

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board of Selectmen held a special meeting Monday, September 23, 2019, in the Auditorium, Newtown High School, 12 Berkshire Road, Sandy Hook. First Selectman Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m.

PRESENT: First Selectman Daniel C. Rosenthal, Selectman Maureen Crick Owen and Selectman Jeff Capeci.

ALSO PRESENT: Planning and Zoning Chairman, Don Mitchell, Director of Planning, George Benson, Deputy Director or Economic & Community Development, Christal Preszler, Economic & Community Development & Fairfield Hills Coordinator, Kim Chiapetta, Director of Department of Public Works, Fred Hurley, Fairfield Hills Authority Chairman, Ross Carley, Fairfield Hills Master Plan Review Committee Chairman, Deborra Zukowski, Economic Development Commission Chairman, Wes Thompson, approximately eighty five members of the public and two members of the press.

PRESENTATION ON THE HISTORY OF THE FAIRFIELD HILLS CAMPUS SINCE ITS PURCHASE BY THE TOWN IN 2004:

First Selectman Rosenthal explained that a ten member review committee was appointed last year to review the Master Plan, which is to be done every five years. The Fairfield Hills Master Plan Review Committee spent an extraordinary amount of time meeting with community members, developers, stake holders in the community, and tenants on the campus to work on their revision of the Master Plan. A survey conducted included the subject of housing. Approximately 1800 residents took the survey which revealed, out of the 1800, 63% - 75% were opposed to housing. Conversely, about the same number of responses revealed the Town should not spend any money on Fairfield Hills. The review committee weighed everything and recommended mixed use in the proposed Master Plan revision. The Master Plan is sent to the Board of Selectmen for review and action. If ratified, the Master Plan then goes to Planning & Zoning for updating of the adaptive reuse zone. Given the survey results, First Selectman Rosenthal thought it best to have a more robust conversation around the campus and to share information and engage the community. Ultimately, the community will have the opportunity to vote in April. The Board of Selectmen will refrain from voting on the Master Plan until after the referendum.

The meeting tonight will cover the history of the campus since the Town purchase in 2004. The next meeting, possibly in November will cover the costs, what has been spent on the campus, what is currently being spent and anticipated future costs. The third meeting will be early next year and cover options for the campus. A fourth meeting will cover the subject of mixed use and housing. Any questions not relative to the subject of the night will be held and all questions will be made part of the public record.

First Selectman Rosenthal went over the power point presentation (att.). Nine hundred people attended a town meeting in 2001 to approve the purchase of Fairfield Hills campus. The campus is 185 acres. There were 4,000 residents at its peak and hundreds of employees. The campus was self-sustaining. Much of the 650 acres of original property is still owned by the state. The state hospital started closing in 1995; many of the buildings have been unoccupied and without maintenance for twenty five years. In 2005 Planning and Zoning approved the original Master Plan and the original adaptive reuse zone was created. In 2012 non-profit community events were officially incorporated in the Fairfield Hills adaptive re-use zone.

Upon purchase the Town had to remediate the soils. Seventeen buildings have been demolished, four buildings have been renovated and four buildings have been constructed. The anticipated cost of demolition, when purchasing the property, has changed dramatically as different things become considered hazardous materials that need to be remediated. Renovated and new buildings offer the opportunity for revenue to come into the town in the form of real estate and personal property taxes. Additional benefits are common area costs and utility assessments. One

Rec'd. for Record 9-26 2019
Town Clerk of Newtown 3:32 pm
Debbie Aurelia Halstead

challenge in getting commercial tenants has been the CT economy. Many Town offices were consolidated into Bridgeport Hall. This building had an open floor plan and allowed the flexibility to reconfigure. Newtown Youth Academy was a new building that also draws people to the campus. The challenge to renovating the larger buildings is that there are smaller, concrete rooms that don't have a flexible floor plan that can easily give way to re-use.

A duplex was renovated for Newtown Parent Connection. The duplexes lend themselves to re-use. There is a lot of turn-key commercial space available lessening the potential of getting commercial tenants willing to spend a lot of money on renovations. The Engineer Building was renovated in 2013 and houses the Center for Support and Wellness and Social Services. The first building to be re-used as commercial use is Stratford Hall. Newsylum Brewery has been renovated by two local businessmen and will be open in the fall.

The Newtown Volunteer Ambulance Association built a new building which opened in 2015. The Community Center and Senior Center opened in summer of 2019. The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) is on the campus; emergency management response can be managed from the EOC.

The 2017 streetscape project, created through a STEAP grant, makes for a more inviting entry with the plantings and lighting. There are two miles of walking trails on the campus. Events on campus include the Farmers Market, soccer, baseball, softball, pickle ball, the Arts Festival, and a fall carnival. There are events on the campus all year around.

In addition to the size, condition and hazardous materials within the buildings there are still underground tunnels and utilities that are 18 feet underground. There has been great progress updating utilities but more still needs to be done. The aging infrastructure needs addressing.

Most of the projects funding come from the tax payer. Approximately \$30 million has been appropriated, which includes the appropriation to purchase the property. Many grants have also been secured by the Town.

