

CAPTURE THE VISION

BRIEFING BOOKLET

Prepared by the



REVITALIZING OUR VILLAGE
ONE PROJECT AT A TIME

VISION: Promoting the economic development of Higganum Village while preserving its natural and cultural assets in order to foster social, economic, cultural and environmental health for this and future generations

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BRIEFING BOOKLET

Prepared by the Higganum Vision Group

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INTRODUCTION

The Higganum Vision Group (HVG) is a fast-growing, volunteer-run, action-oriented non-profit civic organization formed for this purpose:

VISION

To encourage the thoughtful development of the existing village while preserving the town's natural and cultural assets, thus improving the quality of life for this and future generations.

MISSION

To provide the community of Higganum with the knowledge, skill, and ability to develop a thriving Business Center surrounded by farmsteads, woodlands and waterways in order to provide for the community's health and well-being, economic vitality, cultural continuity, and connection with nature.



HVG has created these projects to reinforce Higganum Village's unique sense of place:

- **Higganum Village Farmers' Market Project** — supports economic and environmental sustainability by providing a convenient outlet for the community to buy foods and products directly from local farmers and artisans. This lively neighborhood experience is both nostalgic and progressive in its aim to preserve farming, nurture Higganum's sense of community and stimulate the revitalization of the village.
- **Higganum Hydrangea Project** — planting masses of hydrangea throughout the village, complementing the recently implemented Streetscape Improvement Project, to unify, beautify, and create a memorable identity for Higganum.
- **Pole Banners Project** — The new logo created for the Village of Higganum has been incorporated into a banner that will soon be hung from the sidewalk lights. This project was funded by the Rockfall Foundation.
- Website www.HigganumVisionGroup.org was created to promote all things Higganum (and Haddam too). This project was funded by the Rockfall Foundation.

In addition to these place-making projects, HVG volunteers have been working since October to Capture the Vision for Higganum Village by summarizing its history; identifying recent improvement projects; defining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; and surveying Haddam citizens' desires for Higganum Village over the next twenty years. It is the intent of this Brief to explain the results of the past year's research and surveys.

The capstone portion of the Capture the Vision Project will be two professionally led visioning sessions. It is our intent that this Briefing Booklet will be reviewed by those who intend to participate in these sessions and that it will serve as a foundation to be built on. The Briefing Booklet will be updated to include the results of these sessions and the final product will inform a strategic plan that is developed for the Village of Higganum.

TECHNICAL PORTRAIT

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HIGGANUM

Higganum is a borough in the rural town of Haddam 17 miles from Long Island Sound on the Connecticut River, an American Heritage River. The name Higganum is derived from the Algonkian word Higganompos, meaning “at the axe rock”. Swan Hill (el. 240’) and Higganum Dike (el. 440’) define the area of the village. The Dike is geologically significant, having been produced by a huge volcanic fissure eruption that produced a flood basalt 200 million years ago.

From these hills flow three brooks, Bible Brook from the north, Candlewood Brook from the west, and Ponsett from the south. These brooks converge in the village to become Higganum Creek which flows down a natural waterfall, into Higganum Cove and finally empties into the CT River.

It is these waterways that attracted the first settlers to Higganum. As early as 1678 a gristmill was built on Higganum Creek and saw-, cider- and other mills followed. Beginning in 1752, a prosperous ship building industry grew in the natural harbor of the Connecticut River and there formed Landing Road. In 1763 a ferry began to serve the sister community that grew across the River in Haddam Neck. Over 200 schooners that sailed the world were built on Landing Road.

By 1840 factories had supplanted shipbuilding as Higganum’s major industry. By the 19th century the three brooks powered over two dozen ‘manufactories’. On Candlewood Brook, the D&H Scovil Company milled feldspar and manufactured planter’s hoes and gun barrels from 1844-1942. Higganum Manufacturing (later Clark Cutaway Harrow) harnessed Ponsett Brook with a dam to produce agricultural implements. Higganum Creek powered Middletown’s Russell Manufacturing Co., which used the mill to make cotton webbing until the 1940s, when Frismar Inc. occupied this factory to make chemicals for mimeograph machines.

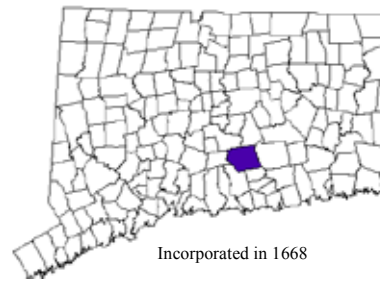
Workers’ cottages sprang up around these industries and in 1844 the Higganum Congregational church was built. Other churches soon followed. Service businesses built around Post Office Square included the Higganum Feed Store and Brainerd Hall (now the Grange), Olsen’s store and Clark’s stores. The latter two were torn down in the 1960’s for the Bank and its parking lot. In 1880’s the factories began to construct housing for their workers. These modest homes can be seen on Lake Avenue, Thayer Road, Dublin Hill Road, and Killingworth Road.

Haddam, Connecticut

CERC Town Profile 2010

Town Hall
30 Field Park Drive
Haddam, CT 06438
(860) 345-8531

Belongs to
Middlesex County
LMA Hartford
Middlesex County Economic Dev. Region
Midstate Planning Area



