led to the development of cracks that risked major losses to the sculpture. We installed Cintec anchors to stabilize the fragments and then filled the cracks with a compatible lime grout. All work was documented and a treatment report, including maintenance recommendations, was submitted at the completion of the project.

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/limestone-relief-panels-conservation/>

SERVICES PERFORMED

- Conservation Treatment
- Maintenance
- Research & Documentation
- Surveys & Condition Assessments