Future meetings will cover the cost summary for the campus, the campus options and mixed use. First Selectman Rosenthal will work with the Legislative Council on the referendum question.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Peggy Baiad thanked the Board of Selectmen and hopes that people make an informed decision, come and find out the facts and not vote emotionally.

Deborra Zukowski had a question about the creation of the next Master Plan for Fairfield Hills. There were recommendations for the update of the Master Plan that the Master Plan Review Committee had forwarded to the First Selectman; that will go through reconciliation between the recommendations and the current 2013 Master Plan under the auspices of the Planning & Zoning Commission. P&Z will then, as a commission, vote on whether or not to accept, or augment, what the prior work group had done for that new Master Plan. It is her understanding that then the Fairfield Hills adaptive re-use zone would be updated, in response of that creation of the new Master Plan. The process is multi-tiered. Will this all happen after the referendum? First Selectman said yes, and he thinks it's very important to have these conversations and allow the community to have a vote.

A member of the public asked about the pile of dirt next to the Community Center. First Selectman Rosenthal said that a band shell was part of the Master Plan for the project. The Hubbard Sanctuary is using some of the dirt for fill behind the butterfly gardens. The dirt area was designated for a band shell.

Ted Dietter asked how many buildings there were originally and how many are left to be renovated or demolished. First Selectman Rosenthal said seventeen were demolished. Nine remain, the three largest are Cochran House (200,000 sq. ft.), Shelton House (100,000 sq. ft.), Kent (200,000 sq. ft.). Norwalk Hall is a tear down. Mr. Dietter

asked how many consultants have been hired and how much money has been spent? First Selectman Rosenthal stated that this will be covered at a future meeting.

A member of the public asked if there has been any commercial interest in any of the other properties. First Selectman Rosenthal noted that would be covered during the meeting on options. There has been interest over the years but the challenge for many of the buildings is the CT economy in general.

Kathy Reiss asked if the demolition and renovation page of the presentation could be online, saying it is a very useful representation of the campus. The whole presentation will be online. She thinks the buildings are beautiful and historical and would like to see them maintained although she understands the costs could be prohibitive.

Ray Ruzek thinks the process needs to be look at more broadly than just Fairfield Hills. Look at the whole town, Newtown has always had beautiful, unique aspects. In his opinion the only two left are Fairfield Hills and Sandy Hook Village. Keep that in mind moving forward.

Ms. Dietter asked about the timeframe of demolition. First Selectman Rosenthal said that almost as quickly as the property was purchased work began on the Municipal Center, utilities and a building was demolished to make room for the Newtown Youth Academy. Some buildings remain as they did at the time of purchase. The roadways remain the same with the exception of the construction of Wasserman Way. Ms. Dietter asked how many surveys have been conducted and how many committees and boards have there been. The Master Plan to govern the campus went into effect in 2005. A review of that plan was in 2010. There was a working group that reconciled the 2005 Master Plan and the 2010/11 recommendations that produced the 2013 Master Plan. There was a 2018 Master Plan Review Committee. There have been two surveys conducted. The announcement of the Master Plan Review Committee was made at a Board of Selectmen meeting, advertised in the newspaper as well as on the Town website. Ms. Dietter said that some of the wants can't be addressed but the needs need to be addressed.

Chandravir Ahuja said the committee extensively sought people from the town, invited all residents to public meetings. The committee had two irreconcilable facts that could not be reconciled. Every meeting was open to the public, town leaders were invited and the committee sought interaction with the community all along.

Deborra Zukowski, speaking as self and not chairman of the Master Plan Review Committee, is delighted the process is coming out. The committee tried very hard to get the public to the meetings.

Alexa Skalandunas asked about lease revenues. First Selectman Rosenthal said there is a land lease with the Newtown Youth Academy. Newsylum has a land lease as well. They are renovating the building and their personal property will be taxable.

Bruce Walczak asked that the session on costs it includes revenue that been generated. First Selectman Rosenthal will have a more in depth cost analysis for the cost meeting.

Steve Rosenblatt asked which buildings will be suitable for housing. First Selectman Rosenthal prefers to cover that at the housing meeting.

Kathryn Simpson asked if there is a vision for what the referendum question may look like so it doesn't end up as a dead end. First Selectman Rosenthal will work with the Legislative Council, as it is the Legislative Council authority to level local questions. They will work together to get something out early in the new year.

Kathy Grable lives on Mile Hill South asked if letters were sent to neighbors on Mile Hill. First Selectman Rosenthal said the meeting isn't proposing a zone change, it is a community discussion. He suggested residents sign up for News & Announcements to keep informed. Fairfield Hills impacts the whole town; the Town did its best to make everyone aware of upcoming conversations.

Board of Selectmen
September 23, 2019

Andy Wellman asked if there was a mechanism for ideas to be communicated to the Town. First Selectman Rosenthal stated questions and ideas can be sent to FH@newtown-ct.gov.

First Selectman Rosenthal ended the meeting by saying the goal is the share all information so the public can make an informed decision.