Incorporated in 1668

Demographics

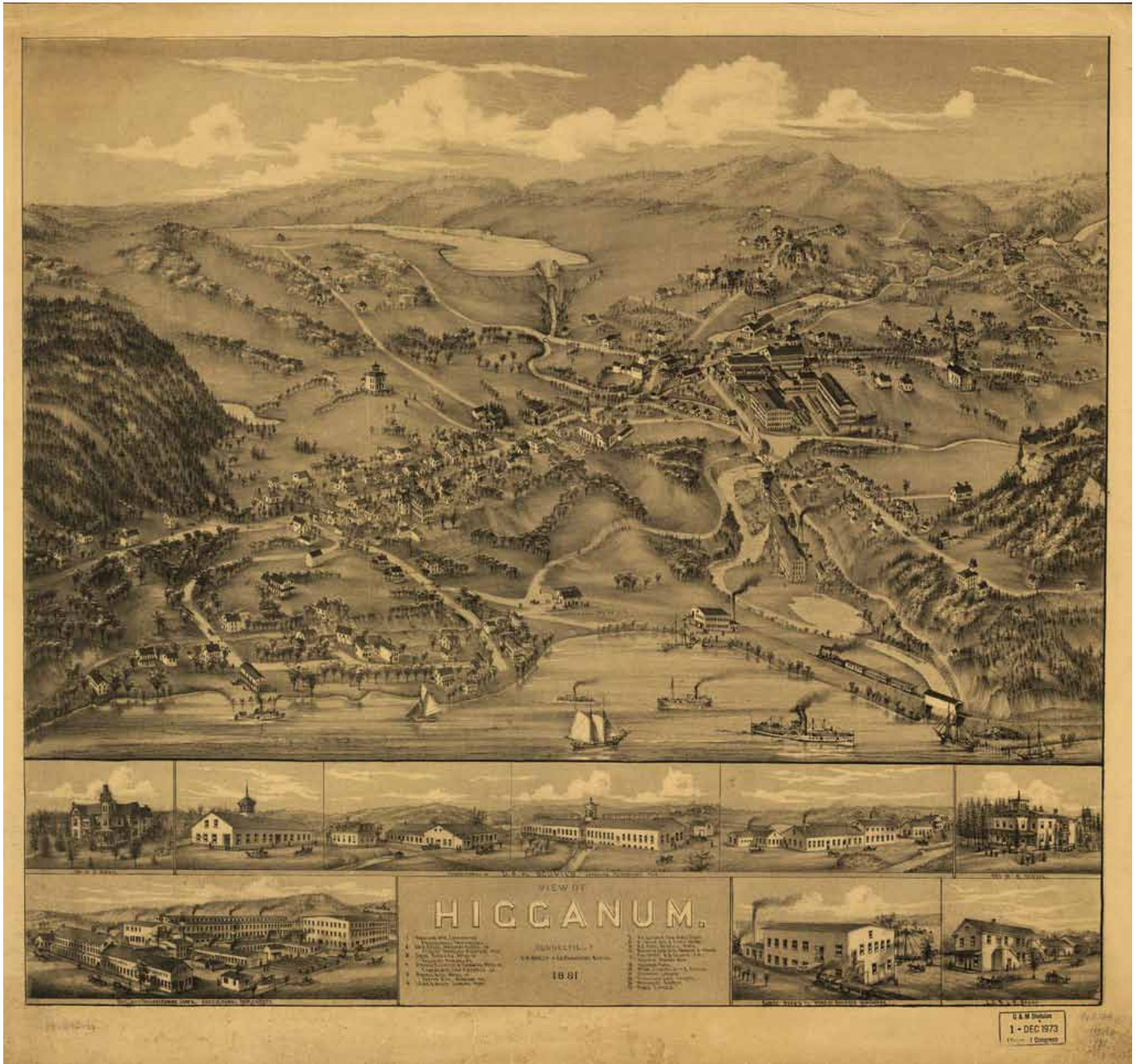
<i>Population (2009)</i>				<i>Race/Ethnicity (2009)</i>									
	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>State</i>		<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>State</i>						
1990	6,769	143,196	3,287,116	White	7,550	148,059	2,756,861						
2000	7,157	155,071	3,405,565	Black	81	5,933	319,730						
2009	7,914	164,892	3,497,398	Asian Pacific	103	3,760	120,457						
2014	7,793	166,731	3,485,122	Native American	29	999	9,990						
'09-'14 Growth / Yr	-0.3%	0.2%	-0.1%	Other/Multi-Race	151	6,141	290,360						
				Hispanic (any race)	120	6,840	426,255						
Land Area (sq. miles)	44	369	5,009	<i>Poverty Rate (1999)</i>	3.5%	4.6%	7.9%						
Pop./ Sq. Mile (2009)	180	447	698	<i>Educational Attainment (2009)</i>									
Median Age (2009)	44	42	40	Persons Age 25 or Older	<i>Town</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>%</i>					
Households (2009)	2,882	63,185	1,311,307	High School Graduate	1,774	31%	688,198	29%					
Med HH Inc. (2009)	\$97,892	\$74,860	\$68,055	Some College	1,422	25%	537,908	23%					
				Bachelors or More	2,097	37%	854,541	36%					
<i>Age Distribution (2009)</i>													
	<i>0-4</i>		<i>5-17</i>		<i>18-24</i>		<i>25-49</i>		<i>50-64</i>		<i>65+</i>		<i>Total</i>
Male	208	3%	733	9%	276	3%	1,327	17%	1,088	14%	402	5%	4,034
Female	161	3%	648	8%	242	3%	1,377	17%	1,017	13%	435	5%	3,880
County Total	7,963	5%	26,007	16%	15,334	9%	55,425	34%	35,625	22%	24,538	15%	164,892
State Total	210,817	6%	588,675	17%	330,112	9%	1,182,009	34%	696,537	20%	489,248	14%	3,497,398

Economics

<i>Business Profile (2005)</i>			<i>Top Five Grand List (2006)</i>		
<i>Sector</i>	<i>Establishments</i>	<i>Employment</i>		<i>Amount</i>	<i>% of Net</i>
Agriculture	2.7%	2.3%	Conn Yankee Atomic Power	\$21,644,290	2.9%
Const. and Mining	20.4%	10.7%	Carmen C Coccomio	\$5,189,490	0.7%
Manufacturing	5.3%	4.8%	Camp Bethel Assoc Inc	\$1,727,520	0.2%
Trans. and Utilities	3.3%	7.7%	Camp Bethel Assoc Inc	\$1,591,660	0.2%
Trade	19.5%	17.8%	Bridge Street Associates	\$1,585,000	0.2%
Finance, Ins. and Real Estate	4.1%	2.9%	Net Grand List (2006)	\$734,572,770	
Services	41.4%	53.8%	<i>Top Five Major Employers (2006)</i>		
Government	3.3%	0.0%	Haddam Board of Education - reg	Town of Haddam	
			Connecticut Yankee	J.C. Products	
			ECS/Marin Environmental		
			<i>Retail Sales (2007)</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>
			All Outlets	\$44,069,426	\$136,936,194,241

Education

<i>2005-2006 School Year</i>		<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Connecticut Mastery Test Percent Above Goal</i>							
				<i>Grade 4</i>		<i>Grade 6</i>		<i>Grade 8</i>			
				<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>		
Total Town School Enrollment		1,271	566,606	Reading	61	53	77	60	79	65	
Most public school students in Haddam attend Regional School District 17, which has 2,401 students.				Math	62	57	76	61	67	56	
				Writing	65	63	70	61	69	61	
<i>For more education data please see: http://www.state.ct.us/sde/</i>		<i>Students per Computer</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Average Class Size</i>			<i>Average SAT Score</i>			
		Elementary:	5.0	4.0	Grade K	16.0	Grade 2	16.0			
		Middle:	4.0	3.0	Grade 5	19.0	Grade 7	19.0	Verbal	542	508
		Secondary:	4.0	3.2	High School	20.3			Math	534	508



