

# Higganum Center Study

**Prepared for:**

*The Town of Haddam, Connecticut*

**Prepared by:** Mullin Associates, Inc. and LADA P.C. Land Planners

*The Town of Haddam received support for this project from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Department of Economic and Community Development with funds from the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut*

December 30, 2019

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# 1.0 Introduction





## 1.0 Introduction

The Town of Haddam faces a unique opportunity to play an active, leadership role in shaping the future of Higganum Center and create guidance and incentives to turn the area into a vibrant, prosperous, walkable Center.

Over a period of two days (October 31 and November 2, 2019), over 250 Haddam residents participated in workshops to develop strategies and goals for addressing the future of Higganum Center. Building on the work previously produced by the Town, the Consultant Team - Mullin Associates and LADA P.C. Land Planners- and Town staff set the stage for residents and Town leaders to explore a range of options for guiding and leading the future evolution of



the Higganum Center study area. The Consultant Team features the unique blend of Mullin Associates' policy, economic, and public participation expertise with LADA PC's team leadership, physical planning, and participatory design skills. Students from the University of Hartford provided support services and sketches which have been included in this report.

## Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of a two-day set of workshops concerning the future development of the Higganum Center Study area. Driven by the Town's desire to bolster the sense of place in Higganum and to create an attractive Center, the public was invited to participate in workshops designed to obtain the thoughts, concerns, and ideas of the citizens of Haddam, along with those of a professional team of planners and designers, and to synthesize them into a series of possible options that could serve as a guide to future actions in the area.

Table 5  
Brewery in Seavil  
Add housing - of  
Mixed Use at Rail  
Connections  
Eco-tourism Center at HES

Table 3  
- Heart of Center - Light  
- Street infrastructure  
- Green parking

Table 8  
- Connect Paths - create logos  
- Rebuild old Garage  
- New Garage to Pass  
- Upgrade HES

## The Motivation for the Study

There have been a multitude of studies and visioning processes conducted for the study area. Most have concluded that there are many constraints to development. The most common ones are as follows:

- Lack of centralized sewage system
- Ground water concerns for both potable (drinking) water and fire suppression
- Depressed Housing Market



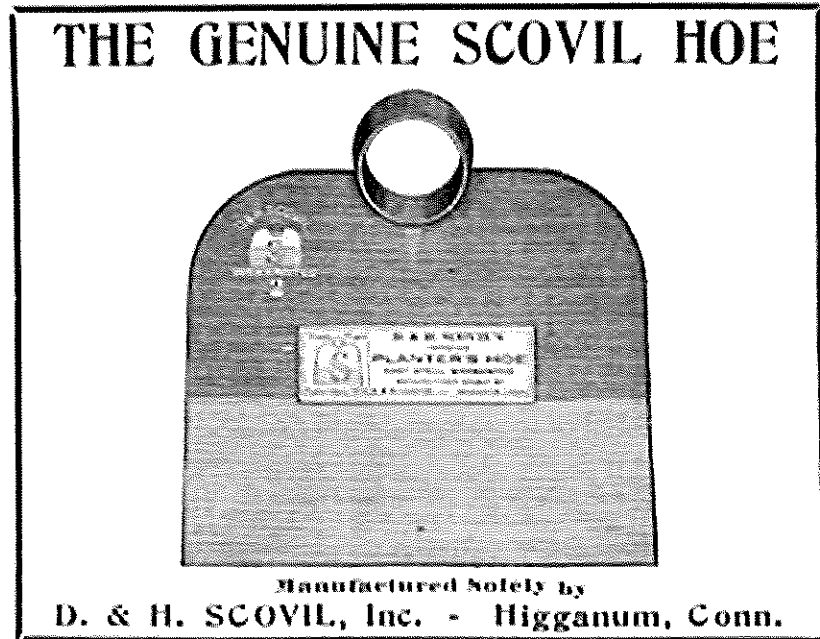
- Aging Demographics
- Limited Disposable Income
- High breakeven costs for new development
- Property ownership constraints
- Environmental restrictions
- Lack of connectivity
- Walkability limited by topography

The Town leadership wanted to create a pragmatic action plan and consider strategies that could be initiated with these constraints in mind. Several recent actions have made it possible to revisit new development and enhance current activities. These include the acquisition of the Higganum Elementary School (HES) property and the realistic possibility of developing a community septic system, the possibility of acquiring the Rossi property, the initial funding to clean up the Scovil Hoe site and the option to move the Town Garage from its current location. With these actions in mind, the two-day workshop aimed to create a realistic action plan for future enhancement of Higganum Center.

This report is structured in six sections. Section 1 describes the process and purpose of the Study. Section Two provides background information regarding the Study Area. Section Three summarizes the key issues and desires of the people that participated in the two day workshop. Section Four includes the plans prepared as a result of the Workshop. Section Five is a detailed road-map for short term actions necessary to put a plan in place to regenerate Higganum Center. Section Six includes closing remarks.

A public presentation of the draft recommendations of the report was held at the Haddam Fire Station on Saybrook Road on December 11, 2019. Portions of the report were revised and additional plans created. A copy of the presentation powerpoint is included in Appendix B.

## 2.0 Background Information





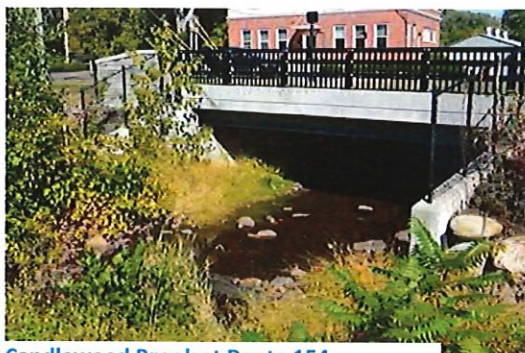
## 2.0 Background Information

Although Higganum is a much larger geographic area based on historic land uses and post office boundaries, for purposes of this study the study area for Higganum Center is limited to the commercial core as shown on Map 1. The study area, or Higganum Center, includes 29 lots or portions of lots and covers approximately 63+/- acres of land. There are approximately 35 structures or outbuildings within the study area which are primarily commercial or municipal uses. The largest properties are occupied, in decreasing size, by the Haddam Elementary School (HES), the Higganum Reservoir, the Rossi property, the Town Garage, Scovil Hoe, and the Village Shopping Center. As noted on Map 1, USGS/State of Connecticut GIS data sets the Route 154/81 intersection at approximately elevation 60'. The commercial core of the Center is located between elevation 56' and 65' with limited slopes which make it very walkable. The land drops lower along Depot Road as it continues north to the Higganum Cove (the Cove) and the Connecticut River (the River). The land rises to the east, west and south as Routes 81 and 154 (Saybrook Road) continue away from the commercial core. These roads rise at about 10% which makes for a steep walk. HES is located at elevation 95'+/- and the reservoir is also at elevation 95'+/-. Locally, the 100' contour has been identified as framing Higganum Center and is known as "The Bowl". Swan Hill is located to the northwest of HES and there are a series of trails from HES up to Swan Hill (elevation 293'+/-).



Village Shopping Center

There are three streams located within the Center- Candlewood Brook, which runs at the rear of Scovil Hoe; Ponset Brook which is the outlet of the Higganum Reservoir; and Bible Rock Brook which travels west to east behind HES. Ponset Brook and Candlewood Brook converge at the Town Garage site and then all three streams converge to the north of the Rossi site before traveling north to Higganum Cove.



Candlewood Brook at Route 154



Candlewood Brook behind Scovil Hoe



As noted in the Introduction, the Town has completed a number of studies of the study area for various purposes as noted on Map 2.

Map 3 identifies the current or recent uses of the existing buildings and properties within the Center and immediately adjacent lands.

Recent and on-going Town projects within the Study Area are noted on Map 4. These are the on-going work to replace the Dublin Hill Bridge and plans for the Candlewood Hill Road reconfiguration to address walkability and proximity to one of the Scovil Hoe buildings.

A Soils Map and Legend from the NRCS website also follows. This map shows that the existing commercial core of the Center is typically “man-made” soils or Udorthents. The stream corridors are generally Rippowan fine sandy loam soil which is a wetland soil. Soils uphill from the core are Hinckley loamy sand, which are excessively drained, and Paxton/Montauk fine sandy loam soils which are well drained.



1881 Map of Higganum

The Study Area includes a number of historic structures such as Village Market, Scovil Hoe, the churches just outside of the study area. There are a number of adjacent historic neighborhoods including Higganum Landing Historic District which are nearby but do not have usable pedestrian access into the Center except for the road system. The application, filed by the

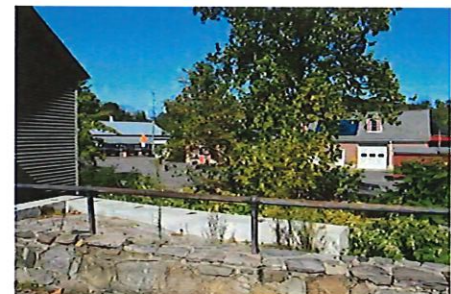


Town for the grant which funded this project, notes-

"Higganum possesses an eclectic mix of historic architecture. Simple cottages, formal estate homes, and smaller historic homes can be found side by side. These residences are evidence of Higganum's history as a successful port and shipbuilding center in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, followed by the development of industrial establishments when the shipping industry declined. Buildings that help to tell the story of commerce and industry in the village include the D & H Scovil Company buildings, the Higganum Grange and the Higganum Feed Store. Overall, Higganum has 71 historic buildings, which include the Higganum Methodist Church and Higganum Congregational Church, both built during the 1800s. Higganum is also home to one of the largest and most historic cemeteries in Haddam, the Old Higganum Cemetery.

The Higganum Landing National District Historic District is also located in Higganum Center. This District was an important New England shipbuilding community between 1752 and 1865. The subtle bend of the Connecticut River at this location created and still creates a natural harbor which was once a center for shipbuilding, trade and other related activities. Over 150 vessels were built at the Landing and were used in river and coastal trade as well as international voyages. Ships traveled to the West Indies, Europe, South America, China and participated in the economic growth of the area and nation. A number of these ships were used as warships and played a role in the country's fight for independence. Following construction of the railroad, Higganum's industrial center shifted inland and shipbuilding declined."

During the workshop and subsequent public presentation, the Consultant Team noted that there was conflicting information regarding the Town Garage with respect to both the property itself and what areas were being used. Figure 1, which follows this page, was prepared to show the location of the historic 1934 Town Garage Building on the Town Garage property. The Town Garage property consists of the 1935 building and several shed/outbuildings including a sand storage structure located at the northern end of the site. The site is a combination of paved and compacted earth surfaces used for drives, parking and storage of materials, equipment and vehicles. There are a few trees and shrubs which have grown on the streambank along the south and west edges of the site. There are no curbs along Depot Road and a car can pull off the road and park next to the chain link fence which surrounds the





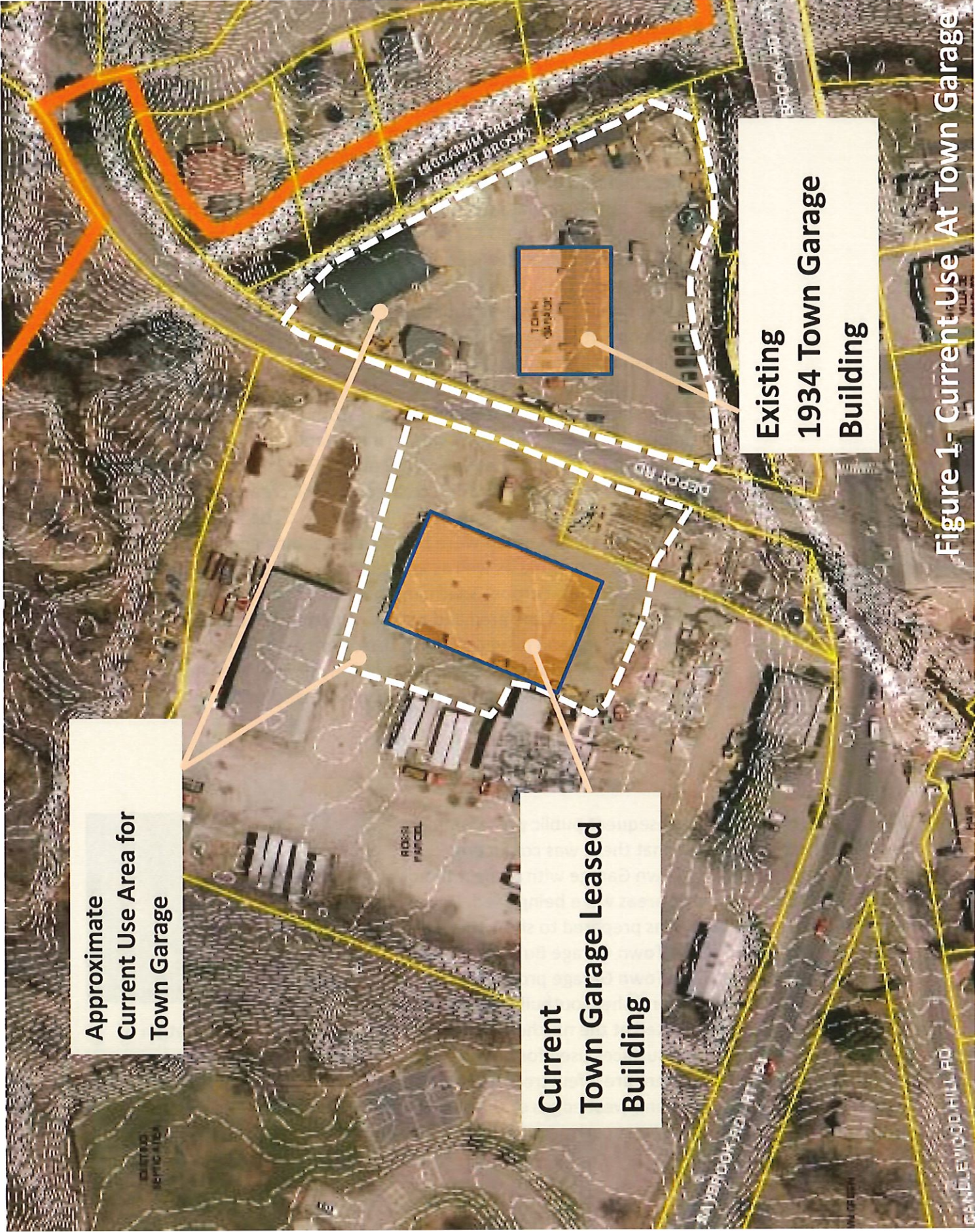


Figure 1- Current Use At Town Garage



building. In addition to the use of the Town Garage property, the Town is currently leasing the largest building on the Rossi property and the surrounding land for truck parking and storage. These two areas combined comprise the current “Town Garage”.

