

**TOWN OF CROMWELL - TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
41 WEST STREET, CROMWELL, CT 06416
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, May 9, 2023 - 5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor S. Fortenbach, Deputy Mayor J. Henehan, Councilman Demetriades, Councilwoman J. Donohue, Councilwoman P. Luna, Councilman J. Polke, Councilman A. Waters

Also Present: Town Manager Salvatore, Chief LaMontagne, Captain Sifodaskalakis, Public Works Director Lou Spina, Finance Director Sharon DeVoe

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fortenbach called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Town Council stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION made by A. Waters and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to approve the agenda as presented.

All in favor.

D. LETTER OF COMMENDATION

Mayor Fortenbach read the attached Proclamation into the record and presented it to Ms. Aubrey Kulpa. See Attachment A.

E. COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORTS/LIAISON REPORT/STAFF REPORTS

1. CMS Building Committee

Rosanna Glynn was not in attendance as we are in a quiet period for the Middle School Building Project until after the referendum.

F. MAYOR'S UPDATE

Mayor Fortenbach read his report. See Attachment B.

G. TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE

Town Manager added the following to his written report provided to the Council:

- OSHA was onsite for five days. They primarily inspected Public Works, Building Maintenance, Parks and Grounds and the Highway Mechanics Facility.
- He handed out a letter from Senator Blumenthal regarding Mattabassett, provided by Mr. Simonian. See Attachment C. He reported that Mr. Simonian plans to have a complete package for the June meeting.
- He provided the Council with a Climate Change Article from Town Engineer Jon Harriman.
- He expects the drainage report to be complete and presented by June-July.
- Cromwell Little League night games are delayed. They are waiting for the meter ring to come in. It is expected to come in soon.

H. APPROVAL OF TOWN MANAGER'S APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OF POLICE
Town Manager Salvatore explained that there was a panel of 3 police chiefs that interviewed Captain Sifodaskalakis. They strongly recommended he be offered the position of Chief of Police.

MOTION made by J. Polke and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to approve the Town Manager's Appointment of Captain Fred Sifodaskalakis as Chief of Police effective July 3, 2023.

All in favor.

I. FINANCIAL/FINANCE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

1. Budget Report

Sharon DeVoe was in attendance to present her budget report and to answer any questions of the Town Council. She informed the Council that she hired a new Assistant Finance Director. She will attend a future Council meeting to introduce herself.

2. Tax Refunds

None.

3. Discussion and action to approve Other Budget Funds for FY 2023-24 for adoption at Special Town Meeting, per Section 8.03 of the Town Charter

- Dog Fund: \$24,400
- Sidewalk Fund: \$5,000
- Authorize the Mayor to set the date/time of Special Town Meeting

MOTION made by P. Luna and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to approve the Dog Fund in the amount of \$24,400.

All in favor.

MOTION made by J. Henehan and **SECONDED** by J. Donohue to approve the Sidewalk Fund in the amount of \$5,000.

All in favor.

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by A. Waters to authorize the Mayor to set the date/time of the Special Town Meeting.

All in favor.

J. CHIEF OF POLICE'S UPDATE

The Chief of Police was in attendance to present her report to the Town Council. She added the following to her report:

- She congratulated Captain Sifodaskalakis. She said the Town is in good hands.
- Officer Durais gave his letter of retirement. His last day will be June 29, 2023. They currently have six openings. They continue to conduct written tests, oral boards, etc.
- Officer Visconti and Officer O are currently doing field training and are doing a great job so far.

K. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Public Works Director Lou Spina was in attendance to present his written report to the Council.

In addition to his written report he provided an update on potential leaf composting. He explained that this could turn a liability into a small revenue stream for the town. They are presently exploring the option of using a specific area for residents to dump their leaves and to compost. They plan to offer compost to residents and will sell the rest. He added that he has spent some time researching this and even talked to surrounding towns who compost their leaves.

Town Manager Salvatore added that the Board of Finance and Town Council approved the purchase of the leaf vacuum and more boxes. This really helps to expedite the composting process.

Town Manager Salvatore thanked Mr. Spina for the research he did on this and said he has done a fantastic job with this.

Town Engineer Jon Harriman was in attendance to provide updates on the following projects:

- Pierson Park. See Attachment D. He answered questions of the Town Council regarding the designs and the documents provided. He expressed

these were only ideas, nothing set in stone and will be limited by the constraints of the budget.