Higganum, c. 1881



Higganum Village — aerial view from east, c. 2010

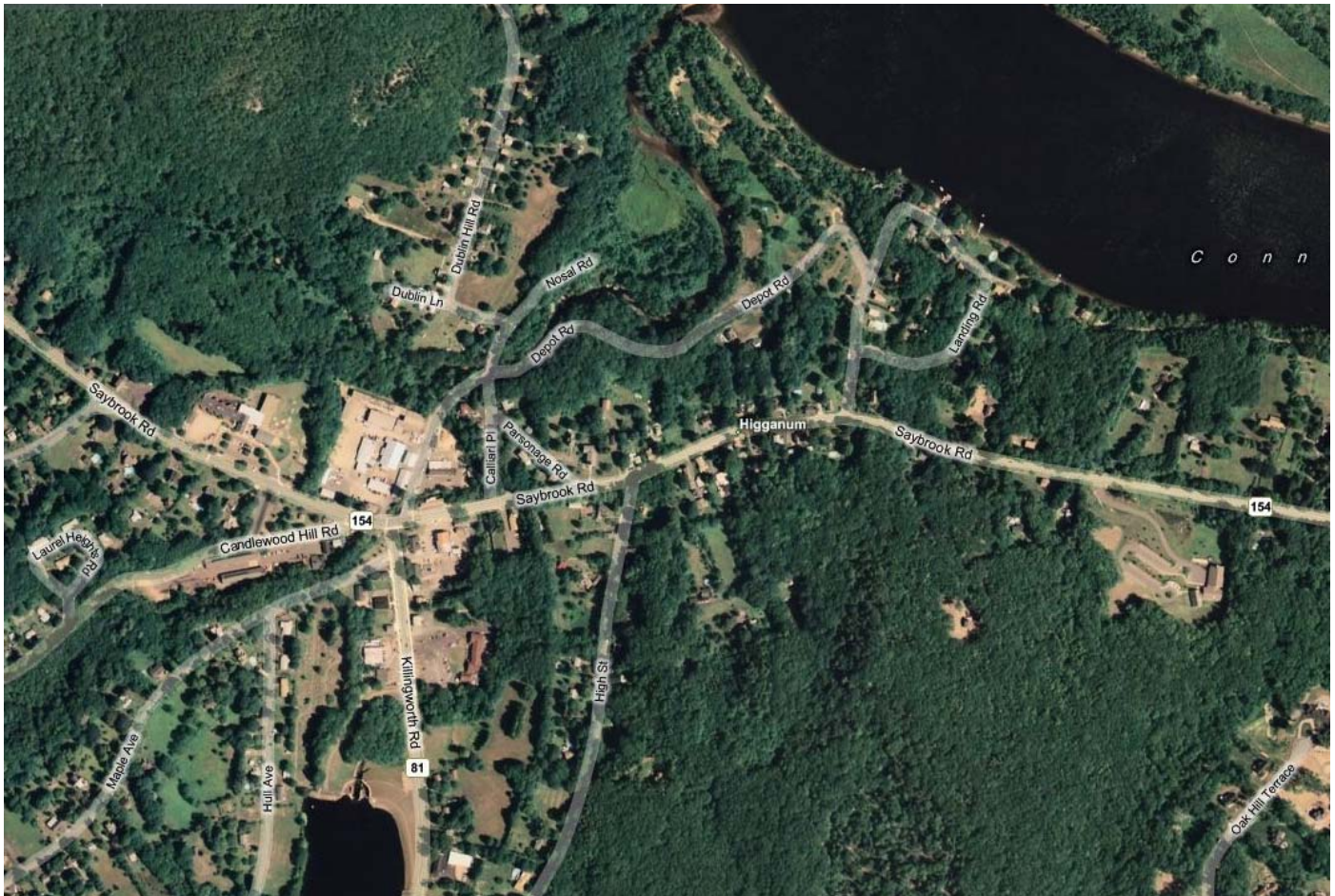


PHOTO INVENTORY



Frismar Falls



Higganum Reservoir



SE corner of Rt. 81 & Rt. 154



Teri's Package Store; Village Court Florist



NW corner of Rt. 81 & Rt. 154



West side of Rt. 81, Higganum Center



Formerly Higganum Drug Center (currently unoccupied)



Citizens Bank



East side of Rt. 81, Higganum Center



Claddagh House



Hi-Way Package Store

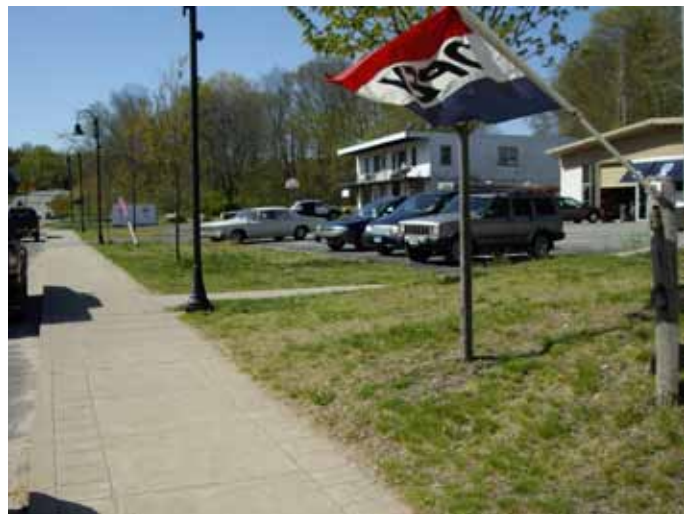


Brookside Steakhouse





Town Green Gazebo



Nehemiah Brainerd House, Rt. 154

HISTORY OF RECENT PROJECTS/REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

*Compiled by Emily Carrow, Nancy Meyers
(with invaluable input from Ann Faust, Thomas Worthley, Gail Reynolds)*

BACKGROUND

Higganum Village is a small business center for the Town of Haddam, a small rural town in Middlesex County in south-central Connecticut. Higganum is a rural village founded in the early 1700s at the confluence of three streams that were once tapped to drive several, now nonexistent, manufacturing sites. One very large site, the “Rossi” site, has been vacant and for sale for several years. The streams come together into a remarkable waterfall that flows into Higganum Cove on the Connecticut River. The cove area includes a mothballed, state-regulated “Superfund” site containing an abandoned water tower and the remains of the Frismar factory. Upstream, also within village boundaries, is the mile-long Higganum Reservoir which is bordered by 65 acres of derelict state park land. Today the village supports about 20 businesses found at a crossroads with a single traffic light. Principal sources of public communication in the village are community bulletin boards, a monthly town newsletter mailed to homeowners, one statewide, one regional and one local newspaper, various internet blogs and word-of-mouth communication.

