

**Initial Report from the Ad Hoc Committee for Proposed Gouveia Park  
Located at 1300 Albany Post Road, Croton-on-Hudson, NY**

**Jan. 13, 2015**

The charter of the Ad Hoc Committee is solely to make recommendations for potential uses for the facilities and grounds located at 1300 Albany Post Road (the "Property"). We would like to clarify that the Committee is not charged with assisting in the decision of whether or not the Property should be accepted as a gift.

This initial report addresses the short term use only: "those uses which could be accomplished with minimal infrastructure work on the property or buildings; and that could be accomplished within a couple of months to one year of the Village taking the property... It is not in the purview of the committee to either try to solve the obstacles, or to eliminate those uses which may require a financial commitment on the part of the village."

The Committee has concluded that it will take time to fully understand the Property's best uses for the public. We hope that our findings and suggestions will be useful.

**Recommendations for Initial Open Space Use and Preparation for Public Access**

**Accessibility and Parking:**

1. Driveway entrance needs widening; provide for two-way traffic at entrance.
2. Propose that public parking be limited to the upper entrance area.
3. Driveway should be widened in the upper area and a turn-around provided.
4. Limit vehicular access beyond the upper parking area; access to the lower parking area near residence available for small groups or handicapped with permission.
5. A chain or gate to be installed to limit off-hour access to the Property.
6. Plan for additional overflow parking and turn-around using gravel.
7. Village to determine if Property is for Croton-on-Hudson residents' use only.

**Signage:**

1. Street Signage: An attractive sign should be placed on Albany Post Road clearly identifying the Property as a community facility for intended group of users (e.g., Croton-on-Hudson residents). The appearance should be kept in line with Village graphics.
2. Internal signage: Signs should state the Village ordinances in a pleasant, welcoming, and clear manner.
3. Parking signage: Should identify the parking areas and overflow areas.
4. Map: A simple map of the Property should be posted at the entrance.
5. An historical sign should identify the architecture, the previous owners, and the gift of Property by Mr. and Mrs. Gouveia.
6. Suggest lowering speed limit on Albany Post Road near entrance and traffic signage for safety purposes.

**Fencing:**

1. The fence on the north side should be repaired.
2. The highway boundary fence should be restored.
3. A south boundary line at Skyview Health Center driveway should be established.
4. The wood sound barrier at the highway should be repaired.

## **Recommendations for Initial Open Space Use and Preparation for Public Access**

### Utilities: (for Village maintenance use)

1. The septic field location should be identified.
2. The underground power and cable locations should be identified.
3. Branch buried electrical circuits should be identified.
4. The buried oil tank locations should be identified.
5. Procedures for fire fighting and rescue should be established.
6. An ADA accessible portable toilet for maintenance and visitors should be available.

### Security and Monitoring:

1. Security cameras should be placed at the entrance of the Property and house.
2. Fire and security service should be retained.
3. Utility monitoring should be implemented to monitor temperature to reduce fuel use when the house is not occupied.

### Landscaping:

1. Continue the current landscape practices.
2. Establish a compost area for yard waste.
3. Establish procedures and rules to keep the Property green and free of harmful chemicals.

### Residence:

1. A plan and study of the house needs to occur before public access can be granted.
2. The house should be designated off limits until further study.
3. Valuable ornamentation should be secured or moved.
4. Possible rental use to generate income as a private residence was suggested for the initial phase.
5. Discuss with Skyview any potential interest in use of house.

## **Engage Local Citizens and Organizations for help planning and developing the Property**

### Open Park:

1. Organize tours of the Property for local citizens to view; run bus from town hall.
2. Invite local organizations to view the Property for consideration of use and creation of community programs.
3. Contact land use and environmental groups that can advise and may offer some funding and grants for park projects.
4. Some Organizations discussed were (list is not limited):
  - a. Civic Groups – Scouts, Seniors, Recreation Department, Conservation Advisory, Arboretum, Trail Blazers, and Garden Club.
  - b. Environmental Groups – Westchester Land Conservation, NYNJ Trails, Riverkeeper, and Sierra Club.
  - c. Educational Groups – CCCA, STGITW, Clearwater, and Croton Harmon Schools.  
(NOTE: STGITW is currently occupying a portion of the Property at the invitation of the Estate and Executor).
  - d. Arts Groups – Recreation Department, CACA, CCCA, CAC, music schools, and local artists.

## **Possible uses for the Property that can be developed**

### **Grounds:**

1. Trails and hiking paths
2. Create a sitting park and picnic area
3. Build a pavilion that can be rented for events
4. Outdoor events – farmers’ market, concerts, gatherings
5. Create a community garden
6. Create a walking path connecting to Skyview
7. Lease portions of Property for other uses

### **Residence:**

1. Rental Use – Long term rental can be achieved without much work; a rental estimate for the residence and two-acre site is approximately \$3,000 to \$4,000 per month.
2. Short term rental as a Bed & Breakfast would require someone to schedule, manage, provide cleaning, bookkeeping, etc.
3. Catering or Corporate Training use – house would need to be modified for this use.
4. Private office space rental.
5. Space for town offices i.e., Recreation Department, classes, meetings, Seniors’ events, etc. Improvements would be needed - handicap accessibility, ADA compliance.
6. Rental to non-profit arts, educational, environmental organizations and they would make improvements.
7. Improvements discussed were (a) installation of an exterior elevator for 2<sup>nd</sup> floor access, and (b) installation of energy saving equipment such as solar panels and geothermal heating.

### **Quonset Hut: The Quonset-hut storage building for inter-generational community uses:**

1. For the arts: painting, sculpture, pottery, crafts, wood shop, and metal workshops.
2. Possible changes to the building include replacing east and west walls with sliding glass doors, constructing patio, and a shading device on the west side.

### **Upper Garage:**

1. Possible improvement to become a classroom or meeting facility.

### **Lower Garage (near residence):**

2. This can be used by tenant, if house is rented.
3. Storage for house and/or yard furnishings, maintenance and transport equipment, as well as chairs and supplies.