

**TOWN OF HADDAM
BUILDINGS COMMITTEE
TOWN HALL
21 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT
THURSDAY, 9 MAY 2019
PUBLIC MEETING
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Scott Brookes
A	Emily Carrow
X	Lisa Malloy
A	Joanne Nesti
A	Jared Novinski
X	Patrick Pinnell, Chairman
A	Jan Sweet, Alternate
A	Lizz Milardo, First Selectman
X	Bill Warner, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

THIS WAS A JOINT MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEES.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Pinnell, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION: Mike Fortuna motioned to approve the 9 May 2019 agenda as submitted. Lisa Malloy second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Attendance

Attendance was taken. Infrastructure members: Mike Fortuna, chairman; Kate Anderson, Mike O'Brien, Lynne Cooper, and Patrick Pinnell,

5. Approval of Minutes

The Buildings Committee did not have a quorum at the 11 April 2019 meeting and there were no minutes. The Infrastructure Committee did have a quorum and approved their minutes.

6. Scovil Mills National Register Listing Update; Discussion of Camoin Associates Development Evaluation

Mr. Pinnell confirmed that he will be meeting with Renee Tribert, Project Manager, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, and Jenny Scofield, State and National Register Coordinator, State Historic Preser-

vation Office (SHPO), on Thursday, 23 May 2019, 9:30 a.m., to go through the mill structures. The only problem at this time is obtaining a key to gain entry to the structures. Mr. Warner reported he has sent two emails to Amy Martinez, CTDOT, and her assistant, but they are not responding. Mr. Pinnell asked Mr. Warner to provide him with the email and he will attempt to contact someone further up in DOT regarding this matter. Mr. Fortuna suggested contacting the Tylerville DOT Garage as he knows they go back and forth quite a bit. Mrs. Malloy will reach out to the Tylerville Garage.

7. Jail Update

Mr. Warner reported there are two restauranteurs who are interested in the building; however, it's the opinion of Nathan L. Jacobson Associates (NLJA), the town's engineer, that it will cost \$400,000 for well and septic. Mr. Warner stated there has been discussion in regard to leasing the building (difficult to finance when you don't hold a lease). Mr. Warner talked about a similar model - Harbor Park, Middletown, with Frank Marotta - 25 year lease with 25 year extension; Mr. Marotta financed the entire project and is making money. Mrs. Malloy asked if the restauranteurs are interested in the entire building or part of it. Mr. Warner stated their interest lies in the jail - the front first floor and expanding the kitchen area as it's not big enough. Mr. Pinnell asked what type of time frame they are talking about. Mr. Warner stated they have asked what can the town do with the water and septic and he's responded that he's working with NLJA regarding this matter. Mr. Warner noted that the well and septic system are working as they are currently being used by the Annex Building. Mr. Warner also informed the interested parties that he needs to know what their vision is for the building and that the Historical Society has input that needs to be incorporated to make it a win-win for everyone. Once a more realistic number for the well and septic is obtained from NLJA, a discussion with the Board of Selectmen will need to take place.

Mrs. Malloy asked if there has been any movement on selling the property. Mr. Warner stated no, a state representative would need to present a bill to the state legislature in order for that to take place and that has not happened.

8. Higganum Sewer Update and Discussion; Synch with Haddam Elementary Situation.

Vote on having Fuss & O'Neill update Wright Pierce report. Tasks and calendar milestones to inform public. Set referendum date.

As this agenda item is primarily an Infrastructure Committee matter, Mr. Pinnell turned the meeting over to Mr. Fortuna. Mr. Fortuna reported based on the April meeting, Fuss and O'Neill will update the costs from the Wright Pierce study to validate the sewer district, the flows, and the costs prior to putting this before the public to obtain their opinion. Mr. Fortuna stated rather than spend the study money on a full analysis, use some of the funding to get the public's opinion.

Mr. Pinnell reported he had spoken to Chris Ferraro, Fuss and O'Neill, and they are upset about not having been spoken to for some time when they put a proposal in front of the Committee and followed up with DEEP in January. Mr. Pinnell stated Fuss and O'Neill does not understand why Middletown is off the table. Mr. Fortuna stated the connection stops just south of Fellowship Church, Saybrook Road/Brooks Road. Mr. Warner stated there are a number of answers: 1) It's not on the state's POCD. Would need to go before the legislature to change the state POCD to allow a sewer through open space and rural lands.

Mr. O'Brien asked if it's a gravity sewer or pressure main. Mr. Fortuna stated it would have been a pressure main. Mr. O'Brien stated you can't tie into a pressure main so it wouldn't be extending the sewer system. Discussion followed in regard to it not being economically feasible for Haddam to extend further into Middletown.

Mr. Pinnell suggested as a courtesy to Fuss and O'Neill, that Mr. Warner have a direct conversation with Mr. Ferraro. Mr. Warner stated he has been in contact with Fuss and O'Neill via emailing. Mr. Pinnell stated Mr. Ferraro claims he has not had contact and again asked Mr. Warner to put it on his agenda.