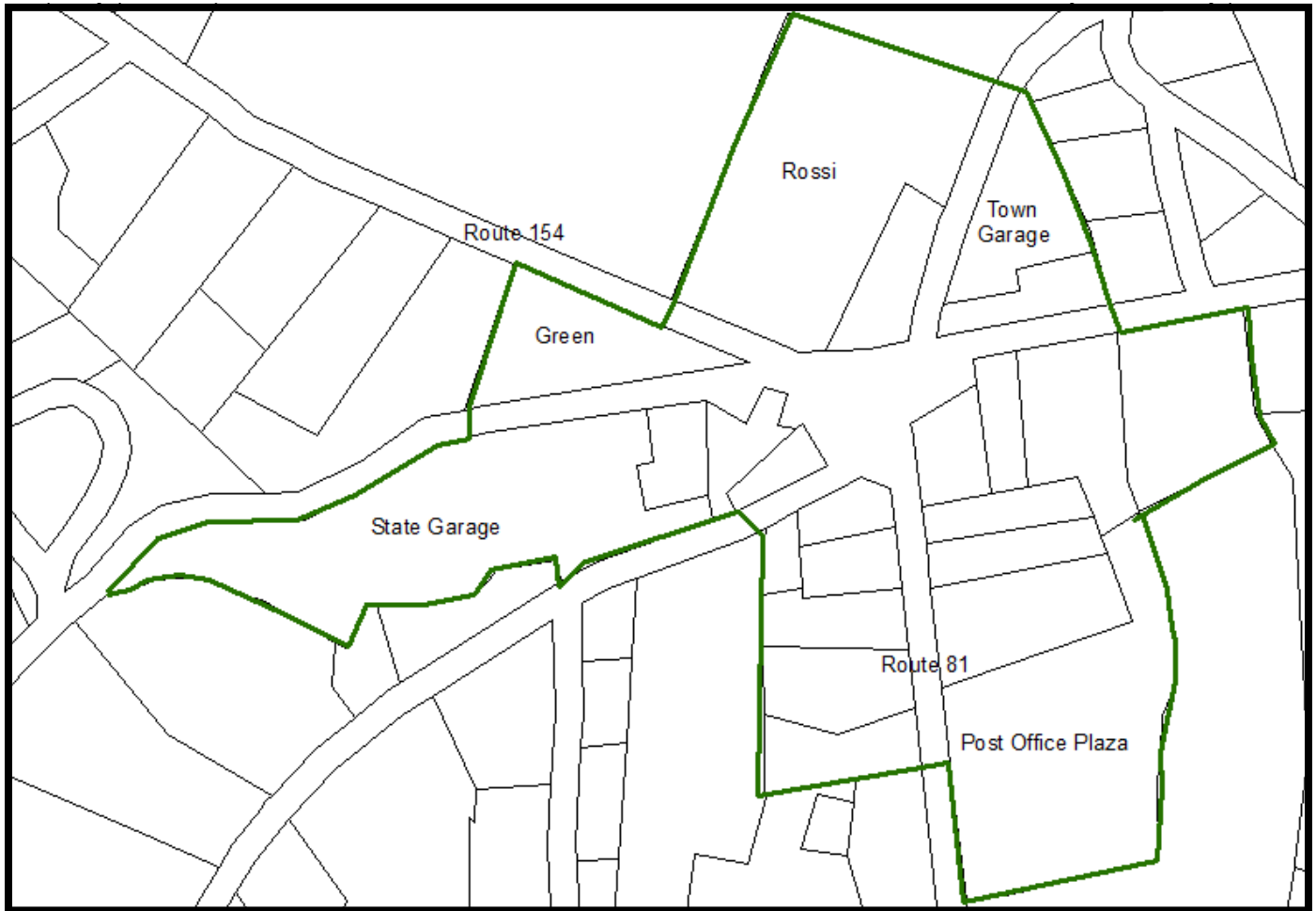
Once a thriving focal point of the town, Higganum Village today struggles economically to maintain key services. The redevelopment of several properties in the town center is critical to Haddam’s efforts to revitalize itself. Higganum was the setting of a Brownfields Demonstration Pilot Project awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1999 and completed in 2002 (see project summaries, below).

*Adapted from: “A Rural Application of the Sustainable Brownfields Redevelopment Process”
By Ben Tyson, Associate Professor, Department of Communication, Central Connecticut State University, August 2002*

Higganum possesses an eclectic mix of historic architecture. Here simple cottages, formal mansions and stylish homes can be found side by side. These residences are evidence of Higganum’s history as a successful port and shipbuilding center in the 18th century, followed by the development of industrial establishments in Higganum when the shipping industry declined. The D&H Scovil Company buildings are also evidence of the influence of industry on the area. All located along Candlewood Hill Road, the buildings recount the history of one of Higganum’s most prosperous industries during the 19th century. The Higganum Grange and the Higganum Feed Store are also village institutions. The Higganum Grange was built in 1882 and originally housed a grocery store, post office and bank. The Higganum Country Market occupied the ground floor until early 2009 when a move was undertaken to relocate 6 miles south to Tylerville, Haddam’s other small commercial center. In July 2010, following extensive renovations to the Grange building, the grocery store reopened under new ownership as the Gristmill Country Market. The Higganum Feed Store was built in 1880 and still provides the town with home and garden goods. Overall, Higganum has 71 historic buildings, which include the Higganum United Methodist Church and Higganum Congregational Church, both built during the 1800s.

Adapted from: “Town of Haddam, Plan of Conservation & Development Update March 2008”

The map below shows the Higganum Village Zone outlined in green.



Map courtesy of Thomas Worthley

NATURAL HISTORY

The confluence of Bible Rock Brook, Candlewood Hill Brook, and Ponsett Brook at a place of relatively flat topography in Higganum Center has resulted in industrial and commercial use of the center since European settlement. As a result, the soils and land cover reflect this use: impervious surfaces, structures rather than forested land cover, urbanized, compacted soils resulting from fill and human use.