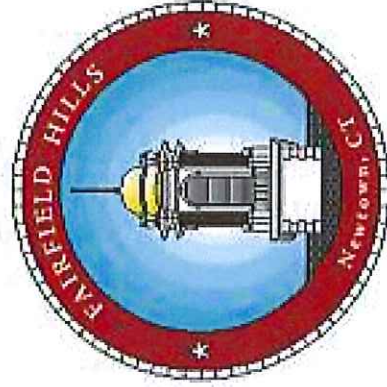
ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business the special Board of Selectmen meeting adjourned at 8:13p.m.

Attachments: Community Conversation – September 23, 2019, Fairfield Hills Campus, the History

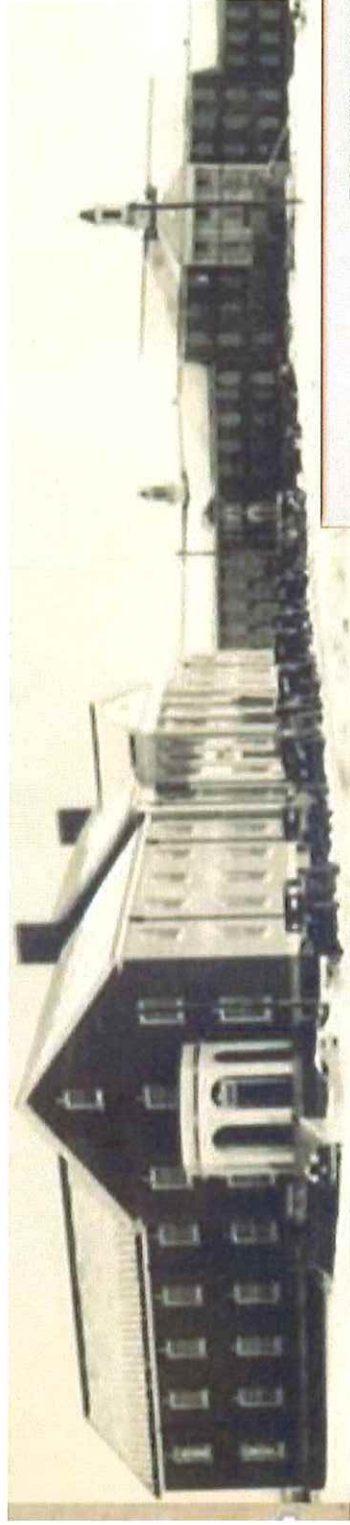
Respectfully submitted,
Sue Marcinek, Clerk

