

**TOWN OF HADDAM
HIGGANUM COVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2022
APPROVED MINUTES
*Approved as Submitted at the 13 April 2023 Meeting***

ATTENDANCE

X	Peter Baird
X	Sue DeCarli
X	Tim McCane
X	Ed Schwing, Chairman
A	Tim Teran
X	Dante Ursini
X	Bill Warner, AICP, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

Mr. Schwing, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Dan Ursini motioned to approve the 22 September 2022 special meeting minutes and the 13 October 2022 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Tim McCane second. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion on Funding Priorities

Mr. Warner reported the Committee has an approved budget of \$380,000 and now it's time to come up with some designs and go out to bid for some of the projects.

Using a map of the Cove, Mr. Warner pointed out the following: **A – Pollinator Garden** – Have applied for the Rockfall grant. Also have obtained contact information for the Boy Scouts as he believes finishing the trail would be a great Eagle Scout project. **B – Split Rail Fence** – There needs to be some type of fencing. Have contacted Chris Corsa, Assistant Director of Public Works, and will be getting all the boulders located at the Rossi property and will need to contact Lee Hunter regarding this. Noted there will not be enough boulders to do all the work. Would like to use split rail fence. **C – Grading/Grinding/Seed Lawn Mix** – If there's still sufficient time, would like to grade/grind/seed the area (over seed with a lawn mix rather than field grass to eliminate the amount of cutting). **D – Stone Dust Path to Kayak Launch** – This has been completed. Mr. Baird asked Mr. Ursini how the launch is. Mr. Ursini stated it's not bad; however, the water is moving and if someone new to kayaking or someone older with some mobility issues uses it, they could fall and get wet. Mr. Ursini noted the hole at the launch area is not deep. The banks are mucky; otherwise the area is beautiful. Discussion followed regarding walking a kayak back and forth from the launch being tiring (wheeled cart best) and how to safely leave a kayak at the launch (locked to a rack at the launch; something to look at later).

Mr. Ursini stated he did run into a couple of dirt bike riders, and he asked them to slow down a bit. Mr. Ursini also state there may be a few things that need to be posted. Mr. Warner stated he had a good meeting with the resident troopers and asked if they would have any issues patrolling the Cove a bit more.

The Committee continued their review of the map: **1 – Dublin Hill Bridge to the Rossi Property** – Mr. Warner walked the area with Jeff Jacobson, P.E., Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates (NLJA), the town's engineer. Basically fill along road, no retaining wall needed, cut the big tree, and the culvert will need to

be designed as some type of bridge. Have put in \$150,000. Concern is that it is close to the Haddam Land Trust (HLT) property and will need to notify Bill Cowan, HLT President, about the proposal. The Rossi property would allow overflow parking and some kind of pathway. Will define the curb cut, continue through the Rossi property, and it will take people into the Cove. Can't encourage people to walk on the bridge as it's too tight. **2) Foundations** – Construct some type of walk-up platform to view turbine and falls. Covering of the turbine would be too problematic. An interpretative sign explaining the history of the turbine could be added. Area 7 would be at grade. From Area 7 walk up the steps at current grade. Area 8 would be steps down into the foundation and would need to excavate some of the area to expose the foundation. Area 9 would be stepping further down into the foundation and would need to excavate to expose more of the foundation. Would need to evaluate structural integrity of foundation as excavation takes place. The goal would be to try and get Area 9 at grade which would be aggressive. **3) Pavilion Area** – A new stamped concrete surface, pavilion, and picnic tables. At this point people would be looking down into the kayak launch area. **4) Band Shell Area** – Small project – creating a flat surface area. Mr. Ursini asked Mr. Warner if he saw concrete or decking for this area. Mr. Warner stated cement. **5) Viewing Area** – Coming from the parking area and trying to get a grade that is very reasonable especially for seniors or individuals with mobility issues. Believe coming out 25 feet from the road would be an acceptable distance rather than building a structure. Propose using the large boulders as a retaining wall and then fill in up to that grade. Mr. Hunter is aware of proposal and believes it's feasible and understands the Committee would need to go out to bid for it. Mr. Ursini stated he believes this proposal will help to save money. Mr. Warner stated he would need to speak to Mr. Jacobson to see what they could design in order to put up some specs for the Committee to go out to bid.