Along streams, the soils and surficial materials of sand and gravelly loam sit atop the Monson gneiss (granitic gneiss) bedrock. These soils are wetland soils.

The range of a state endangered species (probably the bald eagle) extends into the northeast corner of the village zone according to the Department of Environmental Protection Natural Resources Diversity Database.

Known hydrocarbon contamination exists in the Higganum Center groundwater.

SUMMARIES OF PAST, ONGOING OR PLANNED REVITALIZATION EFFORTS IN HIGGANUM

PROJECT 1	Higganum Center Brownfields Assessment
START - FINISH	1999-2002
OBJECTIVE	Assess possible contamination and plan for the reuse of three sites in Higganum Center that are critical to Haddam's future Sites: Old Higganum Fire House; DOT Maintenance Facility (both on Candlewood Hill Road); Town Garage on Dublin Hill Road
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam US EPA Demonstration Pilot Grant of \$156,000
PROJECT TEAM	Higganum Center Advisory Committee (HCAC) - Selectman Keith Ainsworth, Ann Faust, Ben Tyson, Thomas Worthley, David Platt CCSU Center for Social Research Marin Environmental, Inc. Higganum Center Stakeholder Group (Gail Reynolds, Harvey Clew, et al.)
RESULTS	Phase 1 assessment of DOT site (14 areas of concern) Phase 1 Assessment of Town Garage (2 areas of concern) Phase 1 and 2 Assessment of Old Firehouse (1 area of concern) Ecological assessment of Candlewood Brook
REFERENCES	Final Report June 2004: Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot Cooperative Agreement — Higganum Center Redevelopment Initiative Article Haddam Bulletin 2000 (Tanja Moriarty) Higganum Center Charette (2000) Higganum Center Homeowners' Survey findings Higganum Brownfields Youth Survey findings

<p>IDEAS/ISSUES</p>	<p>The committee researched various community outreach models and decided to implement ASTME 1984-98 Sustainable Brownfields Redevelopment Model. This plan includes participatory decision making in all aspects of Brownfields Redevelopment. While this model was very time intensive, requiring much staff and volunteer time, the results were well worth the effort.</p> <p>The Center for Social Research at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) performed a thorough evaluation of the process using both qualitative and quantitative data. A report detailing the study and its results has been forwarded to EPA for their review.</p> <p>Thomas Worthley coordinated community outreach, communication, and coordination of all the committees working on improving the town.</p> <p>Identified and engaged key stakeholders including homeowners, youth, businesses, developers and the following government committees/commissions: Conservation Commission, Inland Wetlands Commission, Economic Development Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Haddam Brownfields Project Advisory Committee, Firehouse Reuse Committee, Town Garage/Senior Center Development Committee, Higganum Cove Study Committee, Higganum Reservoir State Park Study Committee, and Higganum Dam Reconstruction Effort. Many of these groups have been working on plans, regulations, and ideas on how to improve the ecologic and economic condition of the town.</p> <p>Also worked with the Higganum Creek Watershed Project Committee and the Haddam Land Trust regarding ecological issues of Candlewood Hill Brook, Bible Rock Brook, Ponsett Brook, and Higganum Creek which are all tied to the contaminated Frismar Property which made carbon copy paper, located on Dublin Hill Road in Higganum.</p> <p>Held series of stakeholder group meetings, including a Charette</p> <p>Pre and post survey results of various stakeholder groups (i.e. home owners, business owners, municipal officials) indicate that knowledge, input, confidence and support for Higganum Center improvements improved throughout the project.</p> <p>OTHER OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalyst for community involvement /community-building • \$1.2M in private and public funds leveraged • Led to Streetscape Program <p>IDEAS THAT DID NOT HAPPEN AS ENVISIONED IN 2000:</p> <p>Redevelopment of first Brownfields site: The State of Connecticut donated the abandoned DOT garage on Bridge Street, Haddam, to the town for use in tourism in 1999. After the land was transferred , the town partnered with the Harrington-Haddam Boatworks, to create a wooden boat building facility. The boat works capitalizes on our town’s boat building history. An area of it will be open this fall (2000) to the public to view the manufacturing of boats as they were built in the 1800s. Information will be on display and boat building courses will be offered.</p> <p>In March 2000, the town received a \$350,000 Small Cities grant from the State Department of Economic and Community Development to develop the second building on the site into an Eco-Tourism Center to be opened in the spring of 2001. Site work and septic and well improvements are to be made. This project failed as no business was willing to oversee the tourism Center as was planned.</p> <p>Process is a good model - first time people start thinking that Higganum Center could be different from what it is</p>
<p>NEXT STEPS</p>	<p>HCAC merged with the EDC when the project was completed in 2002</p>

PROJECT	Higganum Center Streetscape
OBJECTIVE	Improve function and esthetics of Higganum Center streets around intersection of Rtes 154 and 81: N on 154 to HES S on 154 to the retaining wall S on 81 to Higganum Village plaza
START - FINISH	2002-2004
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam State and local funding
PROJECT TEAM	EDC : Mike Fortuna, David Platt,
RESULTS	Sidewalks (handicap accessible), streetlights (attractive and adaptable to banners and decorations), trees, visual cues to slow traffic 90° curb cuts, driveway alignment, parallel parking (eliminate pull-in parking), re-engineered dangerous intersection at Maple Ave /154/81 Only Item 3 was completed as planned. Items 1 and 2 were not implemented.
REFERENCES	
IDEAS/ISSUES	Planning grew out of Brownfields Charette Other outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual improvement - stitched buildings together and created cohesiveness visually • Businesses that were opposed at first are now either neutral or in favor • Most businesses generally pleased, no one lost business
NEXT STEPS	Revive effort to complete Items 1 and 2.