Community Conversation – September 23, 2019

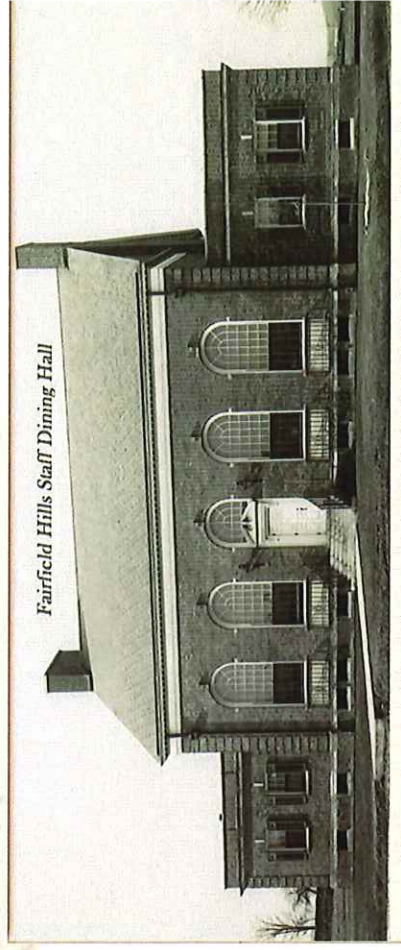
Fairfield Hills Campus -The History-



Fairfield Hills State Hospital



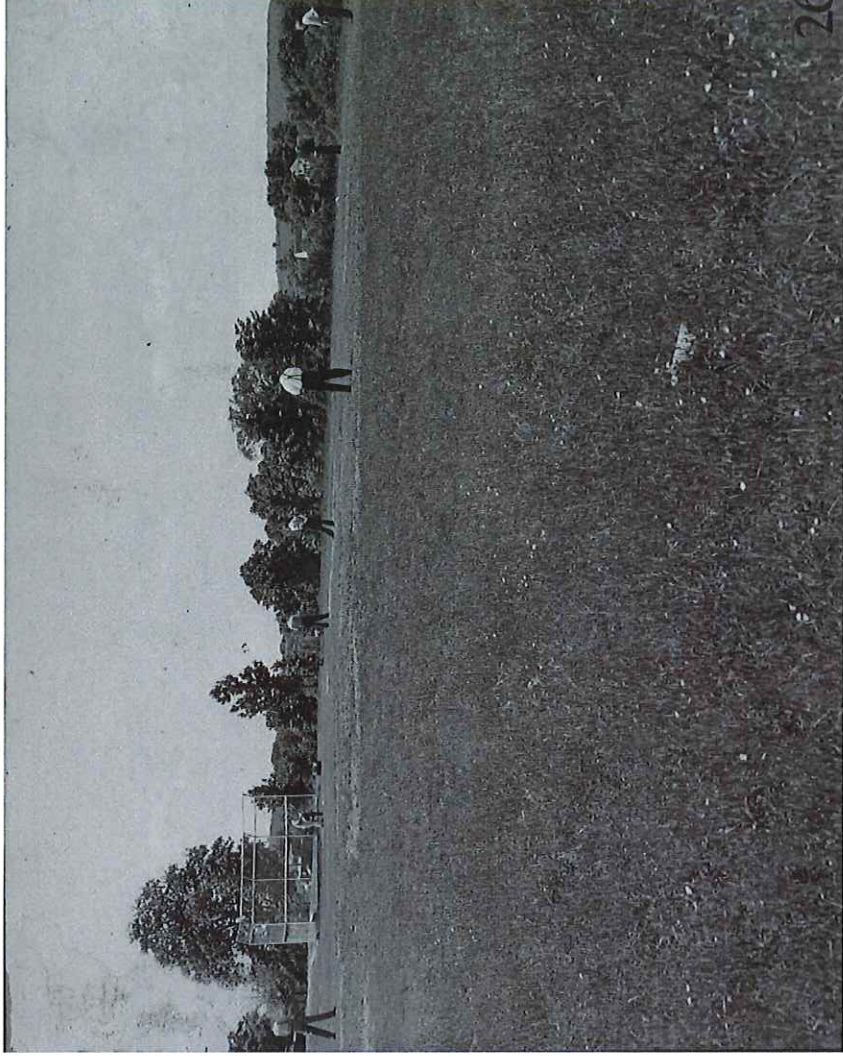
Fairfield Hills Hospital Male Employees Housing



Fairfield Hills Staff Dining Hall

Photos courtesy The Newtown Historical Society

Fairfield Hills State Hospital



Photos courtesy The Newtown Historical Society

Brief Timeline -

- 1930s – Infrastructure installed, most buildings constructed
- 1950s/1960s – Plymouth Hall and Cochran House were built

Utilities:



Brief Timeline -

- 1995 – State hospital closed
- 2001 - Voters approved bonding for purchase of property
- 2005 - Master Plan adopted



Master Plan -

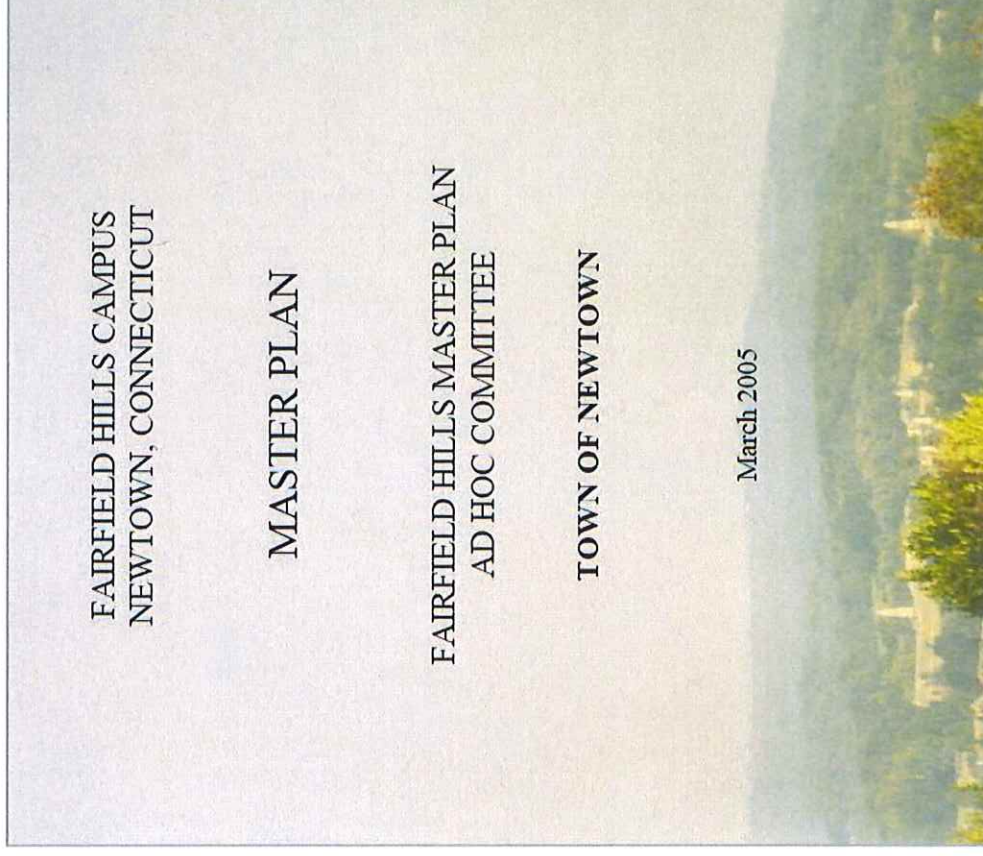
FAIRFIELD HILLS CAMPUS
NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT

MASTER PLAN

FAIRFIELD HILLS MASTER PLAN
AD HOC COMMITTEE

TOWN OF NEWTOWN

March 2005

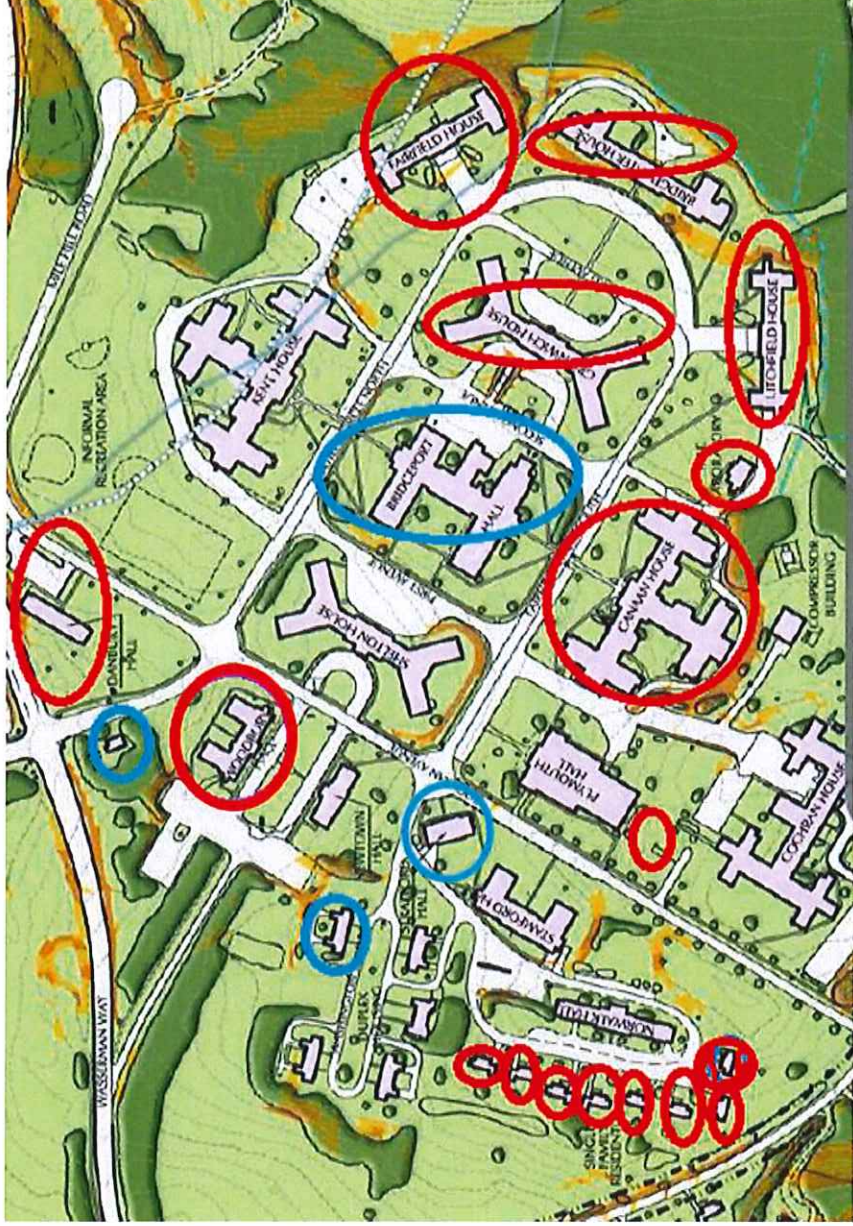


Progress -

- 17 buildings have been demolished
- 4 buildings have been renovated
- 4 buildings have been constructed



Demolition and Renovation -



Demolished Buildings

(circled in red)

Bridgewater House
Canaan House
Danbury Hall
Fairfield House
Greenwich House
Litchfield House
Yale Laboratory
Eight single family houses
Greenhouse
Woodbury Hall

Renovated Buildings

(circled in blue)

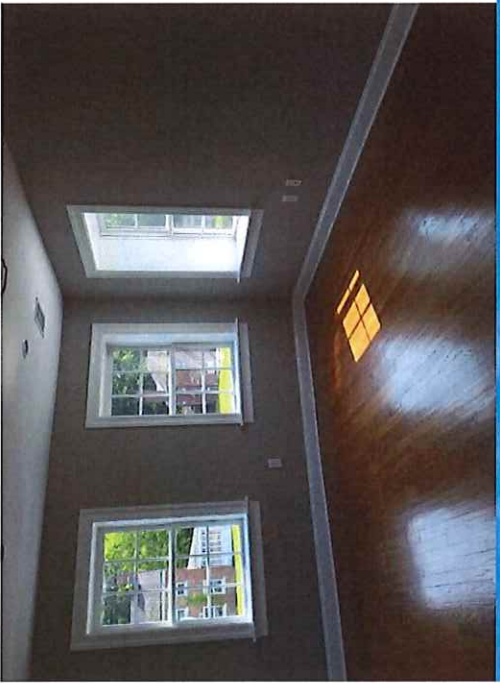
Bridgeport Hall – Muni Center
Duplex #63 – Newtown Parent Connection
Engineer's House – Center for Support and Wellness
Stratford Hall – Newsylym (*in progress*)