There are several site inventory plans prepared for the project by the students of the University of Hartford Architecture Department which are included in Appendix A. Sheet I-1 shows the current uses/businesses of properties within the Center. Sheet I-2 provides a series of aerial photos of the Center – 1934, 1957, 1990 and 2008. These aerial photos show the progression of land uses across time – from mostly farmed land in 1934 to the mostly wooded surrounding land that exists today; from residential property to occupancy as a school (HES); and the many changes to the intersection of Routes 154 and 91. Sheet I-3 includes photos of the larger buildings in the Center. Sheet I-4 identifies some of the historic structures in the Center and Sheet I-5 provides a brief history of the Center and Scovil Hoe.

The Consultant Team would note that the Town has prepared Village District Guidelines which includes guidance for architecture and design of new construction for Higganum Center. These Guidelines align closely with the discussion which occurred during the Workshop and appear to reflect majority opinion. A copy of these Guidelines is included in Appendix E.

## Day One Study Area

For purposes of Day One, Higganum Center was divided into four distinct areas that can be described as follows and shown on Map 5:

1. **The Former Higganum Elementary School Site.** The Town recently acquired the property which consists of a 30,000 square foot building with a commercial kitchen, gymnasium and multipurpose room on site. A portion of the property has soils suitable for a centralized community septic system. The site has the potential to be used by multiple tenants.
2. **The Town Garage Site and the Rossi Property.** The 1934 Town Garage is considered inadequate for a modern public works facility for a town the size of Haddam. The Town owned property can be repurposed if the garage is relocated. The town already leases a significant portion of the adjacent Rossi property and it may be acquired by the Town if so desired. The entire operation of the Town Garage could be moved to the Rossi Property allowing the existing Town Garage Site to be redeveloped to take better advantage of the brook and create streetscape improvements for a better connection to the Cove.
3. **The Scovil Hoe Site and the Town Green.** The Scovil Hoe Mill Site is a State owned historic site with significant environmental liabilities. The Town could acquire the site from the State. An extensive study for future use was undertaken but the price tag was substantial. The site lends itself to multiple uses. Limited environmental funds (\$200,000) are now available. The State Bond Commission should be allocating a new round of statewide competitive funding in the near future. The legislature authorized \$30 million.
4. **Property along Route 81 and the Saybrook Road south.** Infill opportunities exist to enclose the streetscape. Opportunities for unified/shared parking exist. Opportunities exist to extend sidewalks and provide better streetscape to improve the image and provide connections. Streetscape improvements would begin to tie the Center together and illustrate what the Center could look like.

In Day Two- The entire study area was used to encourage participants to think about the Center as a whole and not just puzzle pieces.





**SWAN HILL**  
**ELEV 293**

**HES**



HES

• GO

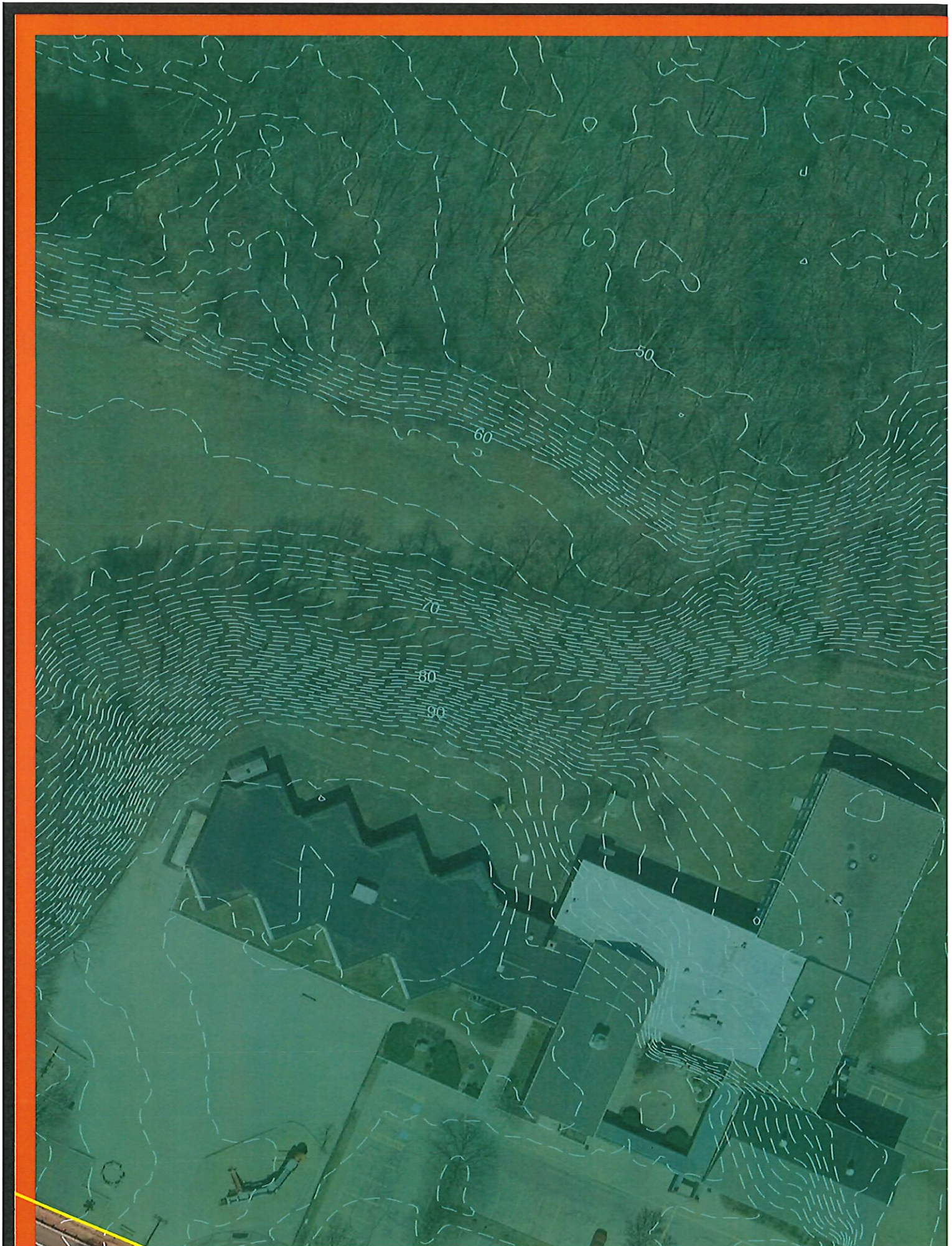
HES

• TOWN OWNS

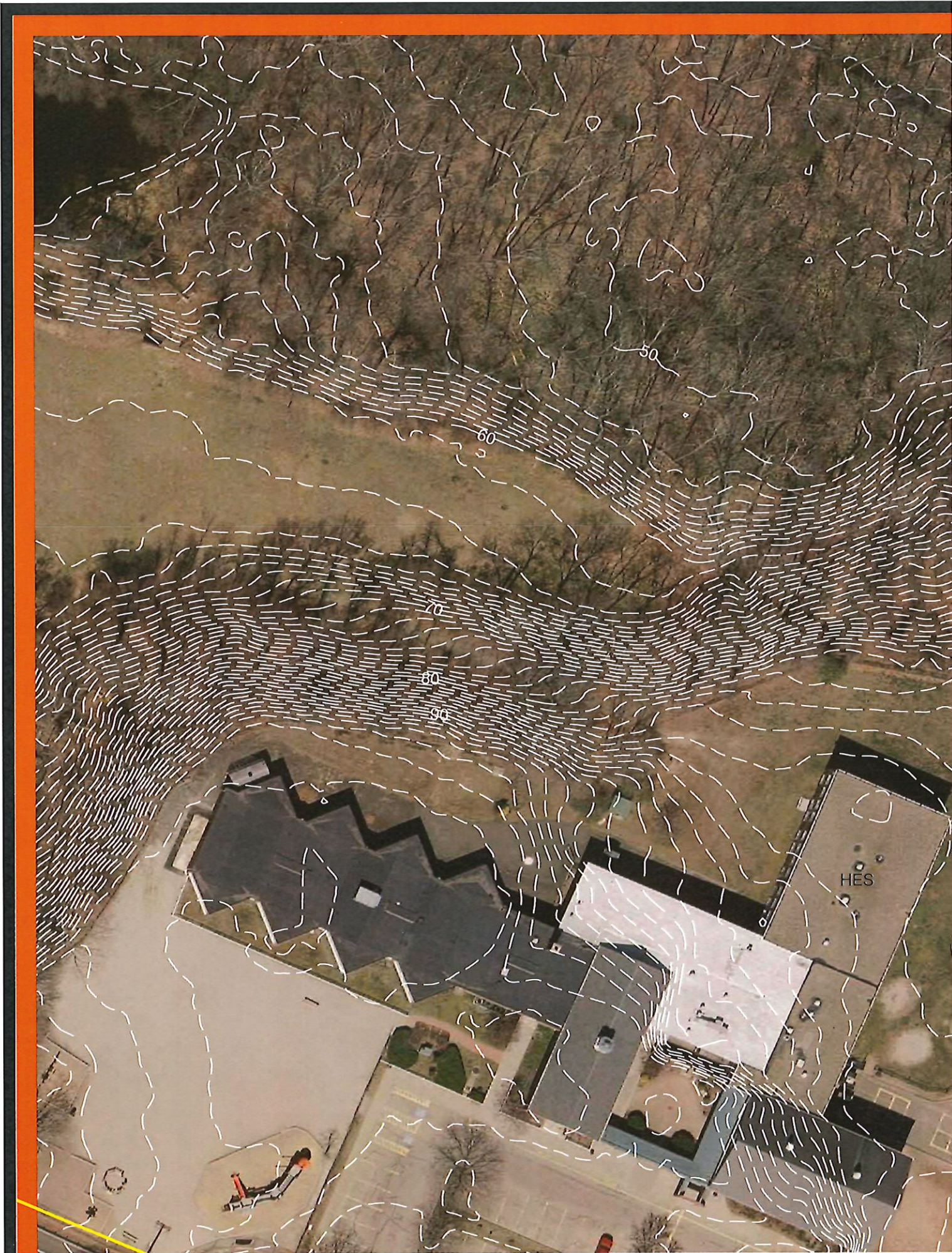


HES













**AREA 1**



Soil Map—State of Connecticut  
(Higginum Center Study)



Web Soil Survey  
National Cooperative Soil Survey

Natural Resources  
Conservation Service



## MAP LEGEND

- Area of Interest (AOI)**
- Area of Interest (AOI)
- Soils**
- Soil Map Unit Polygons
  - Soil Map Unit Lines
  - Soil Map Unit Points
- Special Point Features**
- Blowout
  - Borrow Pit
  - Clay Spot
  - Closed Depression
  - Gravel Pit
  - Gravelly Spot
  - Landfill
  - Lava Flow
  - Marsh or swamp
  - Mine or Quarry
  - Miscellaneous Water
  - Perennial Water
  - Rock Outcrop
  - Saline Spot
  - Sandy Spot
  - Severely Eroded Spot
  - Sinkhole
  - Slide or Slip
  - Sodic Spot
- Water Features**
- Streams and Canals
- Transportation**
- Rails
  - Interstate Highways
  - US Routes
  - Major Roads
  - Local Roads
- Background**
- Aerial Photography
- Special Line Features**
- Spill Area
  - Stony Spot
  - Very Stony Spot
  - Wet Spot
  - Other

## MAP INFORMATION

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:12,000.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Web Soil Survey URL:  
Coordinate System: Web Mercator (EPSG:3857)

Maps from the Web Soil Survey are based on the Web Mercator projection, which preserves direction and shape but distorts distance and area. A projection that preserves area, such as the Albers equal-area conic projection, should be used if more accurate calculations of distance or area are required.