- Multi-Purpose Field at Cromwell High School. See Attachment E. He answered questions of the Town Council regarding the designs and the documents provided. He expressed these were only ideas, nothing is set in stone and will be limited by the constraints of the budget.
- He expects to have the Drainage Study report by next month.
- West Street Sidewalks – there were no bidders.

L. CITIZEN COMMENTS *(limited to 2 minutes per speaker, please be respectful)*

Diane Doxey, 52 Missionary Road read her comments into the record. See Attachment F.

Al Waters, 86 South Street, invited all dignitaries to the Memorial Day Parade. All elected officials and dignitaries are welcome in the gazebo. He encouraged residents to attend as well. The Parade will be on May 30th at 6 p.m.

Councilman Waters left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

M. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible action to adopt amendment of existing ordinance: Chapter 54 Retirement Plan, §54-12 Interruptions in Employment.

MOTION made by J. Demetriades and **SECONDED** P. Luna to adopt the amendment of existing ordinance, Chapter 54 Retirement Plan, §54-12 Interruptions in Employment.

All in favor.

Councilman Demetriades clarified that the above ordinance amendment and adoption expands employee benefits.

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to take Agenda Item M.2. off the table.

All in favor.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding Facility Conditions Study for Fields and School Buildings (tabled)

Melinda St. John, Director of District Operations was in attendance to explain the need for the funding request. She explained that the company would come in, assess their equipment, note when it was installed, note the life expectancy, and

enter all of that information into a database that has the ability to track when the equipment needs to be replaced, serviced, etc.

The Town Council had the following questions:

- Has Town Staff reviewed this information? There should be input from Town Staff.
- How many proposals did we receive? There should be more than one.
- Why was a list not already created and maintained?

Town Manager Salvatore suggested the Council table this item until Town Staff reviews the information and the Middle School Project Referendum is over.

MOTION made by J. Demetriades and **SECONDED** by J. Donohue to table this item.

All in favor.

3. Review and discuss proposed Cromwell Tax Abatement Ordinance for Surviving Spouses of First Responders

MOTION made by J. Demetriades and **SECONDED** by J. Polke to approve the Cromwell Tax Abatement Ordinance for Surviving Spouses of First Responders and forward to Public Hearing.

All in favor.

Town Manager Salvatore agreed to get back to the Council on how many first responders this would affect. He clarified that the ordinance only pertains to first responders living in Town.

N. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 6, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to approve the April 6, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes.

In Favor: S. Fortenbach, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, P. Luna, J. Polke, A. Waters

Abstained: J. Donohue

Motion passed.

2. April 12, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION made by P. Luna and **SECONDED** by J. Demetriades to approve the April 12, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes.

All in favor.

O. RESIGNATIONS

1. Matt Brown, LGBTQ+ Committee

MOTION made by P. Luna and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to accept the resignation of Matt Brown from the LGBTQ+ Committee with regret.

Discussion: Councilman Demetriades explained that Matt has been trying to find a replacement and chairperson for this committee. It is planned to have DEI Committee merge with LGBTQ+ Committee in the near future.

All in favor.

P. APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

None.

Q. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. BerryDunn Culture Assessment (status update requested)
See Attachment G for the update provided by BerryDunn.

R. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Sale of Town Property

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to invite Town Manager Salvatore and Town Engineer Jon Harriman into Executive Session.
All in favor.

The Council entered Executive Session at 6:44 p.m.

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to come out of Executive Session.

The Council came out of Executive Session at 6:57 p.m.

MOTION made by J. Henehan and **SECONDED** by P. Luna for approval of land swap for 14R Winchester Way consisting of 1.93 acres swapping with the parcel immediately to the south, adjacent to the existing Landon property to include mitigating an existing drainage concern and subject to planning and zoning approval of proposed use.

MOTION withdrawn by J. Henehan and **SECOND** withdrawn by P. Luna.

MOTION made by J. Henehan and **SECONDED** by P. Luna by for approval of land swap for 14R Winchester Way consisting of 1.93 acres for the amount of \$25,000 swapping with a parcel immediately to the south and adjacent to the existing Landon property to include mitigation of an existing drainage concern and subject to planning and zoning approval of proposed use.

All in favor.

S. ADJOURN

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by P. Luna to adjourn.