Mr. Pinnell stated if he understands Mr. Warner's presentation on 1 May 2019, one of the reasons for acquiring the school property is the, "Town Green and HES property could unlock Higganum's potential." Discussion followed in regard to the potential of a community septic system and previous studies indicating there wasn't sufficient area, therefore, a package sewer treatment plant was the best option. Mr. Pinnell stated there are three different credible assessments of whether that option is something that should be studied; and one of the major points the Committee needs to settle is how do they figure it out.

Mr. Warner reported that he has been working with Brain Curtis, NLJA, who is one of, if not the, expert in community septic systems (wrote the regulations for DEEP). Mr. Warner also reported that test holes were dug in the playground area of HES and they found ten feet of good sand and gravel and old studies of the area indicate that the Green and the school are sitting on a huge mound of sand and gravel. Mr. Warner stated a community septic system that is over 7,500 gallons is impossible (would need 15 acres of land to handle 12,000 gallons); however, under 7,500 gallons would be a State Dept. of Health system (does not have all the DEEP requirements). Mr. Warner noted that there is a 6,000 gallon tank on HES as well as a 6,000 gallon reserve area, the entire front and the hillside in back of HES is all good sand and gravel, and there's the potential for the placement of a 7,500 gallons at the Green. Mr. Warner stated he had spoken to Jim Ventres, Town Planner, East Haddam, and of the 106 connections they have they only need 13,000 gallons. Mr. Warner also stated he had talked to Mr. Curtis about what potential road blocks or deal breakers may be involved and they haven't come up with any.

Mr. Fortuna asked if HES becomes private property, how a community septic system would be placed on it. Mr. Fortuna stated he didn't believe the Green was large enough on its own and that it would need to be coupled with the school. Mr. Warner stated his entire presentation was about the town purchasing HES. Mr. Warner talked about the creation of a WPCA and a plan to show potential developers as to how it would work.

Mr. Fortuna asked if the community septic would require some type of pre-treatment. Mr. Warner stated community septic would, but state health regulations do not have the nitrogen loading, etc. Mr. Warner distributed a map used in his presentation for the Committees review (copy on file in the Town Clerk's Office with the minutes). Mr. Fortuna stated perhaps Fuss and O'Neill should update the numbers for both approaches.

Mr. Fortuna explained what had been previously recommended to the BOS (a black box that would discharge to the river) and noted that the septic options were studied and were viable, but the properties weren't available at that time. Mr. Brookes asked where the black box would be located. Mr. Fortuna stated either at the town garage or the back of the Rossi property (talked of public/private partnership) and would discharge to the river. However, if the town is considering the purchase of HES, it would be worth looking at again. Discussion followed in regard to potential risks - long term build out unknown.

Mr. Warner stated he doesn't believe everyone is waiting for a sewer system to be installed in order to move to Higganum; and that the town needs to build a market. Mr. Warner stated the Rossi property cannot do anything without sewer and he briefly reviewed the Camoin study - current market for multi-family residential is \$1,500 a month per unit, in order to justify new construction you need \$2,400 per month, 60 percent below market, there is no market for it. Mr. Warner continued by highlighting aspects of the Camoin study - \$6.7 million of equity would need to be put into the development and there would still be an \$11 million funding gap for 90 units. Discussion followed in regard to Pratt and Whitney hiring 500 engineers, there being a demand for multi-family housing for people who want to downsize, but not for \$2,400 a month.

Mr. Warner briefly reviewed Camoin's thoughts on retail and office space - 17,000 square feet would potentially be built in the next 10 years; however, since 2009, there hasn't been that much constructed in Durham, Middlefield, and Haddam all together during the last 10 years. Mr. Warner again stated the town needs to build a market.

Mr. Warner stated in all of the studies, the sewer district proposed is for 34 properties. Mr. Warner talked about East Haddam's sewer district of 102 properties and the payment per residential unit is \$1,025 per year and a business such as La Vita Gusto - \$9,000 per year and the Gelston House - \$30,750 per year. Mr. Warner stated when these numbers are applied to Haddam's 34 properties; it would be \$2,941 per year to connect to the sewer.

Mr. Fortuna stated the business owners all want sewer and have seen the Wright Pierce numbers. Mr. Fortuna suggested the numbers be updated and presented to the public noting both the state and town POCD recommend the installation of sewer in Higganum. Mr. Fortuna stated there are two choices: leave things as they are or build some infrastructure to provide the opportunity for development. Mr. Fortuna noted almost all of the septic systems in the Center are 30 years old and at some point there will be failures and then potential build out won't happen. Mr. Fortuna agreed with Mr. Warner in regard to the need to build a market, but doesn't believe it will happen without infrastructure.

Mr. Warner talked about the HES property being a more economically viable solution if it can work and approvals are granted. Discussion followed in regard to East Haddam being under a consent order and building too much capacity; the costs becoming more daunting every day; and placing the question of sewer on the ballot.