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: State of Connecticut  
Survey Area Data: Version 19, Sep 13, 2019

Soil map units are labeled (as space allows) for map scales 1:50,000 or larger.

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Dec 31, 2009—Oct 30, 2017

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.



## Map Unit Legend












































Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	10.4	3.2%
29B	Agawam fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	7.7	2.4%
35B	Penwood loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	13.5	4.2%
37C	Manchester gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes	3.8	1.2%
37E	Manchester gravelly sandy loam, 15 to 45 percent slopes	6.9	2.1%
38C	Hinckley loamy sand, 3 to 15 percent slopes	3.3	1.0%
38E	Hinckley loamy sand, 15 to 45 percent slopes	25.8	8.0%
46B	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	1.9	0.6%
61B	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	3.6	1.1%
61C	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	17.5	5.4%
62D	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	2.4	0.7%
73C	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 0 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	41.4	12.8%
73E	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes, very rocky	10.5	3.2%
75E	Hollis-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	4.3	1.3%
84B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes	7.8	2.4%
85B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	39.2	12.1%
85C	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	20.7	6.4%

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres In AOI	Percent of AOI
86D	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	20.4	6.3%
100	Suncook loamy fine sand	1.8	0.6%
103	Rippowam fine sandy loam	49.0	15.2%
306	Udorthents-Urban land complex	26.7	8.2%
W	Water	4.9	1.5%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>323.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





## MAP LEGEND

<b>Area of Interest (AOI)</b>	<b>Area of Interest (AOI)</b>	<b>Excessively drained</b>
		
<b>Soils</b>	<b>Soil Rating Polygons</b>	<b>Some what excessively drained</b>
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		



## Drainage Class

Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	Poorly drained	10.4	3.2%
29B	Agawam fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	7.7	2.4%
35B	Penwood loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Excessively drained	13.5	4.2%
37C	Manchester gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes	Excessively drained	3.8	1.2%
37E	Manchester gravelly sandy loam, 15 to 45 percent slopes	Excessively drained	6.9	2.1%
38C	Hinckley loamy sand, 3 to 15 percent slopes	Excessively drained	3.3	1.0%
38E	Hinckley loamy sand, 15 to 45 percent slopes	Excessively drained	25.8	8.0%
46B	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Moderately well drained	1.9	0.6%
61B	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Well drained	3.6	1.1%
61C	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Well drained	17.5	5.4%
62D	Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	Well drained	2.4	0.7%
73C	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 0 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	Well drained	41.4	12.8%
73E	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes, very rocky	Well drained	10.5	3.2%
75E	Hollis-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	Well drained	4.3	1.3%

Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres In AOI	Percent of AOI
84B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	7.8	2.4%
85B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Well drained	39.2	12.1%
85C	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Well drained	20.7	6.4%
86D	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	Well drained	20.4	6.3%
100	Suncook loamy fine sand	Excessively drained	1.8	0.6%
103	Rippowam fine sandy loam	Poorly drained	49.0	15.2%
306	Udorthents-Urban land complex	Well drained	26.7	8.2%
W	Water		4.9	1.5%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>			<b>323.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Description

"Drainage class (natural)" refers to the frequency and duration of wet periods under conditions similar to those under which the soil formed. Alterations of the water regime by human activities, either through drainage or irrigation, are not a consideration unless they have significantly changed the morphology of the soil. Seven classes of natural soil drainage are recognized-excessively drained, somewhat excessively drained, well drained, moderately well drained, somewhat poorly drained, poorly drained, and very poorly drained. These classes are defined in the "Soil Survey Manual."

## Rating Options

*Aggregation Method:* Dominant Condition

*Component Percent Cutoff:* None Specified

*Tie-break Rule:* Higher

## 3.0 Findings Summary



Day One



Day Two



### 3.0. Findings Summary

#### 3.1 Day One

Over 160 people attended the first workshop held on October 31, 2019 from 6:30pm to 9pm. The participants were seated at 11 tables but due to the number of interested residents three additional tables were added to accommodate all who wanted to be seated. After initial remarks from Lizz Milardo, First Selectwoman, Mullin Associates lead a lively discussion of the study area with the participants. The findings from this workshop are as follows:

#### **On Natural Beauty – The River, Reservoir, the Cove and the Green**

The river, reservoir, cove, Swan Hill and streams are seen as hidden treasures and underutilized assets. There is much potential to link these natural assets to the Center. This includes improving view-sheds, creating trails that enhance pedestrian activity and perhaps encouraging small-scale businesses close by.

Similarly, the town green is underutilized and its purpose is not clear. There is a desire for a green but most want to see it more active. Some have expressed an interest in expanding it. Some have noted a possibility of moving it to the current Town Garage site. In its currently location, it needs to be better integrated into the fabric of the Center.



Gazebo on the Town Green

Increased street trees and open spaces along the Route 81 and Saybrook Road corridors are desired. Design guidelines could include a landscape plan to encourage further cohesion along these corridors and to link both sides of the corridor through street furniture, decorative crosswalks, way-finding signs and landscaping. The corridors could be linked with the regional trail network.

#### **On Higganum Center Character**

The historic character of the area is highly valued by the residents. There is support for further protection of the historic buildings along the corridor by providing proper historic designation and strengthening regulations to protect the milieu. This could include getting the buildings listed on the state or national historic register, creating a historic district or even strengthening the design guidelines in the zoning code for new development.

There is a strong sentiment that Higganum Center could act as the gateway that announces *this is Haddam*. Residents are interested in recreating a sense of a Center that reflects the historic nature of the Town. The Center should be a special place for local residents, with mixed uses, small shops, local restaurants, local artisans, and quality establishments that encourage the creative economy. The Center should be people oriented, pedestrian friendly and ensure easy access for those with disabilities. Retail markets should be integrated with residential activities and tourism.

**On the HES property.**

**COLE**

HES HES HES  
HES HES HES  
HES HES XHES

is the best

HES

HES drawing by Cole, HES student

The participants overwhelmingly agreed that the property should support the community septic system that would make additional development in Higganum Center feasible. In addition to the Community Septic System, ideas for community gardens, playgrounds, ballparks and other adult recreational uses were also suggested.

**On the Town Garage Site and the Rossi Property.**

There is consensus on the fact that the Town garage needs to be relocated. The response as to the new location for the garage, however, was mixed. One option included relocating the garage at the rear of the Rossi property if the property was acquired by the Town. Another option was to move it out of Higganum Center and perhaps co-locate it with the fire station.



Once the garage is moved, options to repurpose the Town site included use the site as open space, a visitor center, a rental center for bicycles, kayaks and paddle boats, small scale retail activities, a restaurant and residential uses.

Similarly, the Rossi property if acquired by the Town, could be repurposed for Town services (including the garage), residential uses (such as rental housing or small apartments and cottages for starter families or seniors), and commercial and retail functions along the front of the property. In all instances, the uses should be in scale with the current character of the Center. Connections and linkages as well as amenities are important.

### **On the Scovil Hoe Site**

The mill buildings were recognized for their architectural character. Participants acknowledge that the site needs environmental remediation and clean up before any repurposing of the site can take place. Once remediated, connections to the stream that runs behind the property are strongly desired. Uses include an arts and crafts center that supports artists and unique small shops, restaurants, brew pubs, as well as small scale residential uses. Ideas such as arts incubator and makers space were prominent.



Brewery at Scovil Hoe - U of H/Will Higson

### **Route 81 and the Old Saybrook Road**

Strong support was expressed for small scale retail and commercial uses included eco-tourism, the arts and crafts, and culinary focused businesses as infill. Similar support was noted for pursuing the reuse of the vacant bank building. There is a strong desire that a “complete streets” program be adopted. This would include sidewalks that meet national, state and local ADA standards, traffic-calming techniques, appropriate lighting on both sides, aesthetically appropriate way-finding signs and landscaping.



### 3.2 Day Two

Over 88 people attended the second workshop held on November 2, 2019 from 9am to noon. Approximately 40% of the participants for Day Two had attended Day One. The participants were seated at eleven tables at the Haddam Elementary School. After introductions by William Warner, the Haddam Town Planner, the project team made a short presentation similar to the first workshop looking at the reports and studies done in the past and emphasizing new opportunities that make the project viable now. These new opportunities are:

1. Haddam Elementary School is now under Town control. The school property has soil suitable for a community septic system of a limited but adequate size which will allow for some growth in the Center.

2. The school has a commercial kitchen which has the potential to be both a community resource and a leasable space.



Day Two Plan Work

3. The Town Garage, which is currently housed in Higganum Center, has use requirements that exceed the existing building on Depot Street and they are currently leasing space on the Rossi property.

4. The Scovil Hoe study is complete and the town has received some funding to begin the site clean up for future use and work with the state to transfer the property to the Town.

5. The 2016 Streetscape project is complete and people find the sidewalks, crosswalks and trees attractive and usable.

6. The Rossi property may be available for purchase by the Town.

A short summary of the results of the first workshop were presented which included consensus on the following:

1. HES is vital part of the Center and should be occupied. If it can't be a school (which is the first preference), it should be occupied as a community space as soon as possible.

2. The Rossi property could be used for a variety of new uses but the uses on the street (Saybrook Road and Depot Road) have the potential to change the character of the Center.
3. The Community Septic Area is an important element for growth in the Center.
4. Relocation of the Town Garage may result in positive changes for the Center.
5. Consider potential tax generating uses throughout the center and community uses at HES including incubator space, commercial kitchen, etc.
6. The Center needs more restaurants and reasons to come there- More Destinations!
7. The Scovil Hoe site may be best suited for artist/maker space. The negative is the environmental cleanup and cost before it becomes usable.
8. Trails, sidewalks, bike paths are needed to connect street, buildings and natural resources.



Coffee Shop- U of H/Samantha Ng

### What does the Community Value?

With this introduction, participants were asked a series of questions about Higganum Center and what they value about the place.

#### Question #1 - What makes Higganum Center Unique?

Responses:

- Three streams
- Close to the Connecticut River
- The Reservoir
- History/Historic Buildings
- Close to Middletown
- HES
- Close to the railroad

#### Question #2 - What role does Higganum Center have within the Town of Haddam?

Responses:

- Commercial Center
- Gathering Place
- Village Identity
- Events on the Green
- Community Heart



Question #3- What makes Higganum Center a good place to visit/shop/eat?

Responses: Everyone knows each other  
Anchored by churches on east and west  
Store owners give back to the community  
Grocery Store  
Free parking  
Safe/Walkable Streets  
Local Businesses

What else does it need?

Responses: It is not yet charming  
Fairly isolated, not connected  
Doesn't feel cohesive  
Doesn't have everything needed

Question #4- How important is it to expand shopping uses in Higganum Center?

Response:	Very Important	60%
	Important	30%
	Not important	10%

Question #5- How important is to expand restaurant uses in Higganum Center?

Response:	Very Important	65%
	Important	28%
	Not important	7%

Question #6 – What makes Higganum Center a good place to work?

Responses: Limited opportunities for employment  
Business owners supportive of community but not large  
Need more employment opportunities

How important is it to expand employment opportunities in Higganum Center?

Response:	Very Important	79%
	Important	20%
	Not Important	1%

Question #7- What makes Higganum Center a good place to live?

Responses: The people  
Proximity to major city/hwy  
Walkable  
Pretty/Rural Environment  
Natural Resources (streams,  
cove, Connecticut River,  
reservoir)  
Close to bridge across the  
Connecticut River  
Great grocery store/hardware store/existing businesses  
Business owners committed to town  
Plenty of lunch options  
Access to trails

How important is it to expand Housing options in Higganum Center?

Response:	Very Important	60%
	Important	20%
	Not Important	10%

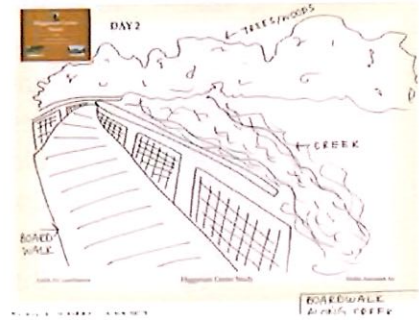
Housing Issues noted: no rental options, need variety of housing, bring generations together in Center.

Question #8- How important is it to expand/green/recreation uses in Higganum Center?