All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amanda Calve
Secretary

Proclamation

Office of the Mayor

Presented to

Aubrey Kulpa

WHEREAS, Cromwell resident and Oakwood Soccer U-19 Player, Aubrey Kulpa has been named to the All-American Youth Soccer Team as selected by the United Soccer Coaches Association; and,

WHEREAS, Aubrey will be attending Penn State in the Fall of 2024 where she will continue both her soccer and academic career; and,

WHEREAS, Aubrey was selected as the most outstanding player at the Girls Academy Playoff in St. Louis this past summer, leading her team to the National Championship; and,

NOW THEREFORE, I Mayor Steve Fortenbach, on behalf of the Town of Cromwell congratulate Aubrey Kulpa on her athletic and academic accomplishments and look forward to following her continued success.

Signed for the Town of Cromwell this 9th Day of May 2023.

Steve Fortenbach, Mayor
Town of Cromwell



Attachment B

Town of Cromwell Office of the Mayor

MAYOR'S REPORT

Date: May 9, 2023
To: Members of the Town Council
From: Steve Fortenbach, Mayor
Subject: Mayor's Report for 5/9/2023 Town Council Meeting

- CMS building project will have its Budget Referendum on May 18, 2023, 12pm-8:00pm.
- Town of Cromwell held its budget referendum on May 2, 2023. The budget passed and Board of Finance set the Mill Rate at 26.41.
- The sub-committee continues to support Berry/Dunn on completing the climate/culture study. We should have a better idea of when it will be presented to the Town Council subsequent to our meeting on 5/9 @ 1:00pm.
- Attended the Athletic Field Committee meeting on Wednesday May 3rd with the Town Manager and Town Engineer to review the status of the project.
- Participated in the Harlem Wizards Basketball Game. It was a huge success. Every ticket was sold and a good time was had by all.
- I had the privilege of throwing out the first pitch at Cromwell Little League Opening Day. I also had the privilege of presenting Robin Watson with a Proclamation for all of his hard work and dedication to Cromwell Little League.
- Looking forward to the Memorial Day Weekend Car Show on 5/26/2023 & the Memorial Day Parade on 5/30/2023.

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
CONNECTICUT

COMMITTEES:

AGING

ARMED SERVICES

HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

JUDICIARY

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Attachment
C
United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

706 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-2823
FAX: (202) 224-9673

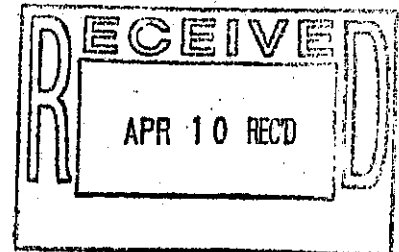
90 STATE HOUSE SQUARE, TENTH FLOOR
HARTFORD, CT 06103
(860) 258-6940
FAX: (860) 258-6958

915 LAFAYETTE BOULEVARD, SUITE 304
BRIDGEPORT, CT 06604
(203) 330-0598
FAX: (203) 330-0608

<http://blumenthal.senate.gov>

April 6, 2023

Executive Director Arthur G. Simonian
Mattabassett District
245 Main Street
Cromwell, CT 06416



Dear Executive Director Simonian:

I am writing concerning issues that were brought to my attention by a constituent regarding ongoing nuisance odors emanating from the Mattabassett District wastewater plant.

I understand that the constituent lives near the plant and has previously reached out to both the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Mattabassett District regarding the issue. Most recently, I have been made aware that DEEP responded to the constituent stating that the odor does not rise to the level of a violation of state law.

