

**TOWN OF HADDAM
HIGGANUM COVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2022
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Peter Baird (Arrived 6:02 p.m.)
X	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

The Committee tabled the approval of the 22 September 2022 minutes.

2. Discussion on Funding Priorities

Mr. Warner distributed/reviewed a copy of budget line items for: **Maintenance Budget** - (General Fund; funding available until 30 June 2023). Balance as of 10/1/2022 - \$7,000; however, a large tree has fallen across Nosal Road and needs to be removed and the clearing of the view sheds that have been marked out (Lee Hunter will cleanup) - \$2,000. Need to reserve money for cutting in April, May, and June (two cuts) - \$4,000. Leaving a balance of \$1,000. **Capital Budget Higganum Connections** – Balance as of 10/1/2022 - \$20,350 less final payment to Kent + Frost for the master plan - \$6,550, authorized the kayak launch (nice path down to the water) - \$3,400, and graffiti removal (became more elaborate attempting to keep the paint out of the water) - \$4,450. Mr. Teran stated it looks great! Leaving a balance of \$5,950. **Capital Budget Higganum Cove Park Development** – Balance as of 10/1/2022 - \$100,000

Mr. Warner reported that the DEEP final budget addresses the connection to the Center. Jeff Jacobson, Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, is developing a design for this (looking at various bridges to go over the culvert – wood, metal, and plastic material - \$150,000). Mr. Warner talked about a bridge coming from the Rossi property, filling along the road (large stones at the base of the slope, filling it in, very walkable), and then at the end installing guide rail.

Mr. Teran asked about the connection being a multi-use connection (bike and walk). Mr. Warner stated if the width can be obtained. The challenge is infringing on Land Trust property. Mr. Baird asked about the Town's right-of-way. Mr. Warner stated there would be some, but noted the road is old and there may not be much right-of-way.

Preliminary Budget – Higganum Cove Park Project - Mr. Warner distributed/reviewed copies of the budget. **Areas 7, 8, 9, and 10 – Turbine and Foundations** - are from the master plan – Area 8 - Fill and level, construct steps to view the turbine and the falls, Areas 9 and 10 – excavate/level so people can step down into the foundations. Will need steps within the foundation and handrails for safety purposes. Using Mr. Kent's number of \$45,000. Mr. Teran asked if Mr. Kent's number includes steps and handrails. Mr. Warner stated yes. **Areas 13 and 14 – Reinforced Concrete Slab, Pavilion, and Picnic Tables** –

Install new reinforced stamped concrete slab, structural engineer to design some items for structural security (not collapsing). Pavilion and eight heavy duty picnic tables included. Using Mr. Kent's number of \$75,000. **Area 16 - Concert Area** – Stamped concrete slab, three benches and two interactive interpretive signs. People will have the ability to look out over the wetland. Using Mr. Kent's number of \$15,000. **Trench and Electric Service** – Mr. Warner added access controls (fencing, guide rails, signage) – depending on what the Committee decides to do on Depot Road (close area off by falls). Mr. Kent showed \$17,000. Line item increased to \$30,000 by Mr. Warner. **Area 19 - Observation Area** – Moving away from a big wooden deck to more of a natural look – level area out, add stone dust, stones on the low end, and back fill in up to the road level. Discussed putting in a 30 foot by 30-foot area but a 20 foot by 20 foot may be more responsible. This would be for the ADA access on Nosal Road. Mr. Warner reported he was on site with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) representative who indicated the water tower foundations would need to be preserved (displays the industrial history of the site). Did include improve-ments to access road so if enough of a grade can be achieved where it does work for ADA. It will become an issue with ADA. Believe Mr. Hunter will be able to grade the area out. \$65,000. Preliminary budget breakdown - \$280,000 State/\$100,000 Local/\$380,000 Total.