Remediation -

- Approximately 1,100 tractor-trailer loads equaling 22,000 tons of contaminated soil were removed shortly after the property purchase.
- Hazardous building materials in structures, tunnels and buried utility vaults remain



Renovations -



Municipal Center



Newtown Youth Academy



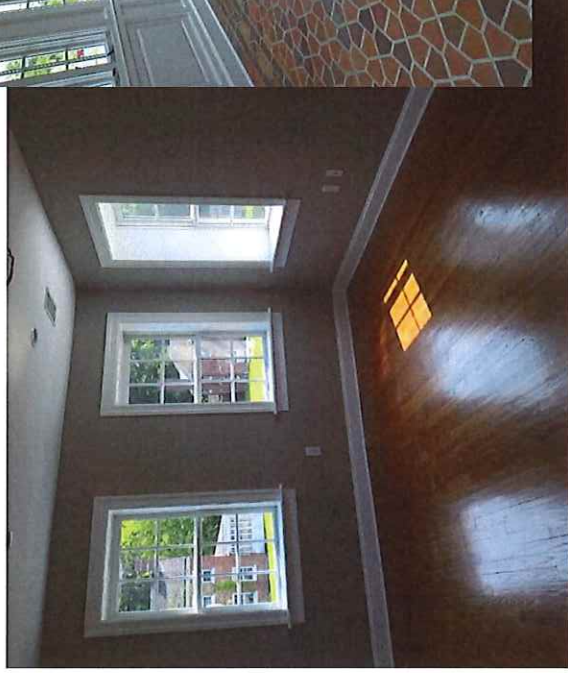
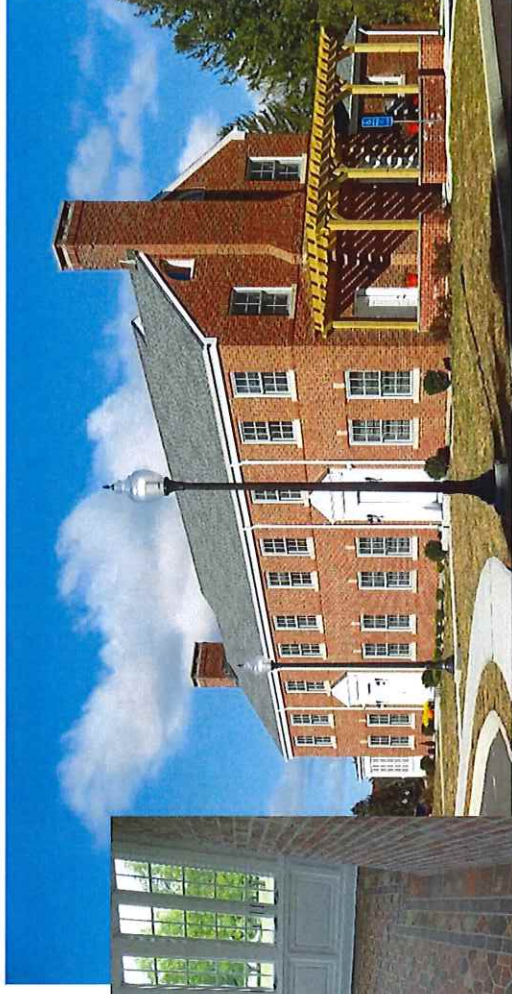
Building renovations -

- Bridgeport Hall – Newtown Municipal Center



Building renovations -

- Duplex #63 / Newtown Parent Connection



Building renovations -

- Engineer's House



Building renovations -

- Stratford Hall



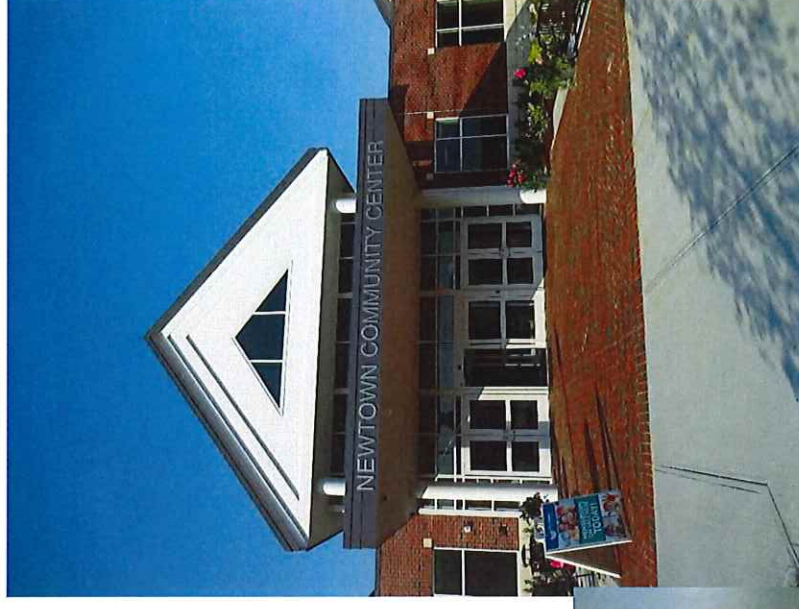
New Buildings -

- NYA
- NVAA (ambulance)
- Community and Senior Centers
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC)