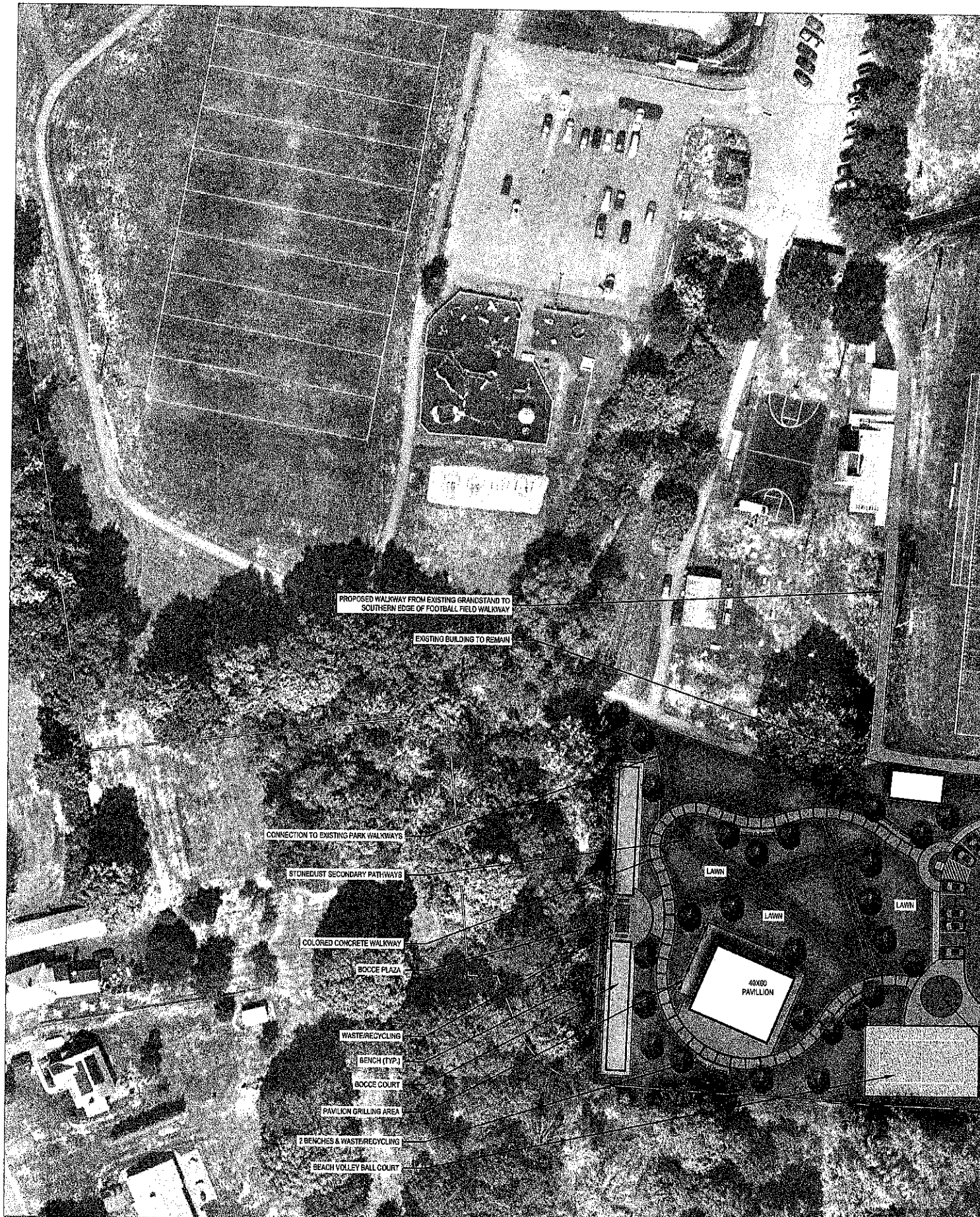
Despite the DEEP legal conclusion, it seems that the odor is still bothersome to the constituent. Could the District review this issue and determine what steps could be taken to reduce the odors emanating from the facility?

I would appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to hearing back from you soon. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my Deputy State Director Joe Rodriguez at (860) 258-6940.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,


U.S. Senator

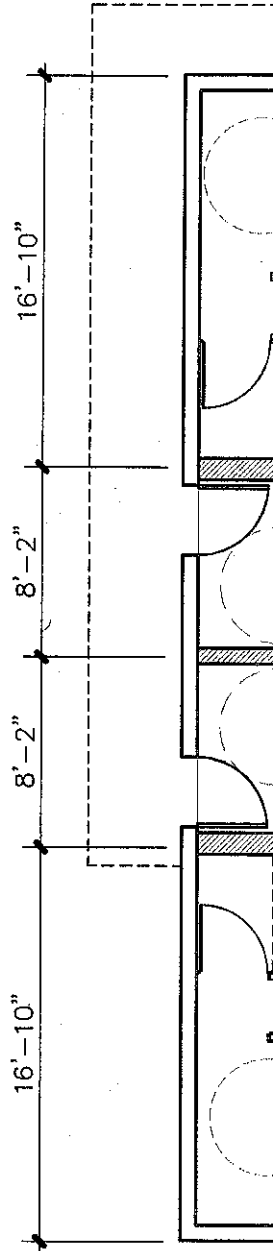


PIERSON PARK EXPANSION

CROMWELL, CT

PROGRAM ANALYSIS	
HOME TEAM	775 SF. 55 SEATS
AWAY TEAM	775 SF. 55 SEATS
(2) TEAM TOILETS	142 SF. 2 STALLS. 0 URINALS
(2) PUBLIC TOILETS	65 SF. WEST END
(2) TRAINER ROOM	72 SF. ACCESS IN TEAM ROOM
OFFICIAL ROOM	84 SF WEST END
STORAGE/ MECH.	59 SF. ACCESS FROM HOME TEAM ROOM
TOTAL SF	2,500 SF

