

**TOWN OF HADDAM  
HIGGANUM COVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
COMMUNITY CENTER  
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441  
WEDNESDAY, 12 MAY 2022  
UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

**ATTENDANCE**

X	Peter Baird
A	Jessica Condil
X	Sue DeCarli
X	Tim McCane
X	Ed Schwing, Chairman
X	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:** Tim McCane motioned to approve the 20 April 2022 minutes as submitted. Dan Ursini second. Motion carried with Mr. Baird abstaining.

**2. Discussion Regarding Kent Frost Initial Thoughts**

Brian Kent, PLA, Principal, Kent + Frost, was present.

Mr. Kent reported he had taken the Committee's input and put the information together, looked at what may fit on the site, and that he had a Zoom meeting with Steve Gephard, DEEP Supervising Fisheries Biologist (a guest at the Committee's 13 January 2022 meeting).

Mr. Kent reviewed the updated matrix noting that he had included Mr. Gephard's comments. Mr. Kent noted that some items will be incorporated into the plan and others may be incorporated if they fit/work on the site. Mr. Kent showed a concept plan where he has identified 19 points of interest, for example - parking area, pathways, main roadway, turbine area, pavilion area, kayak put in, and river area. Mr. Kent noted that the Cove area to the right fluctuates seasonally and there appears to be more and more infill.

Mr. Kent continued with the presentation with photos showing a potential entrance, the ruins of the oldest mill, the pond area, and the masonry wall with the arch (a way to cross over) and talked about the views (trimming may be needed to maintain the view). Mr. Baird noted there are great views of the glacial potholes too. A brief discussion followed in regard to building steps in this area.

Mr. Kent stated he is proposing nine parking spaces and the removal of the gate (potentially replacing it with some type of decorative entrance) and the installation of guard rails at the steep part of the main walkway. Mr. Baird voiced concern over the integrity of the archway. Mr. Kent stated it would need to be shored up (need a structural engineer to review it).

Mr. Kent stated the pathway is not ADA accessible and it would be too difficult to make it accessible. Mr. Kent noted that the entire grade from the parking lot to the water averages 10 percent. Mr. Kent stated the committee is not required to make the site ADA accessible because in order to do so would cause



irreparable damage to the quality of the site. Mr. Kent also noted that vehicular traffic would not be allowed further down on the site due to constraints.

Mr. Kent suggested a pathway down to the upper rectangle of the ruins (this would be to the right of the turbine chamber) and the pathway would continue down through the foundations (some reconstruction will be required) eventually coming out at the end towards the Cove. Mr. Kent talked about the construction of a viewing platform around the turbine area and the need for the opening (12 feet by 12 feet) to be large enough to allow sufficient light into the opening. Discussion followed in regard interpretive panels, the placement of plexiglass over the opening, how big the decking area should be, and plantings to help protect some of the areas. Mr. Schwing stated there is a mill in Connecticut that has a functioning turbine and will provide the location.

Mr. Kent also suggested the following: 1) Turf grass (more comfortable to sit on) be put in place in the lawn area. 2) The concrete area to be upgraded (remove slab; potentially a picnic pavilion/classroom). If a pavilion is constructed (could be rentable), the consensus seems to be placing the structure further down on the site and keeping it out of the view of the falls. A great location for an outdoor classroom. Other considerations – interpretative signage, a piece of machinery, or a native plant garden (pollinator, educational value). 3) Pathway to a board-walk out into the water (consider the size of the boardwalk and how far it would extend into the water; cost a consideration).

Mr. Kent stated a well written grant would be helpful in getting a bridge across the water. Mr. Warner spoke in regard to the rushing water during the spring season or a heavy rain event. Mr. Kent stated based on a conversation with Mr. Gephart one of the areas for a kayak put in would be too shallow. Mr. Ursini suggested the members monitor the water way over the summer and noted there are a number of large trees that would need to be removed. Mr. Teran asked if there is still consideration of putting in a kayak put in towards the end of Nosal Road. Mr. Kent stated there has been discussion; however, there's a question regarding the town's legal right to access. Mr. Ursini stated another option would be a small boardwalk at the corner of the foundation. Mr. Kent stated the shoreline changes from year to year and the flood way may still be an issue.

