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Consigli Construction awarded \$5.6 million library renovation and addition from the Maine Historical Society

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The Portland office of Consigli Construction Co., Inc. has been awarded a \$5.6 million library renovation and addition project from the Maine Historical Society (MHS) at its 485 Congress St. headquarters. Built in 1907, the library is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is located on the site of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's childhood home.

Consigli began work in late October following an extensive pre-construction process that focused on design, value management and permitting. The current project is the first of two phases of a multi-million master plan for the renovation of the organization's campus in downtown Portland.

The Nichols Hall addition, originally built in the 1950s, will be torn down to make way for new construction. In its place will be a new glass-and-brick structure providing storage space for MHS's unique and priceless collections, making precise temperature and humidity control of paramount importance throughout the course of construction. When finished, the MHS Library will gain an additional 11,000 s/f of space over its current capacity of 13,000 s/f.

Further, a new compact storage system will be installed to maximize space and enhance accessibility to the collection. Meanwhile, the historic 1907 portion of the library will undergo an extensive restoration and receive upgrades to the mechanical, electrical and fire protection systems.

Consigli will self-perform several aspects of the project, including: concrete, building underpinning, and masonry and mosaic tile restoration.

"This is a tremendously exciting project that will lead to better care for our collections and a better research experience for all of our users," said Richard D'Abate, executive director of the Maine Historical Society. "MHS is committed to providing full library services and access to its collections throughout the renovation with as minimal disruption as possible."

The library renovation follows Consigli's recent restoration work of the Walker Art Building at Bowdoin College, the city of Portland's City Hall Clock Tower rehabilitation, and brownstone tower restoration work at Victoria Mansion. The project, designed by Schwartz/Silver Architects of Boston, is targeting a January 2009 completion date.

The Maine Historical Society preserves the heritage and history of Maine. Founded in 1822, it is the third oldest state historical society in the United States.