PLAN LEGEND	
NEW WALL	

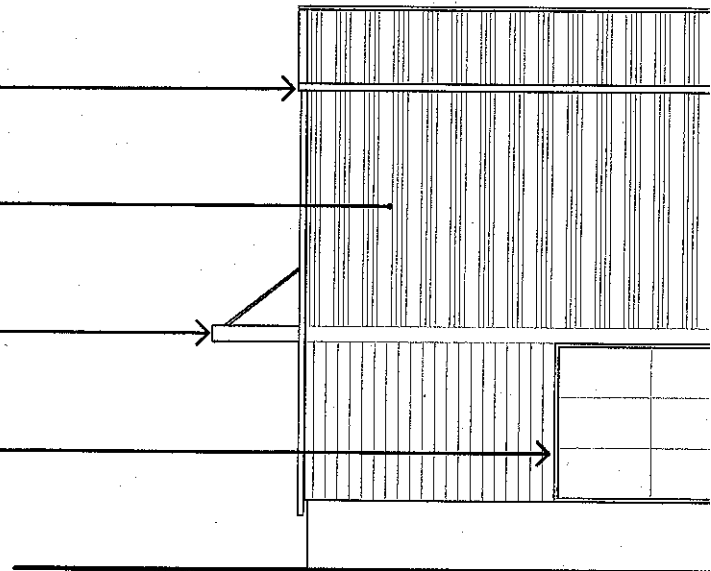


NEW TRIM &
GUTTERS

NEW METAL SIDING

CANOPY

NEW WINDOWS



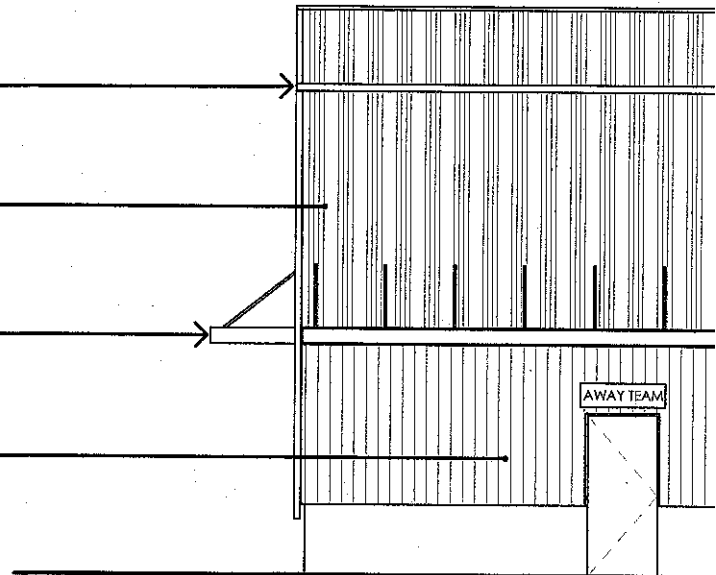
2 NORTH ELEV
1/8" = 1'-0"

NEW TRIM &
GUTTERS

NEW METAL SIDING

CANOPY

NEW SIDING
(FIBER CEMENT OR
WOOD)



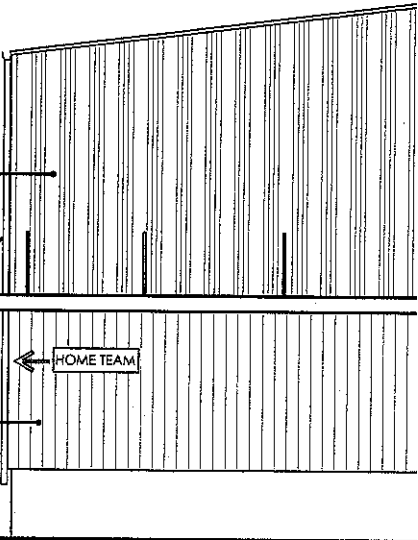
1 SOUTH ELEV
1/8" = 1'-0"

NEW TRIM &
GUTTERS

NEW METAL SIDING

CANOPY

NEW SIDING
(FIBER CEMENT OR
WOOD)