Mr. Warner asked the Committee what they see as the priorities. Mr. Schwing stated #1 can wait until the Rossi property is purchased, and the rest would be #2, doesn't have a preference for #3 or #4, and then work on #5. Mr. Baird stated 2, 3, 4, 5, and 1 or 2, 4, 3, 5, and 1. Mr. McCane stated 2 and 5 combined – combine the work and use the material from 2 for 5. Mr. Warner stated #3 and #1 are big budget items. Mr. Schwing agreed with Mr. McCane and stated he'd like to see 2, 5, 3, 4 and 1. The Committee felt the viewing platform should be first. Discussion followed in regard to completing #4, not necessarily the stage, right away as it's a nice place to sit. Mr. Warner will set up a time with Mr. Jacobson to review the site. Mr. Ursini stated they may be able to look at it in terms of stages. Noted the goal is not to put rails on top of the foundations.

MOTION: Peter Baird motioned to approve work begin on Items #2 - Foundations and #5 – Viewing Area. Tim McCane second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Baird spoke in regard to signage/branding and bike racks that are designed in the town's zip code. Mrs. Batzner stated former Town Planner Liz Glidden had worked on wayfinding signage and a slatted sign had been made to be placed near the Route 82 Connector but DOT would not allow it. Mrs. Batzner also stated the sign was stored at Public Works but believes Bob Waller may have it now. Mr. Warner stated Ted Esselstyn has indicated he would like to help especially with the playground at HES.

3. Discussion About Depot Road Property (Lot 2)

Mr. Warner distributed/reviewed a GIS map. Current zoning would allow a single-family home to be constructed, in wetland review area, and there are very steep slopes. Would not want to encourage people to carry a kayak up/down the slope. The lot is entirely within the wetland review area and when something is built there, there should be a condition that there be no clearing of the slope. Mr. McCane stated it should already be in the file because when he broke the lot off those were the conditions as well as the house being set in a specific location (should be located at the Town Hall). Mr. Warner stated there is no file on the lot. Mr. Ursini asked the septic system and its location. Mr. McCane stated the septic runs along the road. Mr. Warner asked Mr. McCane if he had constructed the stairs. Mr. McCane stated yes. Mr. Warner stated if a house were constructed on the lot there would be no visual issue from the Cove. Mr. Warner stated there is no reason for the town to pursue the purchase of this property.

Depot Road – Proposed Closure of Parking Area by the Falls - Mr. Warner stated he did put in the budget access control - \$20,000 with State funding. Noted that Depot Road has been recently paved and asked the Committee the question should the parking be ended. Discussion followed in regard to “No Parking” and/or “Vehicles will be Towed at the Owner’s Expense” signs and blocking the area off.

Mr. Warner stated he will need to check with DEEP to see if they are agreeable to the town using the town’s engineer to do the design. Mr. Warner explained that for state DOT funds it’s okay to use the town engineer, for state/federal funds you have to go out to bid, and DEEP is different. Noted there is no federal money involved in this project.

Mr. Ursini asked how the Committee moves forward with the bidding process. Mr. Warner stated if he’s allowed to use the town engineer, Mr. Jacobson will design #2 and #5, and he’ll be brought before the Committee to explain, then it will be advertised for bids, contractors will bid, and low bidder selected.

Mr. Ursini asked if the Committee can look to have Mr. Hunter clear the view to the falls (Area B). Mr. Warner stated Mr. Hunter would be able to do the work. A brief discussion followed in regard to the possibility of Public Works assisting with some of the work. Mrs. DeCarli asked if the concrete wall, in the area where the chain link fence is located, could be removed. Will need to review.

Resignation/Committee Vacancy – Mr. Warner announced that Jessica Condil has resigned from the Committee. A brief discussion followed about finding someone to fill the position and whether the position had to be filled (it does not). Mr. Schwing stated if anyone has any suggestions to contact Mr. Warner and himself with the names.

4. Adjournment

MOTION: Sue DeCarli motion to adjourn. Tim McCane second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 8 December 2022, 6:00 p.m.