Response:	Very Important	90%
	Not Important	10%



Over 90% of the participants agreed that new growth (employment, retail and restaurant use) was needed and would be supported within the Center. New housing was also generally supported (80% very important/important) but the discussion about this topic indicated that support was dependent on the type of units, density, targeted occupants, and architecture. 90% of the participants supported using trails, green space and connections to the existing natural resources as the means to focus attention to the Center and, perhaps, identify uses (kayak rentals, etc) to occupy new leasable space and enhance/create a distinctive identity for the Center- a kind of “Green Heart” for Higganum and the Town of Haddam.



Connect Natural Resources-  
U of H/Elaina Zayak

Participants were then asked to consider the architecture in the Center. It was generally considered attractive and at an appropriate scale for what is there but there was a majority who felt that the existing architecture still lacked a “wow factor”. The group generally felt that new construction, done historically consistent, but with modern methods and materials could add a sense of style using rich materials and providing connections that don’t currently exist between and within properties.

There was also a brief discussion about walkability. Most participants were interested in views to the river, streams, reservoir and cove but understood that, topographically, walking to these various natural resources would be a challenge. Just walking from church to church was an exercise and somewhat limited the long term walkability of the Center. However, additions and improvement of walkability throughout the center was considered to be desirable. The 2016 sidewalk project was considered to be a good start but more was needed.

The look of and role of traditional town centers was discussed. The participants generally agreed that Higganum was unique and should not try to emulate any specific town but should use this opportunity to do the following:

1. Create/Enhance the identity of the Center
2. Provide Connections
3. Provide a variety of uses
4. Provide something for everyone not just single age groups
5. Embrace the Unique

## Working on the Plans

Based on the first workshop and the day's discussion, the group was given three directives to help guide their efforts for the plan preparation coming next. They were:

1. Respect the existing business and property owners
2. Build on what was good
3. Connect to and enhance natural features

Participants were then encouraged to create a series of three plans which focused on specific issues or dominate ideas and then produce a fourth plan that brought together all their best ideas. The plans generated by each table were:

### 1. Maximize grand list/growth-

Using a premade kit which included a predetermined amount of future development based on future sewer capacity- participants were asked to identify uses for each part of the study area and what and where new development should occur. This plan was the most difficult for the participants as it required they identify their vision for the future and determine what they felt was acceptable change. The discussions were quite lively and identified areas where there was not true consensus. The ideas of what and where should happen in the future varied from group to group and is summarized in Table 1.

### 2. Destinations and focal points- What would make the Center More Lively?

After the first plan, this one seemed like a relief for most participants as most tables found they had more in common than they thought. Participants were asked to identify where events did or should occur, where there should be more activity and where visual and use focal points should go. Areas of common agreement are identified in Table 2.



Table 13- Plan 2



### 3. Connections

This plan was considered the most fun as everyone got in the action identifying future locations for sidewalks, bike paths and needed additional handicap accessibility. This plan shows the most consensus across all the tables as participants started to agree on the need to connect everything! New walkways/ trails along streams, extended throughout and beyond the center became an important opportunity and by product of the potential for new development. Depot Road, the Rossi property and the disposition of the Town Garage began to rise to the top of how the character of the Center could be improved for the future, see Table 3.



Table 2- Plan 3

### 4. Our Best Ideas

This final plan allowed participants to revisit all their ideas, including the ones where consensus had not quite been reached and look for how the whole Center would look in the future. Using all the kits from the previous plans, the Final Plan was used to identify, locate and layout where things would change for the future. New uses were identified, new buildings were located and in some cases, new road connections and parking design. There was 100% consensus regarding



Table 14- Plan 4

expansion of sidewalks and trails throughout and beyond the Center. The Rossi property was determined to be a critical role in new construction and possibly relocating the town garage. The Town Garage site was either used as commercial space with a stream walk component or as a park/expansion of the Town Green. New housing options were considered on the Rossi property, Town Garage site and above new mixed retail throughout the center. There was some interest in a recent residential property on Route 81 which is currently for sale as it provides the vegetated backdrop to the Center and additional opportunities for

alternate housing types. See Table #4 for a summary of the Best Idea plans.

The plans prepared by the tables are attached in the Appendix.

Overall, there was significant consensus on a variety of topics- not quite as much as Day One but still consistent with those conclusions. Day Two had less emphasis on HES than on Day One as the focus was the Center as a whole but those Day One thoughts -as a school first and then as a community center- still resonated. A certain urgency to keep the HES building occupied was starting to become clear as participants saw firsthand the condition of the building. The topic where there was the liveliest discussion was the future use of the Rossi property and what to do with the Town Garage. 100% consensus was not possible but there was a significant majority opinion which is reflected in the attached tables attached to this section. Based on both Day One and Day Two there was 80% consensus to remove the Town Garage from its current location and relook at the property. Approximately 50% of the participants were in favor of moving the Town Garage to the Rossi property and 50% were in favor of moving it out of the Center entirely. The Consultant Team would note that although the report might seem to be repeating itself from one workshop day to another, it is unusual for there to be this much consensus among participants and that the consistency of opinions is an excellent starting place to build on the ideas generated during the Workshops.

Based on the Day Two plans, discussion and consensus from Day One, the following is a list items to be used to prepare plans in the section below.

- Provide more trails and sidewalks. Connect at the street in an obvious and attractive way.
- Develop Town Green to allow more and varied events. Add trails/connections to sidewalks in vicinity
- Provide streambank trails where possible
- Develop access to Cove, River, and Railroad.
- Expand sidewalks beyond just core of Center
- HES as school preferred. If not a school, then community uses should be allowed/encouraged
- HES- take advantage of commercial kitchen
- HES- expand/enhance playground
- HES- Dog Park
- Scovil Hoe- artist/maker space and/or brewery
- Provide Green space at Town Garage site
- Provide housing or maker space at Town Garage site/ consider Rehab/reuse of building. Define curb cuts.



- Infill shops along Route 81 and at Village Market. Connect parking and sidewalks. Provide a streambank trail behind buildings
- Vacant bank to be restaurant
- Move town garage either to Rossi or out of center
- Find a way to use reservoir more and make an asset/destination as part of Center
- Rossi property – Mixed Use (retail at street with residential above) along Saybrook Road
- Rossi property – put visually challenged uses behind new buildings
- Rossi property – new buildings along Depot Road to create new streetscape
- Rossi property- add restaurant uses to mixed use
- Rossi property – visually connect new buildings to streetscape
- Rossi property- residential units above mixed use or in middle/rear of site
- Rossi property- possible Town Garage use in rear
- Depot Road- create curb and walkways to connect to existing 81/154 streetscape and then toward Cove
- Route 81- provide streambank path
- Route 81- provide sidewalks to and between buildings, share parking



Mixed Use - U of H/Randy Begin

Hlgganum Center Study- Day 2 Table Discussion Summary – **PLAN 1**[illegible]





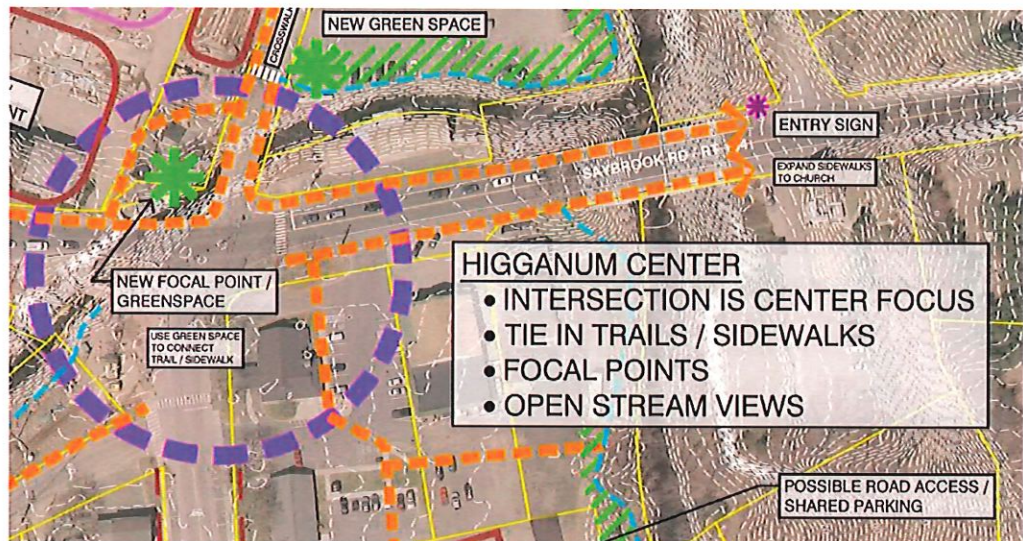
Higganum Center Study- Day 2 Table Discussion Summary – **PLAN 3**

TABLE NUMBER	HES	Scovil Hoe	Town Green	Candlewood Hill Road	Swan Hill	Streetscape to HES	Rossi Property Frontage	Rossi Property Middle	Rossi Property Rear	Depot Road Frontage	Connections to Cove, Railroad and River	Town Garage Property	Intersection Improvements	Saybrook Road to Church
<b>Table 1, 10, 11, 12- no</b>														
<b>Table 2</b>	Community events	Artists and youth oriented	Leave as green	Add sidewalk HCA		Add sidewalk HCA	shops		Town Garage	S/B/HCA	S/B/HCA	Playground restrooms	Shop focal point at corner of Depot	Sidewalk
<b>Table 3</b>	Create Park behind school				Connect Trail to sidewalks						Bike Path			
<b>Table 4</b>	Make a Landmark	Existing Landmark		Make one-way Sidewalks		Extend sidewalks to church	Provide landmark architecture						Make center a focal point	sidewalk
<b>Table 5</b>	Town Offices Playground	Picnic tables Bike Path along Brook	Connect to swan hill and SH	Trail along brook not road		Sidewalks Bike Path HCA						Sidewalks Bike Path HCA Town Park	Sidewalks Bike Path HCA	sidewalk
<b>Table 6</b>	Add sidewalks and HCA	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Connect to Swan Hill and SH	Sidewalks/ Bike Path		Sidewalks HCA	shops		Connect with Brook	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Connect through Center			Sidewalk / Bike Path
<b>Table 7</b>	Recreation	Shops Recreation	Events start here	Sidewalks	Connect trail to center	Sidewalks	shops			Greenway		Dog Park	Open view of brooks	sidewalk
<b>Table 8</b>	Septic system Trail head for Swan Hill	Create destination		Add sidewalks/ Bike Path	Connect Swan Hill to streetscape	Add sidewalks/ bike path					Connect res to river			
<b>Table 9</b>	Community Center Tennis courts	Add Bike Path	Leave as is	Bike Path		Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Shops Sidewalks / Bike Path		Recreation activities	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path to features and Res.	Sidewalk s/ Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalk / Bike Path
<b>Table 13</b>			Destination for events			Extend sidewalks				Sidewalks Bike Path	Improve HCA everywhere			Bike Path
<b>Table 14</b>				Sidewalks Bike Path HCA	Create Overlook	Sidewalks Bike Path HCA				Bike Path Sidewalk	Connect to all destinations		Create Focal Point at Depot Road	Sidewalk Bike Path HCA
<b>Table 15</b>			Destination for events		Connect trail to sidewalk	Sidewalks				Sidewalk Bike Path	Sidewalks Bike Path			Bike path



TABLE NUMBER		HES	Scovil Hoe	Town Green	Candlewood Hill Road	Swan Hill	Streetscape to HES	Rossi Property Frontage	Rossi Property Middle	Rossi Property Rear	Depot Road Frontage	Connections to Cove, Railroad and River	Town Garage Property	Intersection Improvements	Saybrook Road to Church
<b>Table 1,10,11,12- no</b>															
<b>Table 2</b>		Community Center Theatre Amphitheatre	Artist and youth oriented uses parking	Parades		Connect trail to street	Sidewalks HCA	Mixed Use Housing above	Park	Town Garage	Corner focal Point greenway along road	Sidewalks/ Bike Path HCA	Park Play Area Restrooms	Sidewalks/ Bike Path HCA	Sidewalks/ HCA
<b>Table 3</b>		Community Center Add Parking	Artist Studios		Add sidewalks concerts	Connect to Center and streams	Make more park like add trees	Stores	Parking	Town Garage with screening	Bike Path to Cove	Connect to center and HES	Use Ex. Bldg for Mixed Use/ Create Park	Extend Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalks
<b>Table 4</b>		School Community Center Community gardens Playfields	Shops Rest. Indoor sports Theatre parking	Sidewalk connecting to HES to SH	Sidewalks		Sidewalks	Bank Shops with units above	Parking and green	Town garage	Greenway	Greenway	Park Maker space in ex. bldg	sidewalks	sidewalks
<b>Table 5</b>		Town Hall Senior Center Youth and family activities Playground HCA septic	Artists incubator space (+/-) only if extra septic available NOT CONSENSUS	septic	Greenway along brook not street			Shops with units above	parking	Town Garage (+/-) NOT CONSENSUS	Housing	Greenway to River	Housing along street Park access to brook	Connect greenway along brook	sidewalks
<b>Table 6</b>		School Athletic fields Septic system	Maker Space Artist studios 2 <sup>nd</sup> fl Resd	Connect to Swan Hill and SH	Bike Path	Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Rest. Shops	Skate Park Bike shop Bait and Tackle Kayak rental	Access to stream	Connect to cove	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Multi- gen housing	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path
<b>Table 7</b>		Community Multi use Visitors Center Restrooms	Maker Space Destination	100 events per year	Add Trees along Street	Connect to street /center	Sidewalks	Rest at corner shops apts	Parking	Parking	Add trees sidewalk Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path HCA	Dog Park	Path along Brook	Sidewalks/ Bike Path
<b>Table 8</b>		Culinary Institute Community Use Playground Dog Park	Artists studio Farmer's market Add parking		Connect sidewalks and bike path between HES and SH	Connect to HES and SH	Add sidewalks and Bike path	Shops and 10 units above	Parking – Create green space between front and rear	Town Garage	Sidewalks and Bike Path	Connect everything in obvious way	12 units residential	Extend Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalks
<b>Table 9</b>		YMCA Community Space Playground Kitchen Tennis	Quincy Market and Resd.	Bike Path	Add Bike Path/ Sidewalk to SN	Connect to green and street	Sidewalks/ Bike Path Add trees on street	Shops and apt above	Parking	Parking	Add trees Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Park Maker space in old garage bldg.. Parking	Add focal points Sidewalks/ Bike Path	Sidewalks/ Bike Path
<b>Table 13</b>		Septic system School	Sports center/parking with access to Res. And HES	View from gazebo to River	New Sidewalks Bike Path	More obvious connection	Bike path connect to swan hill	Mixed use/ condos	Parking		Bike Path	Bike Path and open up line of sight to cove and river	Visitor center/ rentals	Connect bike path	Bike path