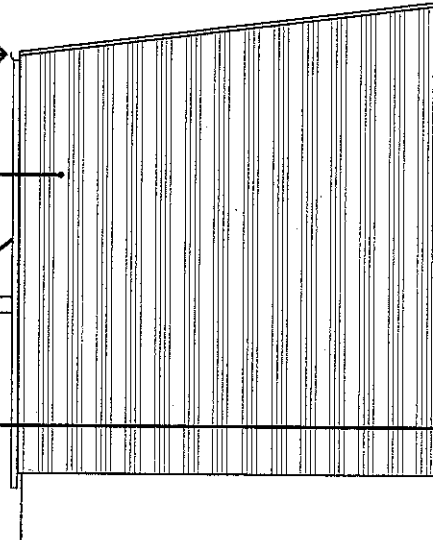
2 EAST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"

NEW TRIM &
GUTTERS

NEW METAL SIDING

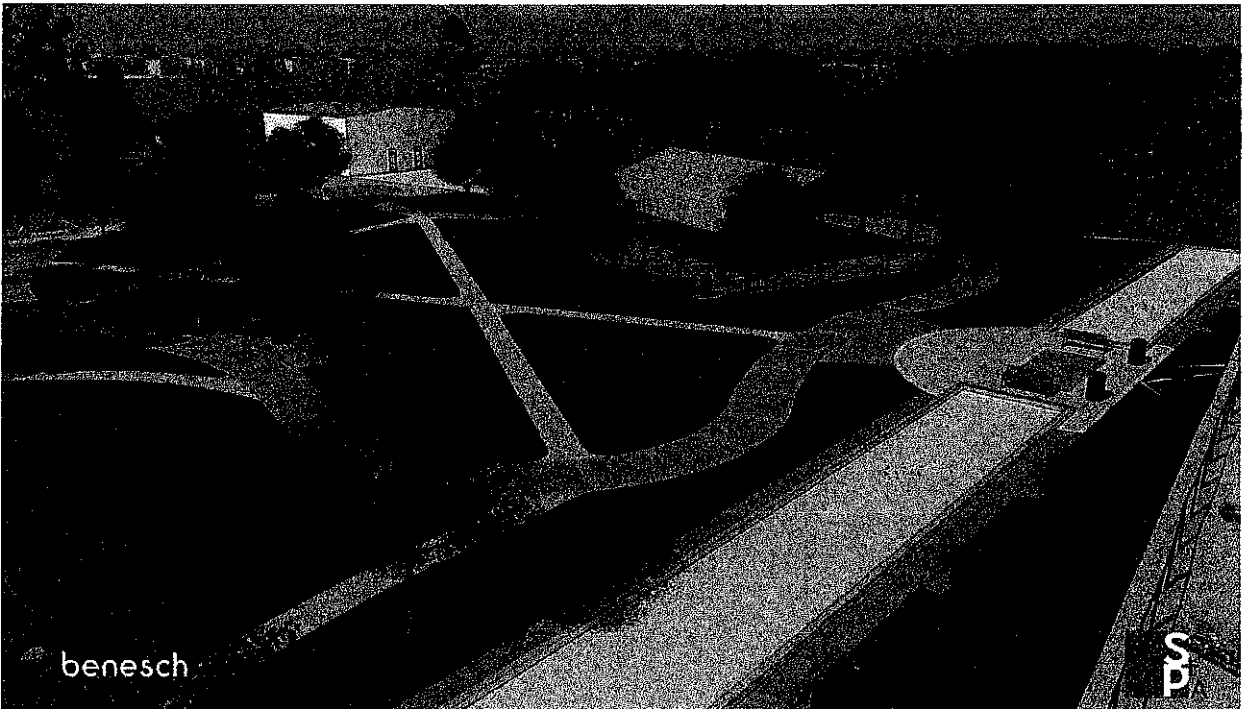
CANOPY

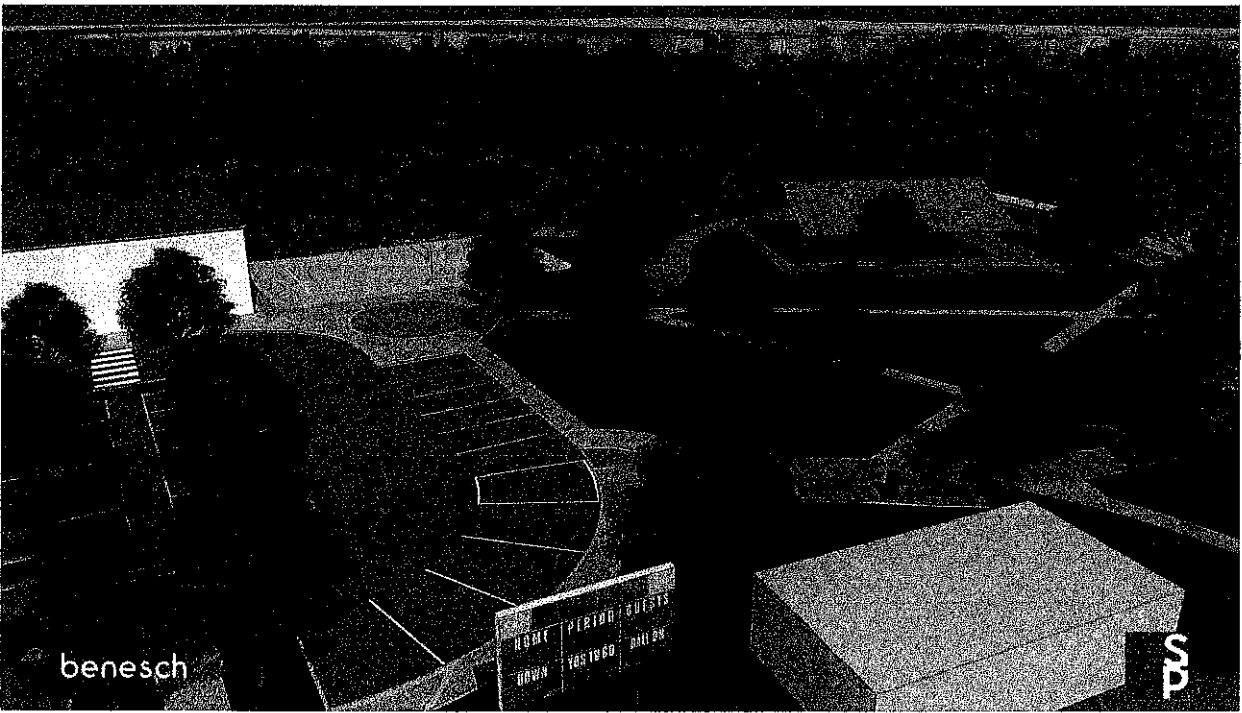
NEW SIDING