Town of Haddam Report on Water System Evaluation Study for Higganum Village Center, 1999, Weston and Sampson

PROJECT	Water System for Higganum
OBJECTIVE	Determine best system to provide potable water in Higganum
START - FINISH	1999
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam
PROJECT TEAM	EDC
RESULTS	
REFERENCES	Town of Haddam Report on Water System Evaluation Study for Higganum Village Center, 1999, Weston and Sampson
IDEAS/ISSUES	Other issues loomed larger than community water source
NEXT STEPS	Water contamination issues to be investigated

PROJECT	Wastewater Treatment System for Higganum
OBJECTIVE	Implement wastewater treatment system to allow commercial development in Higganum Center
START - FINISH	Since 1999 at least 6 engineering studies have been undertaken to assess wastewater issues and evaluate options .Numerous Study Reports have been issued.
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam Funding mostly town, some state
PROJECT TEAM	EDC and Board of Selectmen
RESULTS	Based on a July 2010 study report summarizing technical issues and costs and a detailed comparison between options of connecting to Middletown sewer system vs constructing a local wastewater treatment system, EDC unanimously recommended that Bd of Selectmen solicit proposals for the design of a local wastewater treatment system to serve Higganum Village.
REFERENCES	2010 report by engineering firm Wright-Pierce "Evaluation of Feasibility"
IDEAS/ISSUES	Pivotal issue to sustainability of Higganum as commercial center Ties in with new Village Zoning District regulations that allow for density — key is wastewater treatment The currently proposed service area includes nine properties in the "North" Higganum Village and twenty-five in Higganum Village (center) Both options are very expensive, however based on updated cost estimates, the local waste water treatment option was the less expensive one If a larger service area could be identified, or if the Rossi property was developed, the increased number of potential customers and impact on economic development could possible justify either option
NEXT STEPS	Bd of Selectmen to solicit and evaluate proposals

PROJECT	Higganum Village Zoning
OBJECTIVE	Encourage compatible buildings and uses with increased density in Higganum Center, which has historically been devoted to commerce.
START - FINISH	2000-2001
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam, Planning and Zoning Commission
PROJECT TEAM	P&Z, Paul Geraghty; EDC, Mike Fortuna and David Platt
RESULTS	Village zoning regulations
REFERENCES	Regulations; Analysis of Higganum Village commercial properties document
IDEAS/ISSUES	Pivotal issue to sustainability of Higganum as commercial center Ties in with new Village Zoning District regulations that allow for density — key is wastewater treatment (Paul Geraghty, Mark DuBois) Difficult subject — expensive, lots of opposition (except from business-owners) Many studies have been conducted More beneficial to build a stand-alone system or hook up to Middletown? Technology keeps changing, usage assumptions vary
NEXT STEPS	To assure development occurs as town desires, consider tightening of Village zoning regulations & creating 'design guidelines'.

PROJECT	Higganum Cove Restoration
OBJECTIVE	Environmental site assessment (former Frismar property) and proposal for rehabilitation
START - FINISH	1999-2000
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Higganum Cove Committee appointed by Board of Selectmen
PROJECT TEAM	David Platt, Timothy Brewer, Marge DeBold, Steven O'Brien, Peter Smith, and Anthony Bondi
RESULTS	<p>Report detailing assessment, funding opportunities and proposal for cleanup and development into town-owned passive recreational/nature area</p> <p>Site assessment done by CT DEP and US EPA</p> <p>\$347,000 (DEP) spent to identify and characterize the contamination in the Cove - included field assessments, fiber core sampling, surveying, wetland reports, identifying alternatives</p> <p>Contamination identified includes PCBs, municipal solid waste, and asbestos.</p> <p>Site was stabilized, secured and tanks on Higganum Creek removed.</p> <p>Estimated cost of remediation: \$2.3 million (Tom Riscassi, DEP)</p>
REFERENCES	<p>Higganum Cove Committee Report</p> <p>Article Haddam Bulletin 2000 (Tanja Moriarty)</p>
IDEAS/ISSUES	<p>Potential key segment of proposed green way linking areas from The Reservoir park through the dam, down to the Center (Platt)</p> <p>While the site falls under the state's Super Fund program (eligible for state money to clean up polluted sites), it never reaches the top of the priority list because it poses no imminent human health threat and other sites continue to emerge with more notoriety</p> <p>Entangled issue of ownership and access (owner cannot be located). The state will have to condemn the property in order to conduct remediation activities but the condemnation action will probably not take place until remediation funding has been secured.</p>
NEXT STEPS	Public input is paramount, especially in the formation of plans to improve Higganum Center. Letter writing will help get the Cove into productive use by moving the project into a higher priority status so the State can fund its cleanup and rehabilitation more quickly (David Platt)

PROJECT	Higganum Reservoir State Park Development Committee
OBJECTIVE	Development of site for passive and active recreation
START - FINISH	1999-2001
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	State govt Town of Haddam
PROJECT TEAM	Higganum Reservoir State Park Study Committee: Scott Martin (Chair,) Ed Schwing, Thomas Przybylowicz, Janet Bower
RESULTS	Plan was presented to the State including beach, pavilion, ballfields
REFERENCES	Findings and Recommendations Report, June 2001
IDEAS/ISSUES	State was NOT willing to put money into improvements. Town funds and grants were recommended funding sources. Many local citizens were opposed to the prospect of a State Park attracting "out-of-towners." People who live on Rt 81 nearby were particularly opposed
NEXT STEPS	Users can be controlled by charging out-of-towner's only. Consider phasing in improvements.

PROJECT	Higganum Reservoir Invasive Species Survey
OBJECTIVE	Identify invasive species in the reservoir
START - FINISH	2004
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	State govt
PROJECT TEAM	CT Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES)
RESULTS	Report (Map and Transect Data)
REFERENCES	CAES website
IDEAS/ISSUES	
NEXT STEPS	Could a clean-up day be planned that would include youth volunteers?

PROJECT	Plan of Conservation and Development
OBJECTIVE	Satisfy CT General Statute Chapter 126, Section 8-23, which requires that a planning and zoning commission "prepare, adopt, and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality."
START - FINISH	2005-2008
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam
PROJECT TEAM	Joseph Bergin, Stasia DiMichele, Andrea Duggan, Robert Duval, Paul Geraghty, Melanie Giamei, Peter Gillespie, Lisa Malloy, Kristin McQueeney, Emily Moore, David Platt, Gail Reynolds, Tom Worthley
RESULTS	Plan of Conservation and Development
REFERENCES	1993 Plan of Conservation and Development 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development
IDEAS/ISSUES	Adopted by Town in March 2008.
NEXT STEPS	Land use practices need to reflect Plan findings. Determine objectives to achieve defined goals. Did the state give town money for completion of this?

PROJECT	Economic Development Plan for Higganum
OBJECTIVE	To encourage development that will spur economic growth, preserve assets, and improve the livability of the Village.
START - FINISH	Sept 1999
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Town of Haddam
PROJECT TEAM	EDC
RESULTS	Proposal for new town center with mixed use buildings
REFERENCES	Strategic Economic Development Plan for Haddam, Connecticut, Bartram and Cochran, 1996 A Design for Higganum Center, Rocco Architects, 1998 Economic Summary Report Town of Haddam, MBIA Bartram and Cochran, 2000
IDEAS/ISSUES	Village zoning Regulations written Platt & Fortuna and adopted by town.
NEXT STEPS	Conduct community visioning session and visual preference study. From that, prepare master plan diagram.