# 4.0 Recommendations from the Consultant Team- Concept Plans



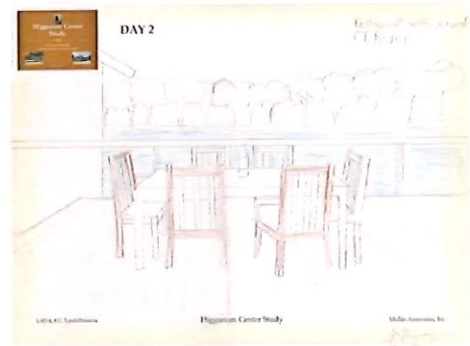


## 4.0 Recommendations from the Consultant Team - Concept Plans

Using the list in Section 3 above, LADA, P.C Land Planners prepared a series of plans to reflect the workshop results.

### Connections Plan

Map 6 identifies locations for future sidewalk/bikepath connections within the Center and beyond. The discussion identified the need to consider connections beyond just the businesses in the Center, such as the Blue/Green Way. These larger or regional connections would not only provide a solid identity for the Center- “where all the trails meet”- but would also allow for visitors and residences to be able to connect to other neighborhoods (both the nearby historic neighborhoods and those further away) and other parts of town.



Overlooking the CT River- U of H/John Turner

### Concept Plan

The ideas identified in the list above are used to start to locate and give them physical form in Map 7. Streambank trails, connections to the reservoir and new sidewalk connections are shown in dashed orange (sidewalk/bikepath) and blue (trail) lines. Possible infill retail buildings in the Center are shown as reddish squares. Connecting the existing parking on the east side of Route 81 creates a “second block” opportunity for these longer lots. The large purple circle highlights the intersection of 154 and 81 as a main focal point and starting point of the trails and sidewalks. Reflecting the concerns of the participants, HES is identified as a critical element whose disposition should be part of the Town’s 90 day action plan. Potential new construction on the Rossi property has been identified and the Town Garage site is proposed to be moved to either the Rossi property or out of the Center. New entry/gateway sign locations are identified on Saybrook Road and Route 81. The Connections Plan looks at the Center as a whole and considers all the properties within for future action.

LADA then looked at the Town Garage site and the Rossi Properties in more detail.

### Rossi Property/Town Garage Site- Possible Site Plan Options

LADA, P.C. Land Planners prepared four possible site development scenarios for the Rossi Site and Town Garage property based on the assumption that the Town Garage is to be moved to the Rossi Site or relocated out of the center. The four alternatives – Option 1 which provides for new mixed use and residential development, Option 2 which maintains the existing building

on Saybrook Road, Option 3 which maintains the Town garage building for rehabilitation and reuse and Option 4 which considers moving the Town Garage out of the Center completely. The intent of all these plans is two fold- to work within the potentially available sewer flow limits and to create practical solutions that could be financially viable projects either a separate pieces or as a whole done in phases by potentially multiple developers. According to the Camoin Market Analysis, approximately 17,000sf of commercial space and 180 residential units throughout town targeted to baby boomers interested in downsizing could be supported by the existing market if rents and sales prices are at apppoint to support new construction. However, the new septic areas available would not support that level of residential use within the Center and a practical unit count is much lower. Based on the workshop discussion, the units preferred would be second floor units above retail space or cottage type homes but either way, the idea of integrating these units into the fabric of the Center is critical to create the vibrant living environment envisioned during these discussions.

#### Option 1- Map #8

Option 1 redesigns both properties with new buildings on Saybrook Road and Depot Street. The Town Garage is moved to the rear of the Rossi Site which opens up the Town Garage property for a new 3600+/-sf restaurant and Visitors Center and associated parking. This parking would also be public parking and provide access to the streambank trail which would follow Candlewood Brook and Higganum Creek (Ponset Brook) and eventually continue along the road to the Cove and River. A large deck would provide Stream views.

Along Saybrook Road, new mixed use buildings would create a new streetscape at this location. Due to the change in topography from Saybrook Road back into the Rossi site, the streetside would be higher with a lower floor to the rear with parking at the rear. The floor elevation at streetside would dictate the height and usability of this lower floor but a preliminary look indicates between an 8' -12' high interior space. The lower floor could be mix of retail/services, such as a yoga studio, and office uses.

Responding to the discussion about introduction of cottage homes into the Center, Option shows nine cottage homes around a private greenspace in the space between the mixed use and the relocated Town Garage.



Streambank Trail- U of H/Damoy Porteus



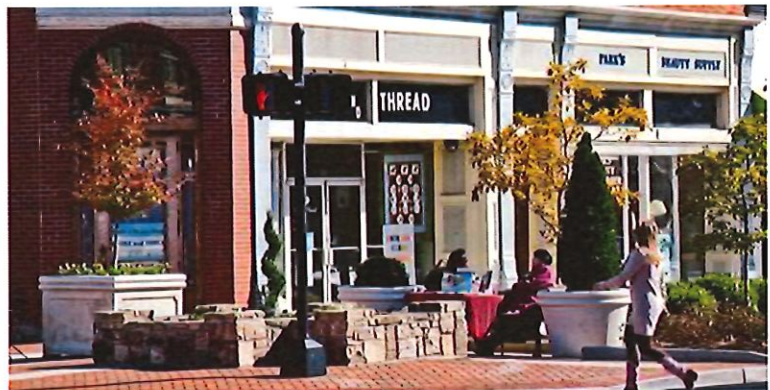


This plan highlights a number of elements that continue in the subsequent Options. Sidewalks and trails are shown in all scenarios. It has become clear that defining the road edge and limiting curb cuts on Depot Road will help to define the streetscape and enhance pedestrian access. The Consultant Team would note that there is no defined pedestrian access from Saybrook Road to Depot Road- the sidewalks end on both sides and the crosswalks direct all travelers across Saybrook Road. Given the change of elevation, it will be necessary to direct pedestrians down toward the rear of the mixed use buildings and use that change of grade to get access to both the stream as it crosses under the roads and Depot Road. A visual focal point- probably 20' tall or more- should be placed at the Saybrook Road/Depot Road intersection to provide a landmark for that intersection. Entry signs should be included as part of any plan.

A cross-section at Depot Road is provided as Exhibit 5.

#### Option 2- Map #9

The loss of existing buildings in Option 1 seems unacceptable and Option 2 starts to remedy this. In Option 2, the existing one story brick building on Saybrook Road remains as well as use of one of the larger buildings on the Rossi property for the Town



Garage, although not the building currently being used. In addition, more room for the Town Garage was needed. In Option 2, a new 15,000+/- sf Mixed Use building is proposed on Saybrook Road. An exterior stair/ramp feature is added to get people down to the rear and to access Depot Road. The drive access allows for through traffic flow of the Town Garage and defined parking areas for the various uses. Depot Road has a second 15,000+/- sf Mixed Use building. Both Mixed Use buildings would have residential units above on the upper floor. A second housing type- either townhouses or two story flats could be constructed on the Town Garage site with a public park with trails wrapping around those units. This plan has a 30,000 sf Mixed Use component, a limited lower level use of 10,000sf, a 2000+/- sf Coffee Shop restaurant and approximately 20-30 units of housing. This Option would require approximately 15,000gpd of sewer use, which is the largest of all three Options.

A cross-section at Depot Road is provided as Exhibit 6.



### Option 3- Map #10

Option 3 is the preferred plan for the future development of the Rossi Site and Town Garage if the Town Garage remains in the Center. This plan provides for mixed use (2-3 stories) buildings on Saybrook Road with an extended sidewalk/streetscape between the road and buildings. The existing one story brick building has been preserved as part of this option but access will need to be reconfigured as the building is not handicap accessible from the streetside. Due to the change in grade between Saybrook Road and the back of the Rossi property, a lower level usable floor is likely unless the area is filled to match the street elevation. This drop in elevation will allow for access from Depot Road at street level to parking at the rear of the buildings. Due to the proximity of the traffic light, DOT is unlikely to allow on-street parking which would be desirable so access to that level will have to be provided inside the building from below or via the exterior sidewalk/ramp system shown. To maintain the streetscape building line, curb cuts on Saybrook Road have been eliminated. The northwest corner of the intersection at the southeast side of the Rossi property has been designated as a park/plaza area with views of the stream and connections between Saybrook Road and Depot Road. A visual focal point- sculpture, clock, fountain, etc.- should be placed here at the termination of the axis/view from Route 81.

The Town Garage use will be moved to the existing building that the Town currently leases and the area to the north. The building will be given a face lift to resemble a barn and the unattractive collection of materials and vehicles will be moved behind the building.



Depot Road should be upgraded with curbs, sidewalks, trees, light poles, etc. as shown in Exhibit 8. New construction on the Rossi site will extend the fabric of the Center and create a new way to connect the intersection, streams and future use of the existing Town Garage building. The upgrade of this road from informal driveway to mixed use street is critical to defining and upgrading the image of and connectivity within the Center. Defined and limited curb cuts would define traffic flow and reinforce the pedestrian environment

On the Town Garage property, a streambank trail and adjacent green space would start a new trail system, open up views of the stream, reduce impervious surface and establish a green corridor around and through the Center. The parking around the existing Town Garage building would be redesigned to be more effective. The historic Town Garage building could be renovated into a pub/brewery or other restaurant.



A cross-section at Depot Road is provided as Exhibit 7.



#### Option 4- Map #11

Unlike the other options, Option 4 is based on the removal of the Town Garage out of the Center. In this case, it is assumed that the Town does not purchase the Rossi property and the future development of the Rossi property is dependent on the owners desire to develop the property as shown on Option 4 or other options. The other alternate is that the Town purchases the property and then seeks a developer to develop the parcel as shown in these options. In either case, Option 4 attempts to show what level of development might be supported by both the potential sewer capacity available and a reflection of the public sentiment from the workshops. Option 4 includes 14,000+/- sf of mixed use space on the Rossi property along Saybrook Road and retains the existing brick building. This existing building can continue to house the current tenants or be reused as another retail use or small restaurant/coffee shop. The buildings along Saybrook Road would be one-two stories above the Road elevation and another floor below to meet the existing grades. The lower floor would house uses such as yoga or martial arts studios or less intensive other uses not currently in the Center. The upper floor would house approximately 9-10 one and two bedroom units. On the corner of Saybrook Road and Depot Road is a 3500 sf one story office/retail building that would provide a visual termination of the view from Route 81. This may be tower located at the end of the building, a loft type space with a view or other architectural elements to raise the profile of that building high enough to provide that visual termination and interact with the plaza at the lower level and along the stream. These three structures would generate approximately 3000 gallons of sewage per day. The residential units would generate 2300 gallons per day.



With the Town Garage out of the center, the remainder of the Rossi property could be used for cottage style units. This plan shows a cottage development of 18 units in both attached and detached styles. Many participants indicated a desire to live “downtown” to be part of the activity of the Center. Each unit is a two bedroom unit of approximately 1200sf on a single floor or with an upper loft. This type of unit would generate 5400 gallons per day which is approximately the same as all the new square footage on Saybrook Road.