(FIBER CEMENT OR
WOOD)



1 WEST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"

Site Renderings







Cromwell High School Athletic Complex In

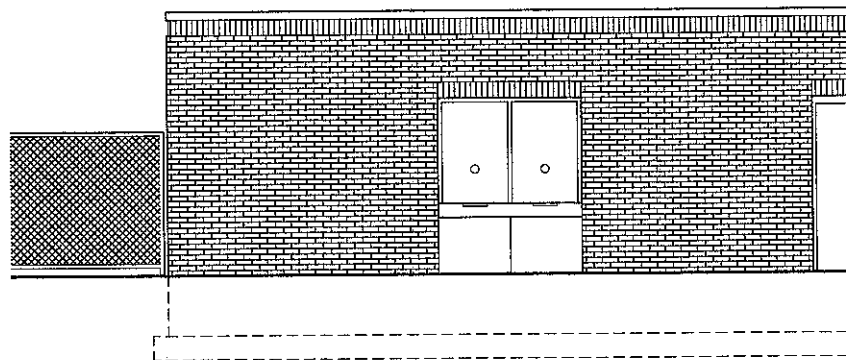
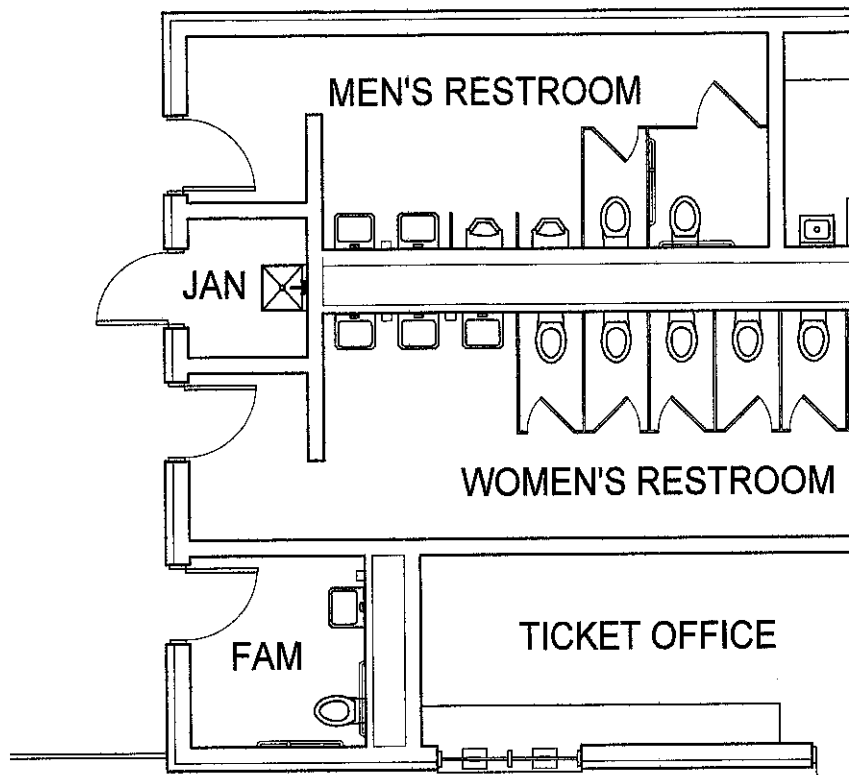
Existing Conditions