New Buildings -

- Community and Senior Center



Additional accomplishments -

- NYA Grand Opening November 2008
- 2014 - Ambulance garage built
- 2017 – Streetscape construction
- Trails/fields
- High Meadow declared as open space



Fairfield Hills Streetscape 2017 -

Before



After

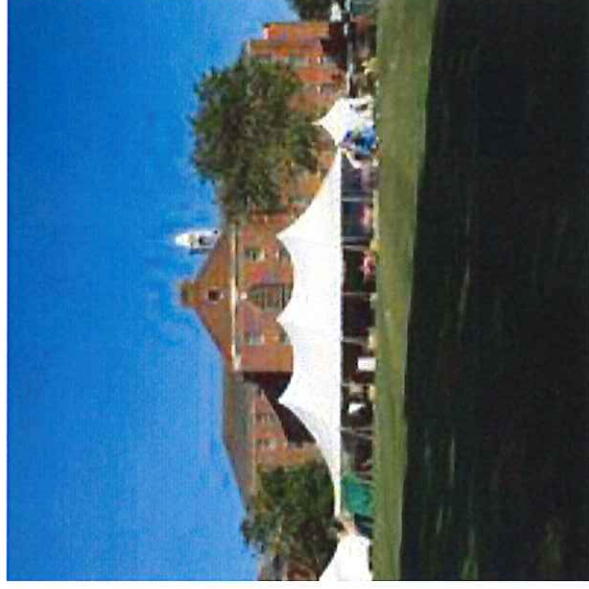


Fairfield Hills Streetscape 2017 -



A day at Fairfield Hills -

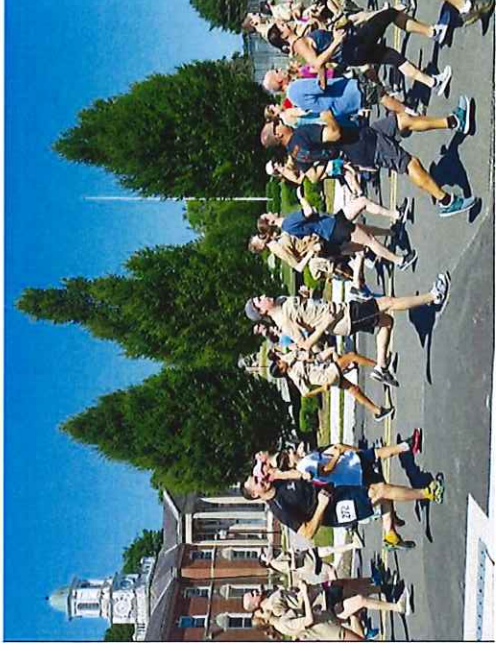
- Sports (soccer, baseball, softball, pickle ball)
- Open space / passive recreation
- Farmers' Market
- Events
- Trails