DEEP Contract - Mr. Warner distributed/reviewed the contract and explained that specific signs will need to be displayed when the work begins that the project has been funded and it's a public park. Specifically reviewed: Design #4 – page A-1 – Must comply with the American Disabilities Act. Believe the proposal for the observation area will fill the bill as it allows access into the main area. Also, there are benches up by the parking lot and upper loop trail. Fees #7 – page A-2 – If charge \$5 for a resident, can only double for an out of towners; and if there's no charge for a resident, can only charge what the State allows for a non-resident. Discussed scanning a QR code and making the payment. The town attorney as reviewed the contract and DEEP as been helpful.

Discussion followed about closing the parking area for the falls along Depot Road; towing vehicles at owner's expense; the process for the purchase of the Rossi property; and the pavilion. Mr. Warner stated an RFP will be required, the hiring of an engineer, etc., doing the design work in all one sitting.

Mr. Teran asked about additional stone dust for Nosal Road. Mr. Warner stated there's a price from Mr. Hunter - \$3,400, \$1,600 for material, and \$700 for trucking. Discussion followed regarding making the entrance way more appealing and working on the 2023-2024 budget,

Mr. Warner distributed/reviewed a copy of the Rockfall Foundation Grant Application for funding for the upper ruins trail. Grant request: planting upper wildflower area (\$4,500; Mr. Kent's number), interpretive signage looking down into the ruins (\$4,000). Match: grading, additional topsoil, and soil preparation (\$1,000), interpretive signage (\$500), completion of upper ruins path, final grading, trail markers (\$1,000), and small wooden bridge (\$1,000; Eagle Scout project). Total request \$8,500 with a match of \$3,500. Project total - \$12,000. Mr. Warner stated he did speak to the Garden Club who is willing to consult, but not plant. Application Due: 11/10/2022. Attaching the application, the master plan, a cover letter, and the mission and vision statements. Mr. Schwing suggested a letter of support be asked for from Lisa Malloy, Director, Haddam Historical Society. Once the contract is signed, an RFP can be put out.

Mr. Teran asked at what point the Committee would want to be overtly public. Mr. Schwing suggested everyone relax.

Mr. Baird asked about winter maintenance such as plowing. Mrs. DeCarli stated the Town plows the parking area.

Recording Clerk's Note: All distributed documents on file with the minutes in the Town Clerk's Office and the Land Use Dept.

3. Discussion on Restrictions for Future Use

Mr. Schwing stated he looked up the deed and Mr. Warner had the town clerk look up the deed as well and when the transfer was done, and it was a foreclosure. The foreclosure lawyer made the deed and there are no restrictions, therefore, the property could be sold. To avoid that, there is a clause

in the state statutes, Title 47, where if a municipality wants to protect any municipal property by dedicating such a property as a park or open space a town meeting must be held to vote on a resolution per the statute and make it a part of the deed. Mr. Schwing stated if the Committee wants to make the Cove a permanent public park, it will become public quickly. Mr. Schwing also stated there will be a series of meetings/hearings for the matter. Mr. Schwing stated to do so the Committee will need to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and suggested it be incorporated with another matter.

After the motion was made, there was lengthy discussion on how residents may feel about money being put into the property and then making it a town park; to date no complaints about what is taking place; who would maintain the park (Park & Rec and/or Public Works); what is being created doesn't restrict the use of the property; time table for approaching the matter (summer 2023); asking the townspeople if they would like a park; what if the town were to sell the property; potential putting daffodils and tiger lilies in the area of the parking lot; potential creating "A Friends of the Cove" group; and whether any of the families that were a part of the factories on the site still lived in town; donations by purchasing a brick or a memory/honor bench; and adding the Cove to the Town Wide Mowing Contract. The Committee determined to wait before making their request. Ms. Condil withdrew the motion.

Mr. Baird spoke about Heritage Park and there being a donation box at the park as well as volunteers who help to take care of the place.

MOTION: Jessica Condil motioned to make Higganum Cove a town park. Tim McCane second.
WITHDRAWN.

Mr. Schwing asked that Public Comment and New Business be added to future agendas.

4. Adjournment

MOTION: Dan Ursini motion to adjourn. Jessica Condil second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 10 November 2022, 6:00 p.m.