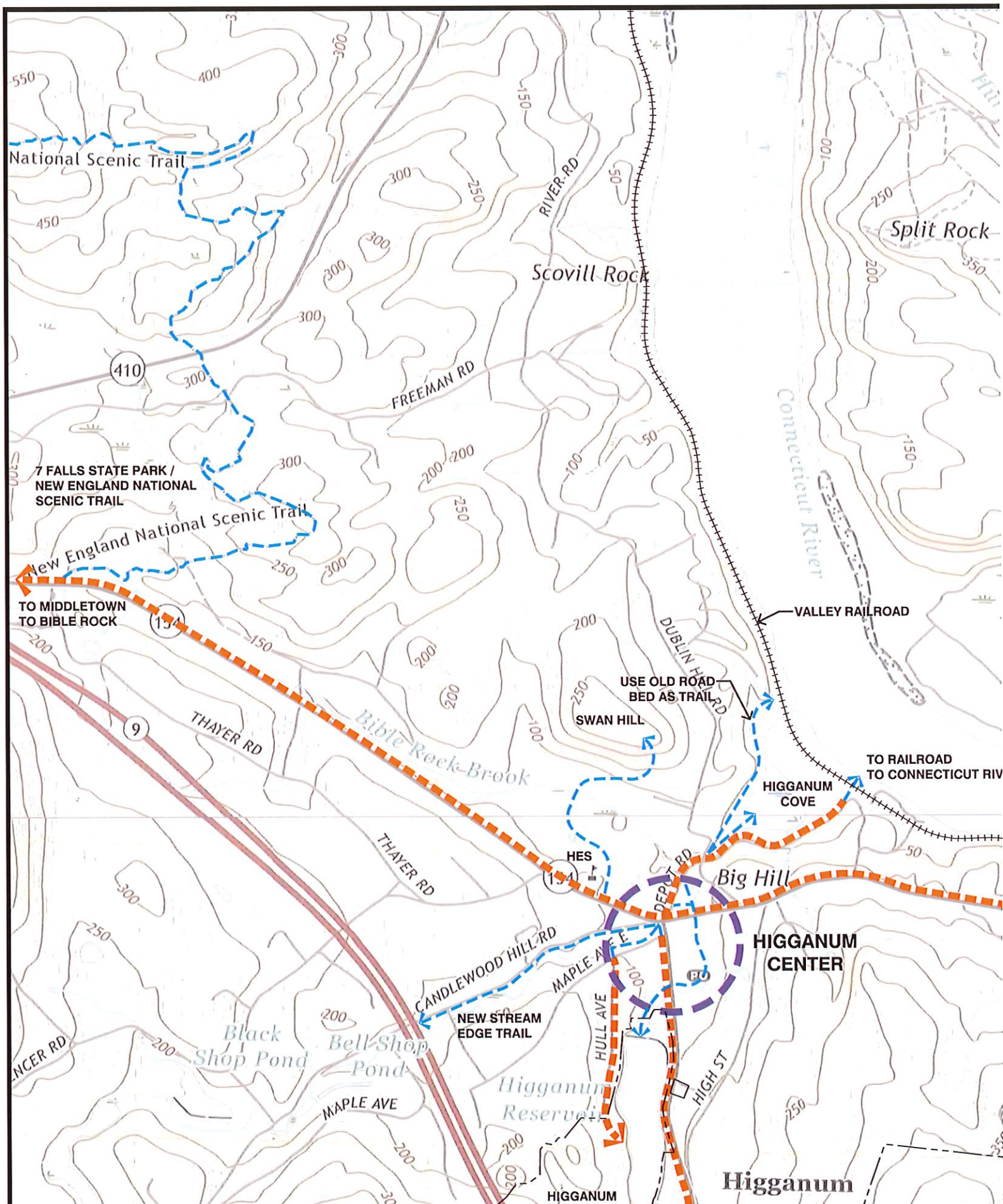
The former Town Garage building would be renovated and reused as a restaurant or visitors center or place to make and sell/rent water sports equipment (boats/kayaks, etc.). Use as a restaurant will generate the most sewage per day. Retail generates the least.

Depending on the number of units and the amount of restaurant space, the plan shown as Option 4 would generate between 10,000 – 12,500 gallons per day of sewage which

is the maximum allocated for this area to allow for additional capacity for Scovil Hoe and other uses/new construction elsewhere in the Center.

The above options give the Town the opportunity to consider a phased approach to the Town Garage use and location. Phase One could be the expanded use of the leased space at the Rossi property. This could be done with minimal cost to the Town and allow time for the sewer system to be implemented and extend sewer lines to Depot Road. While the Town Garage Use is moved to Rossi, the existing building could be renovated and reused, the impervious surface reduced and the streambank trail developed. The development of additional sewer lines and the Mixed Use at the Rossi property could be Phase 2. Eventually, the Town Garage could be phased out of the Center if a suitable location and additional funds were available. Thinking in a phased approach allows the town the time to consider other locations, stay focused on the implementation of the new septic system and capacity and make a determination regarding the purchase of the Rossi property while the septic system is being installed.







### HES

- KEEP OCCUPIED
- COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS / USE
- EXPAND PLAYGROUND
- DOG PARK
- COMMUNITY KITCHEN
- TRAILS

EXPAND SIDEWALKS TO DUNKIN'

ENTRY SIGN

START TRAIL SYSTEM /  
SIDEWALK INTERFACE  
ON STREET

EXPAND SIDEWALK  
BAYBROOK RD / RT 153

FUTURE SSDA

POSSIBLE NEW  
GARAGE LOCATION

NEW RESIDENTIAL /  
PARKING

NEW STREETSCAPE /  
MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

NEW STREETSCAPE /  
MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

RELOCATE  
TOWN GARAGE

REHAB / REUSE  
BUILDING

NEW GREEN SPACE

GANDLEWOOD HILL RD

SCOVIL HOE CLEANUP /  
REHAB FOR USE

BRIDGE CROSSING

GANDLEWOOD BROOK

MAPLE AVE

STREAM TRAIL

ROLL AVE

NEW FOCAL POINT /  
GREENSPACE

USE GREEN SPACE TO  
CONNECT  
TRAIL / SIDEWALK

HIGGA

- INT
- TIE
- FOC
- OPE

CONNECT PARKING LOTS  
PROVIDE SIDEWALKS

CONNECT SIDEWALKS  
WITHIN PARKING

ENCOURAGE  
INFILL ON  
STREET

POSSIBLE  
NEW  
BUILDING

POSSIBLE  
NEW  
BUILDING

POSSIBLE  
NEW  
BUILDING

POSSIBLE  
NEW  
BUILDING

EXPAND SIDE  
FROM STREET





Hand-drawn site plan for a proposed development. The plan shows a large 'Town Garage' on the left, a central '9 Cottage Homes' building, and a '21,000 sq ft Mixed Use' building on the right. The site is bordered by 'SAYBROOK RD / RT 154' at the bottom and 'ANDLEWOOD HILL RD' on the right. A 'Crestwood Frontport' is indicated near the top right. The plan includes parking spaces (21, 34, 52), landscaping (trees, shrubs), and a 'Screen Planting' area. A note mentions 'Shawville Bros. Acoustic Bridge for Pedestrians'.

### ALICE: A multilingual



SWAN HILL  
ELEV 293



BIBLE ROCK BROOK



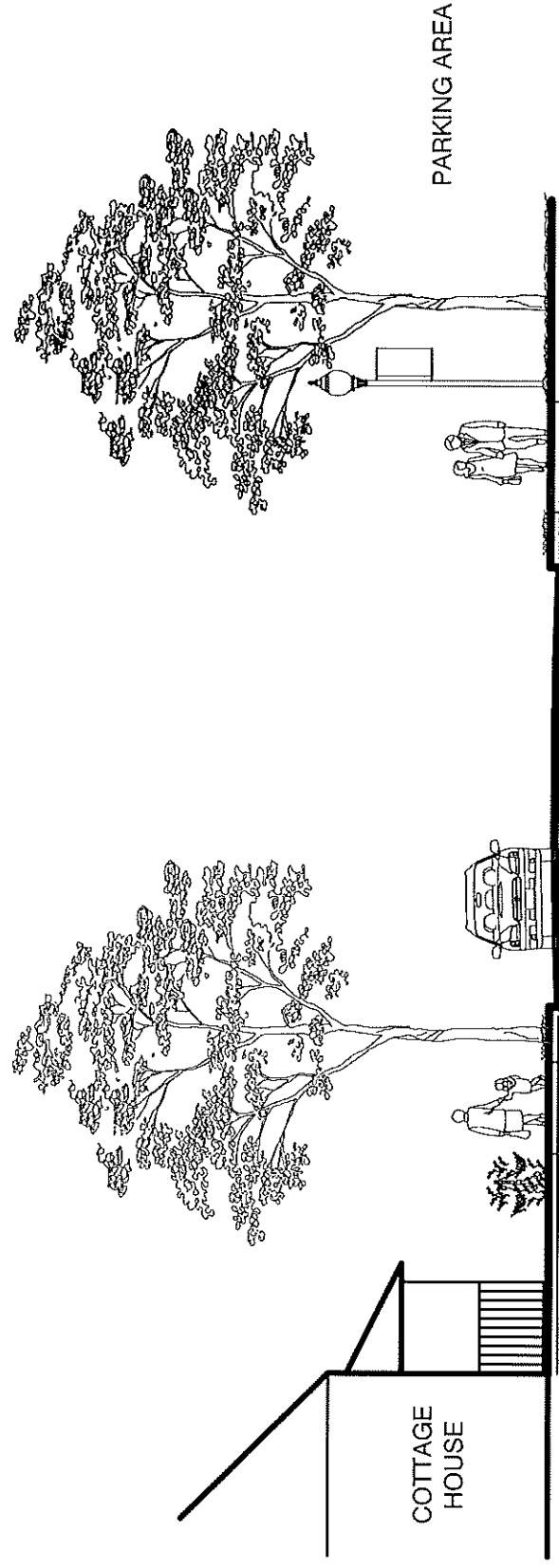


SWAN HILL  
ELEV 293



BIBLE ROCK BROOK

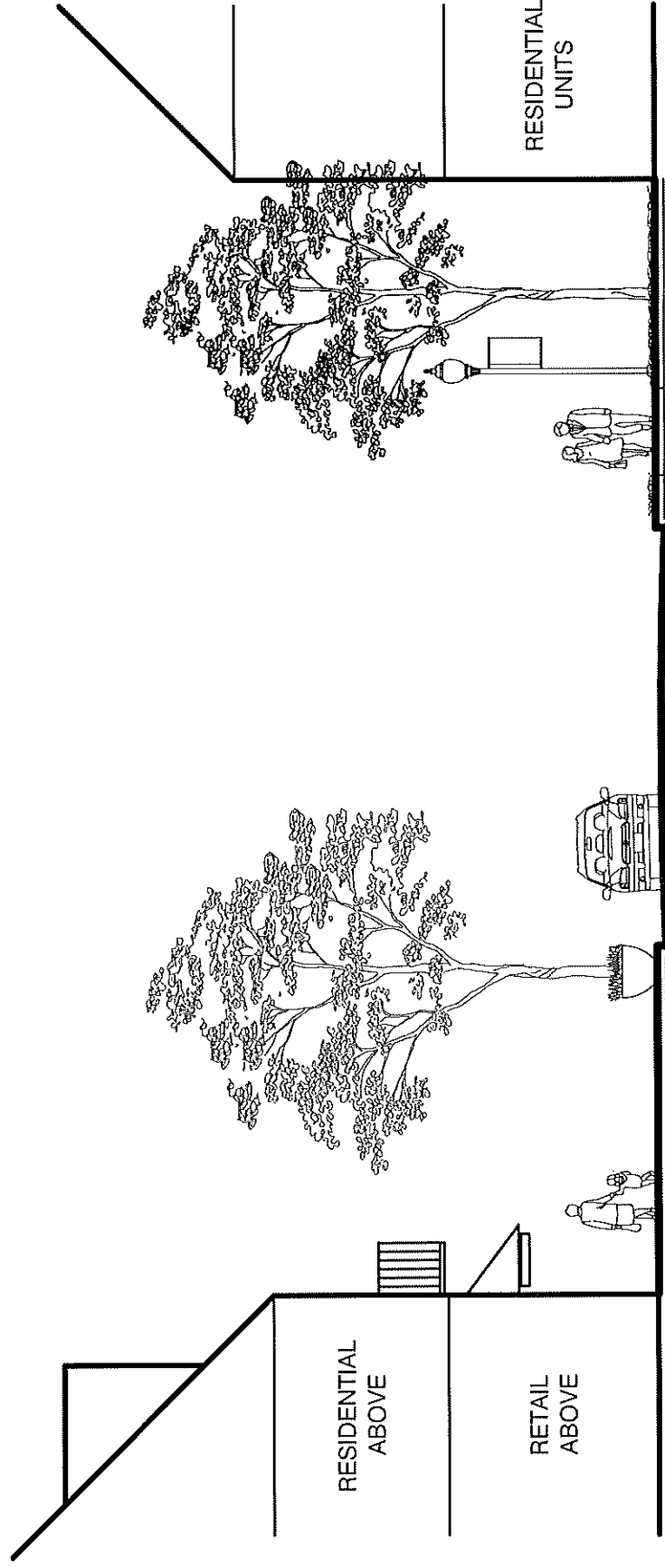




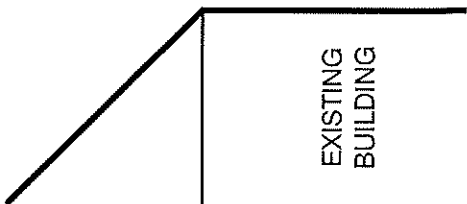
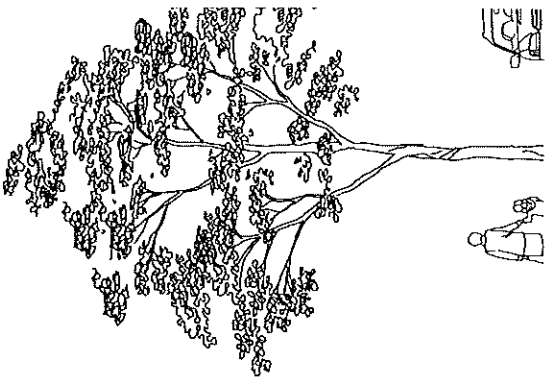
## **Depot Road Cross Section - Option 1**