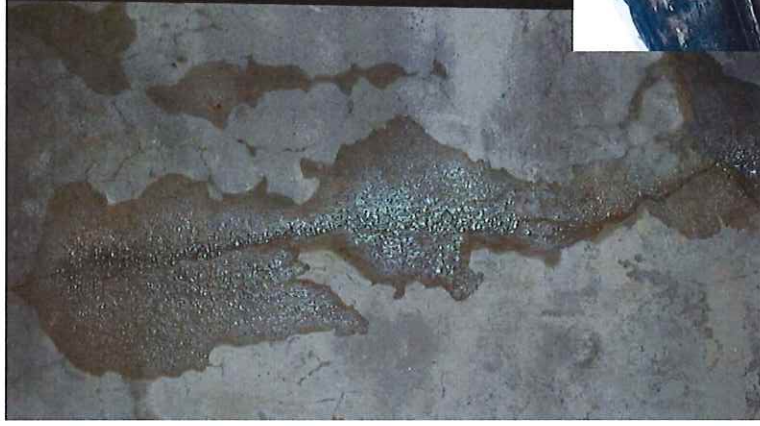
Fairfield Hills Campus Events 2019 -

Event	Date	Time	More Info
American Red Cross Blood Drive	Thursday, February 28th	1 – 6 p.m.	RedCrossBlood.org
Run4Hunger	Saturday, May 11th	8:15 – 11 a.m.	run4hunger-newtown.com
Strut Your Mutt	Saturday, May 18th	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.	newtownparkandbark.org/events
Super Cool Plant Sale	Saturday, June 1st	8 – 6 p.m.	Facebook: FineGardeningMagazine
Catherine Violet Hubbard Butterfly Party	Saturday, June 8th	12 – 4 p.m.	CVHFoundation.org
Newtown Farmers' Market	Tuesdays, June through October	2 – 6:30 p.m.	Facebook: FarmersMarketatFairfieldHills
Rooster Run	Saturday, June 15th	8 – 10:30 a.m.	Facebook: Newtown Parks and Recreation
American Red Cross Blood Drive	Tuesday, June 25th	1 – 6 p.m.	RedCrossBlood.org
Mad Dash	Saturday, June 29th	8 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Facebook: Newtown Parks and Recreation
Newtown Day	Saturday, July 27th	11 a.m. – 8 p.m.	https://newtownday.com/
REACH Car Show	Sunday, September 8th	8 a.m. – 4 p.m.	https://www.reachnewtown.org/new-events
Newtown Arts Festival	Friday, September 20 – Sunday, September 22nd	Times vary	https://newtownartsfestival.com/
Parks and Recreation Carnival	Friday, September 27th – Sunday September 29th	Times vary.	Facebook: Newtown Parks and Recreation
Merry Hill & Newtown Volunteer Ambulance Fun- Tober Fest	Saturday, October 5th	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	https://z-m-www.facebook.com/events/1206906099481472/
American Red Cross Blood Drive	Wednesday, October 23rd	1 – 6 p.m.	https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/fin d-drive
Newtown Congregational Church's C.R.O.P Walk	Sunday, October 27th	2 – 3 p.m.	MerryHillCenter.com
American Red Cross Blood Drive	Thursday, December 19th	1 – 6:00 p.m.	RedCrossBlood.org

Fairfield Hills Campus Events -



Challenges -



Funding of Projects –

- Most of the funding for the estimated \$30 million spent to date has been from Town of Newtown funds, with a smaller amount coming from other sources such as grants.

Utilities -

History:

- Some sewer, water lines are 18 feet below grade and were installed in the 1930s.

Accomplishments:

- WSA has invested \$2 million to upgrade pump station, wells and storage facility
- Fire protection system has been overhauled, replacing 12 hydrants
- Main gas line installed on Keating Farm and DG Beers
- Utility loop installed (cable, phone, power), replacing original utilities
- New laterals are installed at higher elevation

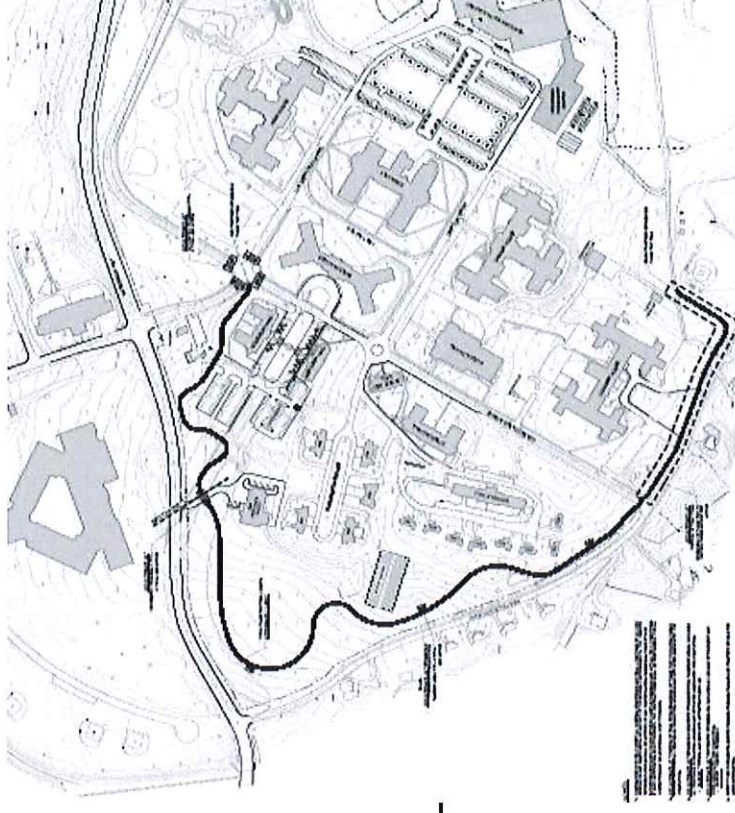
Utilities -

Looking Forward:

- Utility loop completed between DG Beers and Mile Hill South
- Sanitary sewer mains need to be raised and upgraded with an estimated cost of \$2 million - \$3 million. Upgrade necessary due to deteriorating conditions and to mitigate risk of cross contamination between sewer and storm water systems.
- Upgrade is listed as a Tier I priority with NVCOG CEDS

Infrastructure -

- Trails
- Ball fields, pavilion
- Lighting/utility improvements
- Grant application pending with Economic Development Administration for \$918,000 - 50% match for total project cost of \$1.8 million sanitary sewer system upgrade
- 15,000 linear feet of sewer



What is next?

- Additional sessions are expected to be held as follows:
 - November 2019 (cost summary)
 - January 2020 (campus options)
 - February 2020 (mixed use discussions)