Legend:

1. Synthetic Turf Field 2. 6 Lane Oval and 8 Sprint Lanes 3. High Jump Areas 4. Long/Triple Jump Runways 5. Pole Vault Runway 6. Elevated Home Base
10. Track Storage Building 11. Restroom/Concession Building 12. Concrete Sidewalks 13. Perimeter Fencing 14. Safety Netting 15. Parking Lot with ~
20. Javelin Throw Striping 21. Shot Put 22. Natural Grass Field With Striping for (2) Soccer and (2) Lacrosse 23. (6) Tennis Courts 24. Existing Softball



Cromwell High School Athletic Complex
Site Concept Plan- Preferred Concept



CROMWELL STADIUM
(600-650 SP)

Attachment F

52 Missionary Road
apt. 3217
Cromwell, CT 06416
May 9, 2023

Town Council of Cromwell
Town Hall
41 West Street
Cromwell, CT 06416

Dear members of the Town Council and Town Manager:

I am writing as a citizen of Cromwell with input from others, and myself , on a current situation which I cannot defend.

I have voted in New York, and in nearby Glastonbury, and have loosely canvassed several other municipalities regarding their system of informing the public prior to a public vote. They all send information via direct mailing into taxpayers' homes.


Once again here in Cromwell, on May 2nd, registered voters went to the polls with very little information.

For those who are computer literate and have the time and energy, the town budget is on the website, all 110 pages. The school budget is on their website, all 155 pages, and slightly easier to read. The debt issue is not easily discoverable.

I would like to suggest one cost-effective measure of informing your constituents about the issues:

a single page insert could be placed in the Rare Reminder with a sample ballot, a summary of each issue, and a computer link to complete information. I believe the Town would be fulfilling their responsibility, and more would vote.

I sincerely hope you will formulate a strategy to address this serious issue.

Sincerely yours,

Diane Doxey

Calve, Amanda

From: Sondra Hathaway <shathaway@berrydunn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 1:57 PM
To: Calve, Amanda
Subject: Cromwell update for Council 5/9

Town Culture Assessment update

Cromwell Council published a request for proposals (RFP) on August 9, 2022 referencing its "mission to be an employer of choice and an organization achieving community excellence." The RFP authorized a Town Culture Assessment and BerryDunn was selected as the Town's culture assessor.

Current employee and council member feedback was provided anonymously via survey and interviews to BerryDunn. Anonymity was assured to increase participation and encourage honesty without fear of negative consequences or retaliation. Anonymity also reduces the likelihood of respondents feeling pressured to provide socially desirable responses that would skew data.

To further ensure privacy of respondents, a subcommittee to review BerryDunn's preliminary findings was named at the public town council meeting on March 22, 2023. The subcommittee includes Mayor Steve Fortenbach, Council Member Jack Henehan, Council Member James Demetriades, Town Manager Anthony Salvatore, and Executive Assistant Sherry McGuire. The subcommittee received BerryDunn's preliminary findings on April 3, 2023.

After subcommittee review of preliminary findings on DATES, BerryDunn will provide recommendations to the subcommittee and facilitate a work session to establish priorities. A final report containing an evaluation of key findings and a prioritized list of key recommendations will be delivered to employees and presented to council at a public meeting in the near future.

Sondra Hathaway | Senior Consultant
c: 602.380.7231 | berrydunn.com