Mr. Kent stated the existing site has trees scattered all around and suggested the trees, which can be transplanted, be organized to allow for shade; and if along the edge of the open areas, they would frame the view.

Mr. Kent suggested the Committee live with the stonework that's there. EPA put in some curved pieces because they had some very nice flat lintel stones and created new stonework. The only stonework should be the original mill remnants so there is no question what's historical. Mr. Kent showed photos of the site that included EPA's work, current, and examples of items that could fit on the site.

Mr. Warner asked if anything is being proposed in the area of the water tower. Mr. Kent stated he had not come up with an idea noting the area is sloped; and if the Committee would like something to go there, to advise him what their ideas are. The area works as a vegetated slope on the edge of the activity area. Mr. Warner stated he believes the area levels out. Using the map, Mr. Kent pointed out what is level and where the sloping begins. Mr. Kent stated the area could be made level (cost) and that the water tower is not historical. Mr. Kent also stated he could come up with something that would not include the use of the footings.

Mr. Kent stated the Committee will eventually be looking at all of the pieces and their associated costs and then it will be time to decide what is the biggest priority or what should be aimed for by a given year. Discussion followed in regard to the material to be used on the pathway - stone dust. Noted that on a slope such as the one on site, it's a challenge to keep them stable.

Mr. Warner asked if there should be better vehicular access on site as the population in Haddam is getting older. Mr. Kent stated he would not recommend allowing the public to drive down there. Discussion followed in regard to how many people should have a master key (can be problematic), at



minimum town truck will be driving down there for maintenance and there probably should be an area to turn around in. Mr. Kent stated the fine points of the plan can be worked out once the Committee gets into the levels of detail. Mr. Kent stated the plan he had reviewed with the Committee is titled, "Preliminary Concept Plan".

Mr. Kent stated the Committee needs to contemplate what they want to do as a town and that will influence the design to the next level. Mr. Schwing stated this particular area is not designed for older people to walk back and forth and perhaps some type of shuttle (golf cart) that will bring people down further into the site should be considered. Mr. Baird stated the area of the water tower would be the shortest walk and would provide an overall view of the site. Mr. Kent stated most people, whether they have mobility issues or not, will want to see the water. Mrs. DeCarli stated if there's a stable road, then people should be able to use walkers, rollators, or a wheelchair as they would come with family members who could assist them in going back up the slope.

Mr. Kent provided three preliminary conceptual maps (copies on file with the minutes in the Town Clerk's Office and the Land Use Dept.). Mr. Warner to scan/email the plans to the Committee and Committee members are to provide their comments to Mr. Kent.

Mr. Kent stated a full material take off can be generated (estimated costs for work to be done). The site/project would be eligible for a number of environmental grants and having a plan is key to obtaining funding. Mr. Teran asked Mr. Kent if he would be able to assist the Committee as to what is the logical way of phasing. Mr. Kent stated yes.

While reviewing the maps, the Committee discussed funding, developing the parking area, viewing platforms (tower, turbine area, lower Cove water area), monitoring the channel, conducting a site walk, concert that was previously held on the site (what was done for electricity; small generator), exposure of the foundations and walking into them, dogs on the property (need to be on a leash; clean up station). Mrs. DeCarli reminded the Committee of the need to keep Lou Nosal's property in mind (clearly defining private from public) when considering uses for the site.

### **3. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Ed Schwing motion to adjourn. Peter Baird second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Warner adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

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

**The next meeting is scheduled for 9 June 2022, 6:00 p.m.**





**Legend:**

- ① Parking Area - 9 spaces
- ② Gateway - Sign Kiosk, Bollard
- ③ Upper Ruins Path
- ④ Thematic Wildflower Area
- ⑤ Main Path w/ Guardrail
- ⑥ River & Turbine Viewing/Interpretive Platform
- ⑦ Mill History/Activity Area 30' x 40'
- ⑧ Intermediate Level
- ⑨ Stone Masonry/Interpretive Area
- ⑩ Park Overlook/Bench
- ⑪ Lawn
- ⑫ Picnic Pavilion/Classroom
- ⑬ Planting and/or Interpretive area
- ⑭ Path to River
- ⑮ Footbridge
- ⑯ Kayak Put-In
- ⑰ Performance Stage/Cove Viewing, Benches
- ⑱ Cove Boardwalk
- ⑲ Riverwalk Trail