PROJECT	Route 154 Scenic Road Committee
OBJECTIVE	Develop Scenic Corridor Management Plan
START - FINISH	February 2002-June 2003
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Federal Highway Administration, Connecticut Department of Transportation
PROJECT TEAM	CT DOT, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Carol Johnson Associates, Fitzgerald and Halliday, Ann Faust, Jan Sweet, Gail Reynolds, Tim Brewer, Donald Smith, Paul Marin, Peter Smith, Geraldine Marek, Jeff Schultz, Howard McAuliffe, Teri Everett
RESULTS	Corridor Management Plan, including Cultural Resource Inventory, Scenic Vistas inventory, CD-ROM of photos
REFERENCES	Route 154 Corridor Management plan, Haddam, Connecticut, June 2003
IDEAS/ISSUES	Town would not fund any of the management plan suggestions
NEXT STEPS	The gateway to the village is critical. Revisit existing plan, modify as indicated, request funding from town and private foundations.

PROJECT	Tree Planting
OBJECTIVE	Beautification
START - FINISH	1998-1999
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	America The Beautiful Grant, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Department of Urban Forestry
PROJECT TEAM	Haddam Conservation Commission
RESULTS	Trees planted on land at the corner of Maple Avenue and Killingworth Road Also on Christian Hill Rd.?
REFERENCES	Grant proposal (written by Leslie Starr) should be on file at town hall
IDEAS/ISSUES	Town would not fund any of the management plan suggestions
NEXT STEPS	Project completed Consider other such beautification projects and potential funding sources (Fiskar).

PROJECT	Higganum Walking Path
OBJECTIVE	Get people to walk around Higganum Center Increase awareness of in-town waterways.
START - FINISH	2008
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Trails Grant
PROJECT TEAM	Haddam Conservation Commission, Intern Eric Boardman, Tom Worthley, Advisor
RESULTS	Path of walking trail proposed
REFERENCES	Maps and documentation
IDEAS/ISSUES	Still on Conservation Commission active list
NEXT STEPS	Organize volunteers to assist in implementation?

PROJECT	Higganum Creek Watershed Study
OBJECTIVE	Obtain water quality baseline
START - FINISH	2000-2002
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	
PROJECT TEAM	Haddam Land Trust
RESULTS	Higganum streams surface waters tested for baseline items
REFERENCES	
IDEAS/ISSUES	
NEXT STEPS	

PROJECT	Scenic Route 154 Brochure
OBJECTIVE	Route 154 publicity
START - FINISH	1996-1997
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	ISTEA grant, Haddam Conservation Commission
PROJECT TEAM	Haddam Conservation Commission
RESULTS	Glossy brochure describing highlights of Route 154, including Higganum Center.
REFERENCES	
IDEAS/ISSUES	Obtain a copy of brochure for this record.
NEXT STEPS	

PROJECT	Higganum Center Well Water Testing
OBJECTIVE	Determine contaminants, extent of contaminants, management of contaminants
START - FINISH	2010-
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Chatham Health District, Citizens for Clean Groundwater
PROJECT TEAM	Chatham Health District, Citizens for Clean Groundwater
RESULTS	
REFERENCES	
IDEAS/ISSUES	
NEXT STEPS	

PROJECT	Proposed Haddam Merchants Association
OBJECTIVE	
START - FINISH	
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	
PROJECT TEAM	Steve Kanaras
RESULTS	Fizzled?
REFERENCES	
IDEAS/ISSUES	
NEXT STEPS	Initiate another attempt at forming a merchants' association with clear benefits for membership. Survey merchants for desired improvements. Consider forming chamber of Commerce and/or consortium of lower CT River Towns.

PROJECT	Transfer Station Relocation
OBJECTIVE	To find a suitable new site for transfer station because town must move out of current state-owned property
START - FINISH	Ongoing since 2008
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Board of Selectmen
PROJECT TEAM	
RESULTS	First Selectman Paul DeStefano succeeded in obtaining an extension of DEP deadline to move out of current site.
REFERENCES	
IDEAS/ISSUES	Ideally one site would accommodate both transfer station and town garage If a suitable site is not found, other options include partnering with other towns or eliminating transfer station altogether and forcing private pickup service
NEXT STEPS	Evaluation of options ongoing

PROJECT	Replacement of Bridge - Route 154 over Candlewood Hill Brook
OBJECTIVE	Replace the existing single span bridge with one comprised of galvanized steel beams and a composite concrete deck on stay-in-place forms. The proposed clear span length will be increased to 30 feet to improve the hydraulic conditions at the site. The proposed bridge width including travel lanes, shoulders, parapets, and Town Green will remain the same as the existing bridge.
START - FINISH	Spring 2012 - Summer 2013 (Proposed)
SPONSORSHIP/ FUNDING	Connecticut Department of Transportation Federal and State funds
PROJECT TEAM	
RESULTS	
REFERENCES	More detailed information is available at CTDOT's Office of Engineering, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, Connecticut, Anyone wishing to review the plans may contact Mr. Louis D. Bacho at (860) 594-3212 to make an appointment. Plans will also be available for review at the Town Planning office.
IDEAS/ISSUES	The bridge is in need of replacement due to the poor condition of the abutments and wingwalls, poor hydraulics at the bridge, and channel erosion due to scour. The estimated construction cost for this project is approximately \$3,465,000. There will be some minor rights-of-way involvement associated with this project. The construction will be performed in two stages. Under this scenario, one lane of traffic in each direction will be open during each construction stage. Pedestrian access across the bridge will also be maintained in each construction stage.
NEXT STEPS	

TOWN COMMITTEES AND THEIR OBJECTIVES (CIRCA 2002)

(excerpted from Ben Tyson, Aug 2002)

HADDAM BROWNFIELDS PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: complete environmental assessment and reuse plans for two sites in Higganum Center
HADDAM LAND TRUST: landowner education and ecologically sound development of Haddam
CONSERVATION COMMISSION: promote ecologically sound development in Higganum
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC): develop and implement plans for economic development of Higganum Center
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION: design and approval of new zoning regulations to support EDC plan for Higganum Center
FIREHOUSE REUSE COMMITTEE: develop plans for Firehouse reuse and Youth Center/Veteran Museum development
TOWN GARAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: develop plans for moving the Town Garage
HIGGANUM COVE STUDY COMMITTEE: develop environmental clean-up and reuse plans for Higganum Cove
HIGGANUM RESERVOIR STATE PARK STUDY COMMITTEE: develop plans for town to assume management of Higganum Reservoir State Park from State DEP