1





**2** Depot Road Cross Section - Option 2





SWAN HILL  
ELEV 293



BIBLE ROCK  
BROOK

9 ATTACHED  
COTTAGES

9 COTTAGE  
HOMES

14 units of  
duplexes  
1-10 units  
apart

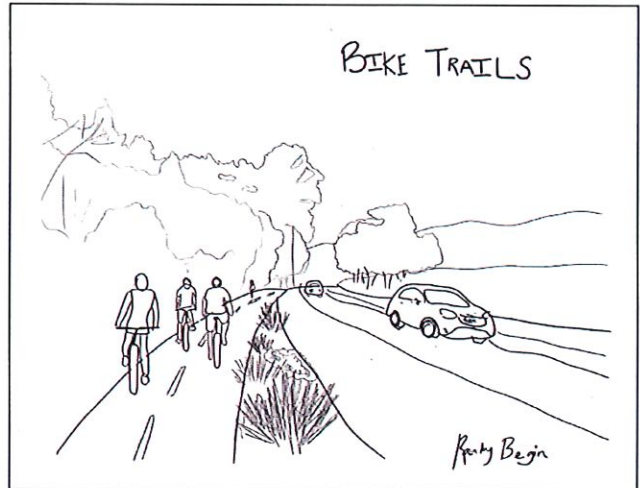
SAYBROOK RD RT 154

CANDLEWOOD HILL RD





## 5.0 Recommendations from the Consultant Team- 90 Day Action Agenda



Bike Trails- U of H/Randy Begin



## **5.0 Recommendations from the Consultant Team- 90 Day Action Agenda**

This section of the report proposes a 90 Day Agenda (beginning January 1, 2020) to jump start the revitalization plan for the Higganum Center. It is our strong belief that if strategic actions do not follow the great momentum and energy generated at the workshops this will have been a futile exercise. In order to get to specific actions spelled out in this plan, the Consultant team focused on the consensus built during the workshops (summarized in the first section), our review of previous studies and background materials, and extensive conversations and input from Bill Warner, the Town Planner. The section lays out our rationale and then proposes a 90 Day Agenda for each sub-topic. Our aim is simply to move the Town forward in its desire to create a vibrant and cohesive Higganum Center.

### **5.1 Leadership and Promotion**

Throughout this process the number one missing ingredient has been an organized voice of the existing property owners and merchants. Successful downtowns, villages and shopping centers and even suburban malls have some variation of a management association, merchants association, business improvement districts or special services district. Higganum Center needs a voice!

Higganum Center cannot compete in the same market with suburban strips and malls or its neighboring centers. The Center must develop its own unique and specialized image and it must market that image to specific niches in the overall market with a focus on uniqueness, customer service, product knowledge and quality merchandise.

A retail gap analysis shows a 100% market leakage for clothing and accessory (e.g., shoes, jewelry, leather goods, handbags) and sporting goods, hobby, books and music stores. These retail sectors could very well locate in the Center and enhance the shopping experience.

The Town must, first and foremost, work with existing merchants and businesses. Stabilization and strengthening of the existing base is bound to attract new investment and new businesses. Once existing businesses are educated, organized and on board the Town must then start to follow the following four point approach to revitalization:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's – Main Street America approach is the most successful economic development program in history. The Connecticut Main Street Center is a member of [Main Street America](#). The program helps member communities tailor the *Four Point Approach to Downtown Revitalization™*, currently utilized in over 2,000 communities, to meet the communities' individual needs. Developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the program advances economic and community development within the context of historic preservation, and advocates public-private partnerships to ensure lasting success. The Four Point Approach™ is about increasing the value of the downtown:

1. *"Organization:* Focusing on consensus and cooperation, we help build a framework for sensible, community-driven programming – matching a community's assets to its potential.

2. *Promotion*: Enhancing the image of downtown through retail promotions, special events and branding. Increasing the social value of downtown will increase the economic value of the district.
3. *Design*: Improving the physical value and appeal of downtown through both new construction and rehabilitation of historic and under-utilized buildings. We encourage design of public spaces for walking and gathering.
4. *Economic Restructuring*: Increasing the economic value by encouraging diversity among current and new businesses suitable to the unique needs of a particular marketplace.”

Haddam is a member of the CT Main Street Program and pays annual dues but has not taken advantage of their professional assistance.

#### The 90 Day Agenda

In order to accomplish this stabilization and strengthening the following is recommended in the short term:

- The Town’s Economic Development Committee (EDC) should take a lead role in the revitalization effort and work with merchants to form a Merchants Association.
- The EDC should meet to carefully review the findings in this report and act as a strong advocate for the Center;
- The EDC should host a meeting with the CT Main Street Center to discuss their program and their recommendations.
- The EDC should begin to establish a Main Street approach to revitalization to provide the sustained organizational focus and resources that Higganum Center revitalization demands.

#### **5.2 Community Septic**

It is clear that the creation of the community septic system is the most important fundamental action that must be taken in order to revitalize and regenerate the character of Higganum Center. Based on community input it is clear that this is a priority.

As of today, there are no failing septic systems in the Center. The capacity of the conceptual community septic system, at full build out, is 22,500 gallons per day. The system is not designed to replace existing fully functional septic systems in the Center.

The Community Septic will serve 3 purposes which will support business retention and attraction;

1. Capacity reserved in the event of a failing system;
2. Capacity available to allow existing buildings to change use and expand; and
3. Capacity for new development.

The system should be brought to a point where it is “shovel ready” with detailed cost estimates.



### The 90 Day Agenda

To move this project forward the Town should accomplish the following in the short term:

- To be eligible for potential state funding the Town should immediately request an amendment to the State Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) - Locational Guide Map to include the HES property, the Town Green and the Kovacik properties on Killingworth Road in the Center Priority Funding area.
- The Town should continue the productive dialogue with the State Health Department and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.
- As recommended in the POCD, the Town Meeting should create a Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) pursuant to Chapter 103 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS).
- Pursuant to CGS Section 7-246 (b) the WPCA is required to create a Water Pollution Control Plan and Sewer Service Area Map.
- WPCA should use funding currently available in the Capital budget to have the Town Engineer advance the conceptual plan and prepare a Water Pollution Control Plan and Sewer Service Area Map.

### Beyond 90 days

- Town Meeting should approve the conceptual plan and the Water Pollution Control Plan and Sewer Service Area Map.
- Staff should revisit the 2018 Higganum Development Potential Assessment in light of the new Community Septic System and define the optimal uses for Higganum Center
- The potential of the Citizens Bank and Fork in the Road buildings is muted due to inadequate sewage capacity. As a first step the Town Engineer shall prepare cost estimates to connect the Fork in the Road and Citizen Bank buildings to a new Community Septic System.
- The WPCA should discuss these connections with the owners and develop a funding mechanism which covers the cost of the work and does not create an undue burden on the town or the property owner.

### **5.3 Connections between Higganum Center and the Natural Environment**

There was a steady discussion concerning the connection of Higganum Center to its beautiful and scenic natural surroundings. While the Center does not border the Connecticut River, it has three streams and is quite close to the cove. The general consensus was that these factors were not only valuable to residents but to potential tourists as well. However, many participants had little knowledge of the trails and possible connections. In terms of revitalizing Higganum Center, it would be important for the Town to undertake a plan that should highlight these features and how they would influence the Center's future development.

### The 90 Day Agenda

- The Town Planner, working with the Town Engineer, should create a map of the existing and possible future trails and walkways, that could contribute to the wellbeing of Higganum Center. These connecting elements would inevitably add value to the character and development of the Center.
- The Town should work closely with those promoting the Green / Blue Way to strategize on enhancing and promoting these connections through the cove and the use of the rail right of way as a multi-purpose trail while maintaining the potential for extension of the tourist train. Within the first 90 days, begin the process to engage the Conway School to Update their existing CT Valley Railroad State Park Scenic Corridor Study (2014) to include a rail- / trail path to Middletown.
- There is \$6,000 in the capital plan for a pedestrian walkway plan in Higganum Center. Based on the above, the town should determine how best to use these funds.
- Design an attractive, distinctive sign post to highlight trails and destinations within and beyond the Center. The signs should be located at the interface between the street and the trail locations. Develop a trailhead parking plan to provide defined locations for visitors to access these trails/destinations.

### **5.4 HES Building and Site**

This property garnered the most interest at the workshops. There was a clear desire to maintain the property as a community asset, including the development of a Community Septic System.

In accordance with the survey conducted earlier in the year and the recent workshops, residents are clearly interested in a use that will generate activity in the Center, patronize local businesses, and keep the school grounds, the gymnasium, the commercial kitchen and the multi-purpose room available for potential public use.

Based on the 2018 market study, the current market rents cannot support the renovations necessary for a change of use at the school. There is a limited number of public and private schools in need of space and at the same time there are multiple school buildings in other communities which are or will be available in the near term. For example, there are vacant schools available in Madison, Clinton, Durham and one will be available in Middlefield. A sustained vacancy at HES would be a significant drain on the Center and Town resources.

A private school has expressed a strong interest in leasing the HES building from the Town and, perhaps more importantly, becoming a part of the community (they even participated in the workshops). The Town should seriously pursue this potential tenant as if it were a new business looking to move to Town and explore possible incentives to attract the school.



### The 90 Day Agenda

- The Town should create a plan that will expand the use of the structure for community activities including renting it for public and private functions, expanding the recreational uses, promoting artistic activities and linking it to the activities of the Town Green.
- There is also a local non-profit theater group that is very interested in using classrooms in the old section and the multi-purpose room for performances. Incorporating the theater group into the mix would add activity on nights and weekends.
- The First Selectman and the Town Planner should meet with the private school that has expressed interest in the school.
- If the private school is interested in becoming a tenant, the Town should negotiate a lease arrangement which would generate revenue to cover all or some of the operating costs with clear provisions for coordinated public use of the playground area, the gym and multi-purpose room.
- The Town should evaluate the adequacy of the commercial kitchen and the potential to develop a culinary incubator independently or in conjunction with the private school tenant.
- The roof is a concern and the capital planning committee should begin allocating funding to repair the roof.

### 5.5 Rossi Site

Gaining control of the Rossi site was of considerable interest to the participants. The site is adjacent to the Town garage and rented in part to the Town for storage of plow trucks and construction materials. It is the lynchpin between the HES site and Town Garage site. The property is non-conforming and has the legal right to intensify uses on the site that would not be in-line with the desired improvements to the Center. Compounding this is the fact that the Rossi property cannot support any significant on-site sewage disposal. As the owners have confirmed, it is highly unlikely that the Rossi property will change without some government intervention. This intervention should include discussions on the following options:

1. The provision of a sewage treatment plant with discharge to the Connecticut River and possibly a public water system to hopefully spur development of the entire five acres;
  - The sewage plant option has been studied in the past and the current estimate is \$12 million and potentially years of permitting. The debt service on a \$12 million bond would be approximately \$680,000 per year for 20 years. A public water system has been studied in the past and is now estimated at \$5 million. The Rossi's would be seeking full buildout which would include eighty-seven units which would pay approximately \$285,000 in annual property taxes.
2. The acquisition of the property by the Town for economic development. As previously discussed, a large green could be developed on the front half of the property with limited development. The majority of the buildings could be demolished and the

property advertised for limited development using a portion of the community septic system.

- This scenario would not provide the density as envisioned in the POCD and the Higganum Center District regulations. It would also be highly speculative with no immediate return and the majority of the property could sit vacant for an extended period of time. The Town Garage would remain as a user of the 10,000 building and surrounding property until a new town garage is developed.
3. The acquisition of the property by the Town and development of the Town Garage on the back half of the property and economic development on the front half using a portion of the adjacent community septic.
    - This option provides for a desperately needed new Town Garage in a central location using existing buildings and infrastructure. This would contribute to smart growth, one of the major tenants of the 2018 POCD. It also allows for the repurposing and economic development of the existing Town Garage site and the provision of approximately 2 acres of land adjacent to Saybrook Road along with the community septic system for future economic development.