# Higganum Cove Park

Preliminary Concept Plan  
May 12, 2022

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
**KENT+FROST**  
1 HIGH STREET MYSTIC, CT 06355







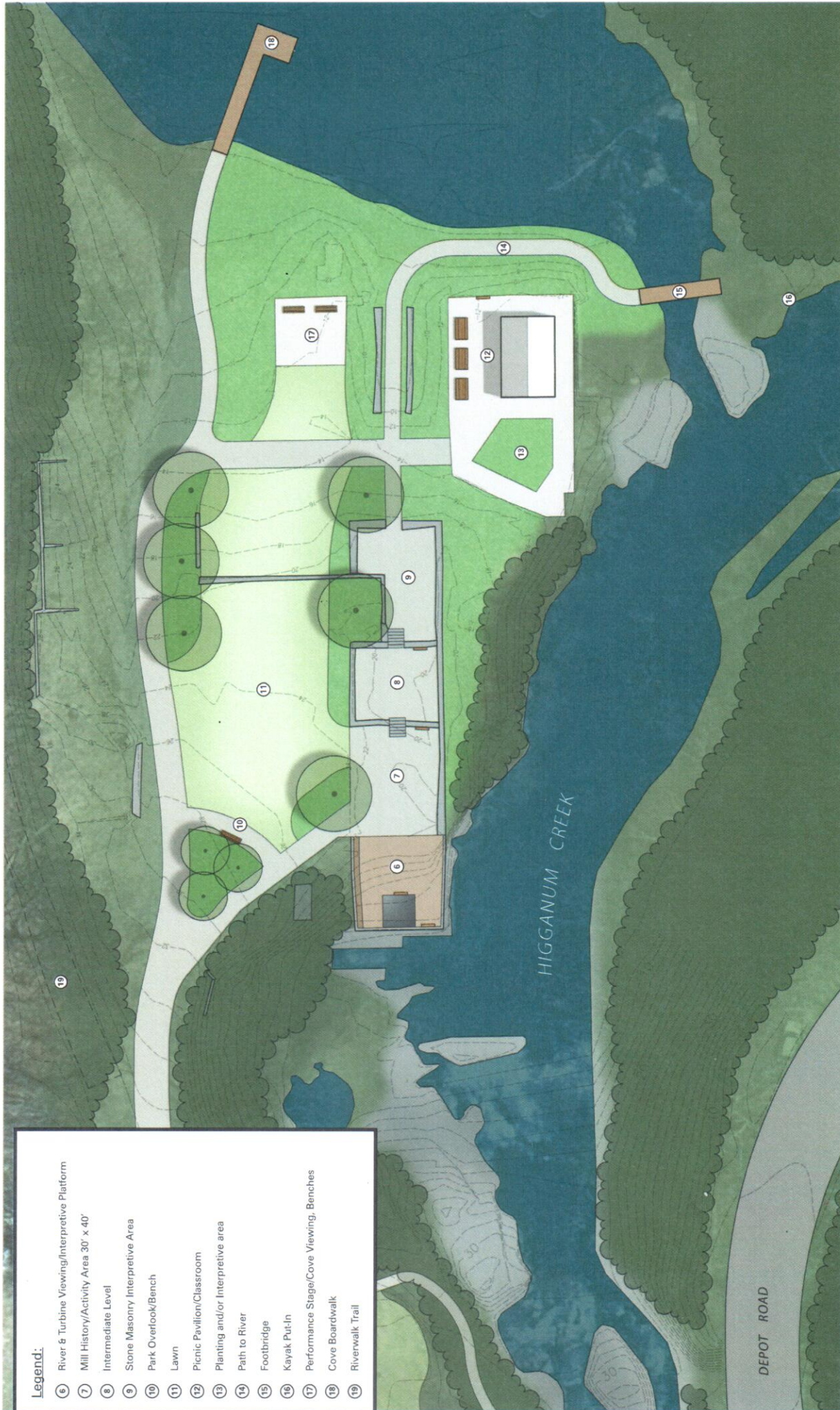
# Higganum Cove Park

Preliminary Concept Plan

May 12, 2022

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
**KENT+FROST**  
1 HIGH STREET MYSTIC, CT 06355





# Higganum Cove Park

Preliminary Concept Plan  
 May 12, 2022