Ms. Cooper stated she has been hearing the town needs the ability to expand and grow, we need the ability to open small businesses, and the current setup in the Center is maxed out; therefore, not allowing for expansion and growth. Ms. Cooper stated the HES opportunity is something no one had looked at before because it wasn't available, but now it is. Ms. Cooper also stated if the town doesn't do something, something is going to happen; however, \$10 million price tag, especially in this economic environment, is more than the town can sustain. Ms. Cooper stated if put out to a vote to build infrastructure, she believes it will not pass. Ms. Cooper stated the Committee is trying to figure out how much realistically it would cost the town to position Higganum to create a market and does the town want to take the next step. Ms. Cooper concluded by stating perhaps the Committee needs to take a look at the community septic option. Mr. Fortuna clarified that when he says sewer, he's also talking about community septic.

Mr. Pinnell called for a resolution to have Fuss and O'Neill update the numbers. Discussion followed in regard to waiting to see what happens with HES; the status of Fuss and O'Neill's work; and to have an informal discussion (update) with Fuss and O'Neill regarding what is taking place.

9. Higganum Center/Saybrook Road Traffic Calming and Balanced Mobility/ CT DOT and STCC

Mr. Pinnell stated that after the accident that took place in front of HES, he believes it's time to ask DOT to lower the posted speed limits, add more on street parking, and to restripe the lanes. Mr. Pinnell also stated perhaps the DOT and STCC could use the data from a previous study in light of the anticipated potential economic development in Higganum Center.

Mr. Brookes asked what effect restriping the road would have on the speed. Mr. Pinnell stated it would narrow the travel lanes which causes drivers to slow down and focus on their field of travel. Mr. Brookes also asked where a bike lane would be created with parallel parking spaces (the potential of a car door opening or a car pulling out from the space on a bicyclist). Mr. Pinnell felt the town should ask for the lower posted speed.

Mr. Fortuna asked if the swing bridge was operating on a schedule or on demand. Mrs. Malloy stated she believes they stick to a schedule.

Mr. Warner spoke in regard to a new round of BUILD grant funds being offered and the towns of Haddam and East Haddam resubmitting for the walkway on the Swing Bridge.

Ms. Cooper stated along with the Higganum Center concerns, the Infrastructure Committee should be looking at traffic calming on Route 82 toward the bridge and other town roads. Ms. Cooper stated the

Committee should see how they can get DOT to have the speed on the state highway work to the benefit of the town. Mr. Warner reported that DOT will be holding public hearings regarding the installation of two roundabouts in Tylerville (one at Route 82/Bridge Road and Route 154/Saybrook Road and the other at Route 154/Saybrook Road and the Route 82 Connector/Exit 7). Mr. Fortuna stated there are issues in getting the high school (Route 82, Little City Road, Ponsett Road, and Hubbard Road). Mr. Warner suggested the Infrastructure Committee consider looking at Candlewood Hill Road.

10. Public Comment

Ed Schwing stated that the Haddam Bulletin conducted a survey regarding proposed sewer in Higganum Center. Out of 200 returns, 76 percent stated no - people are not ready to pay for sewer. Mr. Schwing also stated that the committees need to take into account the number of empty buildings sitting within the town as well as the majority of the structures in Higganum Center are owned by three or four individuals. Ms. Anderson asked Mr. Schwing to read the question with Mr. Schwing stating it's in the Bulletin and that he would provide her with a copy.

Mr. Schwing talked about corporate welfare and asked why the taxpayers should pay for a businesses' infrastructure. Mr. Schwing explained why he moved to Haddam – rural area – and believes this is the reason why others have stayed in Haddam and continue to move here.

Mr. Schwing concluded by stating that he believes if you ask a consultant to look at differently priced projects, the consultant will pick the higher price because that's where his funding is coming from, therefore, the studies would be slanted.

Melissa Schlag stated half the town probably has a septic system that is 30 years old and that it's not the town's responsibility to fix someone's septic system or to pay for a sewer. Ms. Schlag noted the Saybrook at Haddam does not have a sewer system.

Ms. Schlag stated approximately five or six years ago she conducted a poll study of the Center trying to figure out how much the EDU's would be using East Haddam's numbers (slightly scaled back) and came up with the same numbers Mr. Warner had previously mentioned. Ms. Schlag stated she believes a cost benefit analysis and EDU analysis are needed as well as speaking to the business owners to see if they are willing to pay this kind of money. Mr. Fortuna stated the business owners have said yes.

Ms. Schlag stated she believes the purchase of HES is the perfect solution to the problem as it will be a lot less expensive and that it will save the town money in the long run.

Ms. Schlag thanked the Committees for having public comment as most small committees do not.

11. New Business

There was no new business to report.

12. Adjournment

MOTION: Scott Brookes motioned to adjourn. Lisa Malloy second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bunny Hall Batzner
Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

**The next meeting of the Building and Infrastructure Committees will be held on:
Thursday, 13 June 2019, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, Haddam.**