#### The 90 Day Agenda

1. We believe that serious discussions should be undertaken with the owners to negotiate the purchase of the Rossi property.
2. If an agreement can be reached, the property should be purchased. By so doing, the Town will have control over the HES, Rossi and Town Garage properties, have the ability to strongly control the southern side of the Center and the ability to develop optimal uses and control the pace of development.

#### **5.6 Town Garage at the Rossi Site**

There is agreement that the current Town garage is inadequate and something needs to be done. The location of a new site for the garage was, however, mixed. Based on community input, 6 out of the 14 tables explicitly mentioned relocating the Town Garage to the Rossi site; 5 mentioned moving the garage out of the Center and 3 did not address the relocation site. We did not hear particularly compelling arguments why it shouldn't be in the Center, just that it shouldn't be. The POCD is equally silent on reasons, it simply says search for sites outside of the Center.

It is our understanding that the Town has done a town-wide search for other locations for the Town Garage and no reasonable, permittable and functional sites were identified. We do believe a well-designed and carefully placed Town Garage, with its employees and the services it offers, can exist in a Town Center as long as the facility meets the Town needs and is designed to integrate into the Center framework.



### The 90 Day Agenda

To move this project forward, the Town should accomplish the following in the short term:

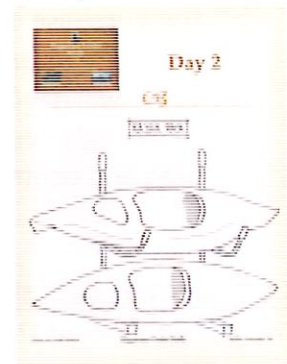
- The Planning and Zoning Commission should prepare a CGS 8-24 Report concluding the Rossi site is an appropriate location for a new Town Garage;
- The First Selectman should negotiate a purchase and sale agreement with the Rossi's contingent on all necessary approvals, including the Planning and Zoning Commission, Town Meeting approval, environmental due diligence and a structural analysis of the buildings proposed for re-use; and
- The Board of Selectman should authorize the execution of the purchase and sale agreement and refer to Board of Finance for appropriation or budgeting to fund all necessary due diligence.

### Beyond the 90 Days

- Create a Developer Request for Proposals (RFP) to gauge private market interest in the development of both the current Town garage site and the Rossi site in accordance with Town interests.

### 5.7 Town Garage Property

The existing Town Garage property should be repurposed for mixed use development once the garage is removed. The existing building on the site should be rehabbed as a multi-use commercial space, preferable a use that takes advantage of the stream that runs alongside the property. The property is in an inland wetland upland review area and has portions in the flood plain. Uses suggested by workshop participants included additional open space, a visitor center, a rental center for bicycles, kayaks and paddle boats, makers-space, small scale retail activities, a restaurant and residential uses. The reuse of the site should be in scale with the current character of the Center and enhance the connections and linkages to the natural features as well as the Rossi site, HES and the infill uses along the corridor. Any future use should reduce overall pavement, remove the sand/salt shed, plant a tree cover, organize the parking and provide a stream bank path with access for public use.



Kayak Rack-  
U of H/ Damoy Porteus

### The 90 Day Agenda

- The Town should prepare site guidelines and a site plan showing existing structures and possible infill development along with desired open space and pathways.
- The Town should work closely with those promoting the Green / Blue Way to strategize on enhancing and promoting connections to the stream and other natural resources
- Create a Developer Request for Proposals (RFP) to gauge private market interest in the development of the current Town garage site, possibly in coordination with the Rossi site, in accordance with Town interests.

### 5.8 Scovil Hoe Site

The reuse of the Scovil Hoe buildings and site was of considerable interest to the participants. In terms of the Town's history, it is quintessential. Its architectural features also makes it unique among other New England Centers. If appropriate, the Town should undertake efforts to have the site accepted on the National Register of Historic Places. Such acceptance not only would add prestige to the Center, but make the site more eligible for state and federal historic tax credits.



Art Gallery at Scovil Hoe-  
U of H/Michael Bernal

In 2018 the Town used DECD brownfield funding to conduct extensive investigations into the property. The extent of contamination has been identified and quantified. Also, in 2018, the Town applied for \$1 million in clean up funds but that request was not funded. The Town has prepared a re-use plan for the property. However, the re-use was predicated on the State transferring the property to the Town at no cost and paying for the environmental clean-up. The *Order of Magnitude Opinion on Probable Cost* for the proposed re-use set a range of \$11 to \$17 million with environmental cost estimated at \$2.8 – \$4.1 million. State Brownfield funding is available but is extremely competitive and for most programs, remediation grants are capped at \$1 million.

The State Department of Transportation is the property owner and it has indicated that it has no plans to maintain or re-use the property. The abandon buildings are already showing significant signs of decay.

### The 90 Day Agenda

To move this project forward, the Town should accomplish the following in the short term:

- Continue discussions with Christie A. LaBella, Property Agent for the property at Department of Transportation, Division of Rights of Way regarding the Town's acquisition of the property and the appraisal process.
- Execute state assistance agreement/right of entry forms with State DECD for the \$200,000 grant.
- Prepare a work plan to include:
  - An opinion letter from highly qualified environmental attorney regarding the Towns ability to qualify for municipal liability and Towns ability to pass that immunity on to future owners
  - An update the Phase 1 study, an absolute requirement, for EPA liability relief.
  - Develop a potable water supply assessment and re-evaluate the condition and size of the current septic system.
  - Prepare a Remedial Action Plan which phases the remediation and allows sections of buildings to be occupied as soon as possible. The first phase would be the north mill building which should include an abatement of hazardous building materials.



Target petroleum contaminated soil excavation and off-site disposal along with removal of any remaining underground storage tanks.

- Advertise the work plan to State bid contractors and award the contract.

#### Beyond the 90 Days

- To move the project forward, the Town must take ownership of the property, avoid enrollment in the CT Transfer Act and move towards creating an occupiable shell.
- Revisit the 2017 *Real Estate Market Opportunities for the Scovil Hoe Building Complex* study in light of the new Community Septic System and define the optimal uses for the buildings and site.
- Create a Developer RFP to gauge private market interest in the development of the buildings and site in accordance with Town interests.

### **5.9 Rt 81 and the Saybrook Road South**

Higganum Center is well respected and provides most of the basic goods required for everyday life. However, it lacks cohesion and order. To correct this shortcoming, there is a need to create a physical plan for the downtown that will extend sidewalks, streetlights, improve curb cuts and create greenspace. First steps have already been undertaken, but more actions are necessary.

#### The 90 Day Agenda

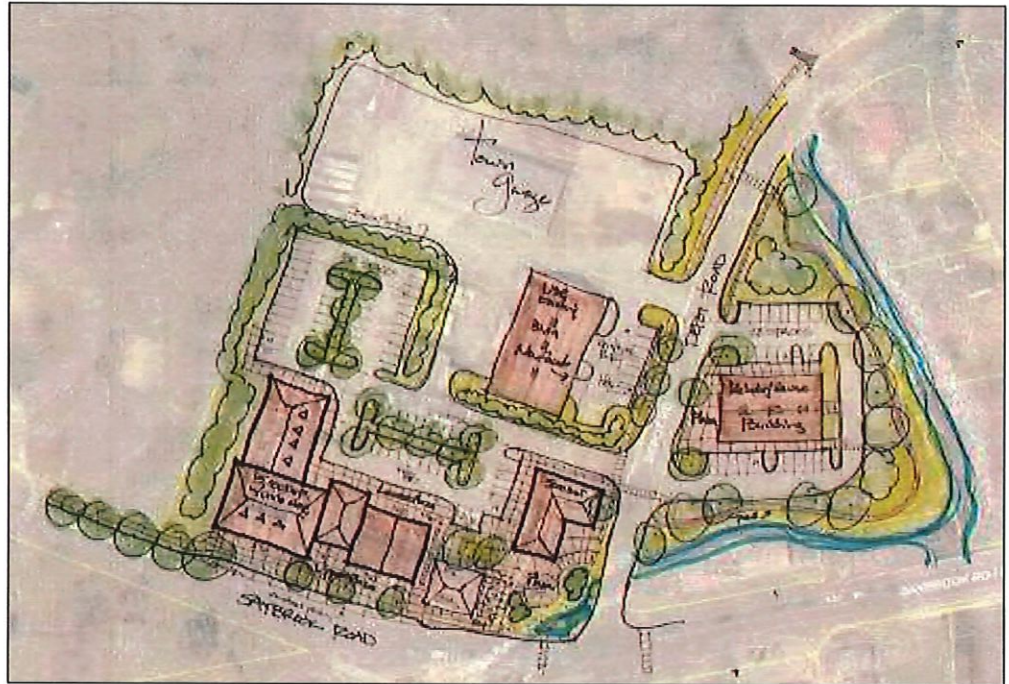
- The Town should first create a detailed buildout map of Center, depicting areas where possible growth could be placed. The design sketches created by the Consulting Team could be a guide.
- The Town should prepare site guidelines and a site plan showing where trees and ground cover should be placed and where appropriate curb cuts should be located. The design sketches created by the Consulting Team could be a guide.
- As the plan is being produced, the Town should request the assistance of the CT Mainstreet Program, to provide insights on possible improvements and to present the best practices found in other CT Centers.
- The Town should work with property owners to develop a public streambank trail through the many properties on Route 81 and encourage extension of sidewalks and connections between the street and the streams, and between buildings.

### **5.10 Vacant Citizens Bank Building**

This building went dark in 2018. It was used as a bank branch with a drive up window. Its presence brought important traffic into the Center.

It was built in the mid 1970's as City Saving Bank and has a 1,000 gallon septic tank with a small leach area in very marginal soils. It would be difficult to use the property for anything other than office/dry retail. This is such a prominent location in the Center that the extended vacancy is extensively impacting the economic vitality of the area.

## 6.0 In Conclusion





## 6.0 In Conclusion

We began our assignment in Haddam by meeting with the Town Planner, the workshop selection committee, and taking a walking tour of Higganum Center. We then reviewed the Town's previous planning studies and reports and zoning documents, examined economic development data and became aware of current trends in the Town. After this, we facilitated the Town's two-day planning and design workshop, where we listened to close to 300 of Haddam citizens express the values, concerns and aspirations for the future of Higganum Center.

Based on the above and our more than 30 years of planning and design practice across New England, we believe that the town is well-positioned to tackle the issues required to regenerate this special place. The issues are clear, the required analysis has been completed, the priorities determined, the practical alternatives identified, there is consensus on the most important issues and an experienced planner is in place. Very rarely in our experience have all of these elements, necessary to undertake change, been in place. They are in Haddam. It is time for action!

The potential community septic system opens up opportunities for higher and better uses. There is ample and available on street parking in the Center and the site is a great location for a restaurant or brew pub or other lunch/dinner type venue. Such a use, using on street parking, would complement the surrounding uses and generate critical and much needed pedestrian traffic.

The current owners are an LLC in Houston, Texas. It is the Town's understanding that Citizens Bank still holds the lease to the property and will not sub lease to another bank or credit union.

The contact at Citizens Bank is  
Jared Wallace  
Property Strategy & Execution  
Citizens Bank Property Services  
One Citizens Bank Way  
Mailstop: JCB430  
Johnston, RI 02919  
Telephone: 401-260-0288  
[jared.c.wallace@citizensbank.com](mailto:jared.c.wallace@citizensbank.com)

#### The 90 Day Agenda

To move this property forward the Town should accomplish the following in the next 90 days:

- The First Selectman and Town Planner should make contact with the owners/decision makers and discuss the status of the building and its availability.
- If there is opportunity, the Town should explain the community septic proposal and start to discuss redevelopment options and how the property is being marketed. The possible reuse may be the expansion of current businesses or a new use based on the community septic capacity, market leakage data and community interests.

#### **5.11 Funding Capital Improvements**

Finally, it is necessary to recognize that volunteer efforts can only achieve limited success. Much of the 90 Day Agenda may be achieved without too much financial infusion, however, funding will be critical as the projects gain momentum and need to be realized. It will be necessary to create a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) specifically for Higganum Center that addresses how improvements will be financed. In addition to the CIP, it is essential to explore outside funding sources that should be targeted as the Town moves toward implementation. Such a report would provide a significant boost in the public confidence in this project.

On paying for various projects, several federal agencies have grant programs that can substantially lower costs. For example, the Rural Development Administration has long supported the funding of rural infrastructure projects, commercial kitchens and the expansion of farmers markets. CT DECD has a very active brownfield redevelopment program. The US Economic Development Administration (EDA) frequently contributes to the rehabilitation and



creation of structures that could generate jobs and tax base enhancement. The CT DEEP and US Land and Water Conservation Fund has a tremendous record of funding trails and walkways in communities. And, in the past, the US Transportation Improvement Program (T21) has assisted communities in making roadways safer and more accessible and aesthetically pleasing. The point we are making is simply this: it is essential that the citizens realize that this is not a project that will be totally funded by the Town, that there are public and private assistance opportunities and that the expectation is that all of these investments will notably improve the quality of Center life and lead to increased jobs and tax revenue of the Town.