HIGGANUM COMMERCIAL SPACE INVENTORY

TYPE OF BUSINESS	AVAILABLE LOCALLY (includes 2 mile radius Rte 154 N and Rte 81 S)	AVAILABLE IN NEIGHBORING COMMUNITY (Tylerville or Middletown)	RECENTLY CLOSED in local or neighboring community	WHY CLOSED?	NOT READILY AVAILABLE
Accounting services	X	X			
Antiques/ Collectibles store		X	X		
Appliances					X
Apparel		X			
Art gallery		X			
Auto dealer		X			
Architect services	XX				
Auto parts		X			
Auto repair/service	XX				
Bakery		X			
Bank	XX				
Barber shop	XX				
Bicycle shop		X			
Beauty salon - full service	XXX				
Book store		X			
Café/internet - sit down		X			
Café/Coffee shop - take out	X				
Catering and specialty foods		X			
Convenience store	XX				
Consignment shop		X	X	Lost lease	
Dance/Martial Arts facility		X			
Dental services	X				
Doctor services	X				
Dry cleaners	X				
Exercise facility	X				
Fast food - franchise	X				
Fast food - seasonal	X				
Feed store	X				
Financial services	X				
Floor covering		X			
Florist	X				

Funeral home		X			
Furniture store					X
Gas station	X				
General store					X
Gift shop		X			
Grocery store	X			Closed 1 ½ yrs - reopened under new ownership	
Hardware store	X				
Heating/Cooling services	X				
Household/Home goods		X			
Insurance services	XX				
Ice cream shop		X			
Jewelry store		X			
Nail salon	X				
Laundromat		X			
Massage services	XX				
Music store		X			
Legal services	X				
Nursery/ Landscaping		X			
Package store	XX				
Paint/Wallpaper		X			
Pet grooming	X				
Pet s & supplies		X			
Pharmacy		X	X	Retired	
Pizza place	XXX				
Real estate office	XX				
Rental services		X			
Rug cleaning	X				
Printing/Copying service		X			
Restaurant-full service with bar	X				
Restaurant - breakfast/or lunch	XX				
Specialty retail		X			
Sporting goods		X			
Tanning salon		X			
Tavern/Pub	X				
Variety store		X			
Veterinary services	X				

SUBJECTIVE PORTRAIT

PERCEPTIONS OF THE VILLAGE (COMMUNITY SURVEY)

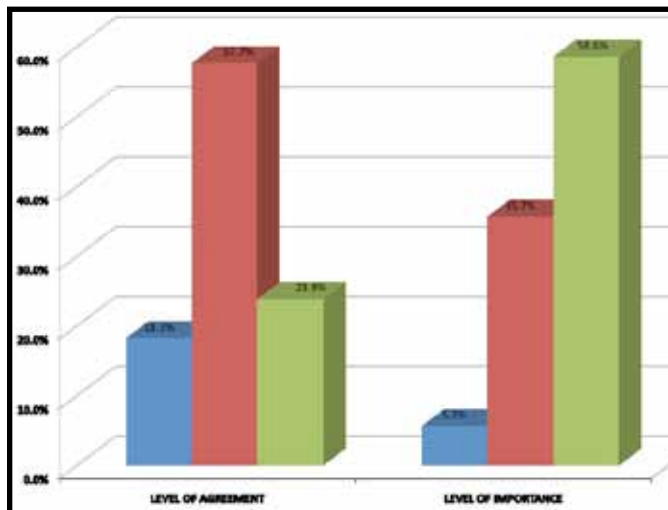
A total of 74 Haddam residents and business owners replied to a Community Survey that examines perceptions of Higganum Village. A summary of the responses is below.

KEY

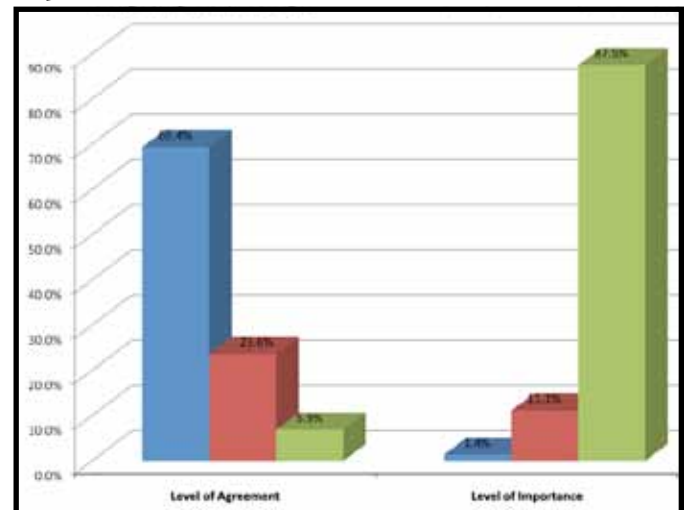
Please indicate the level to which you agree with each statement:
■ 1 = disagree ■ 2 = agree somewhat ■ 3 = agree

Then indicate the importance of this feature of Higganum to you:
■ 1 = not important ■ 2 = somewhat important ■ 3 = very important

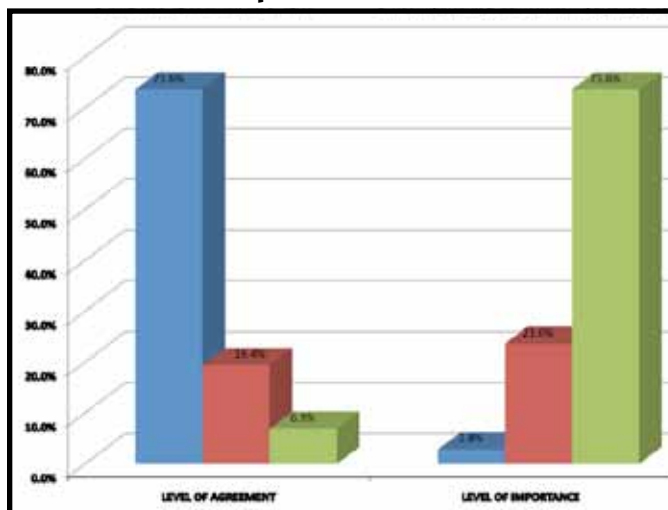
1. The roads leading into Higganum Village are attractive.



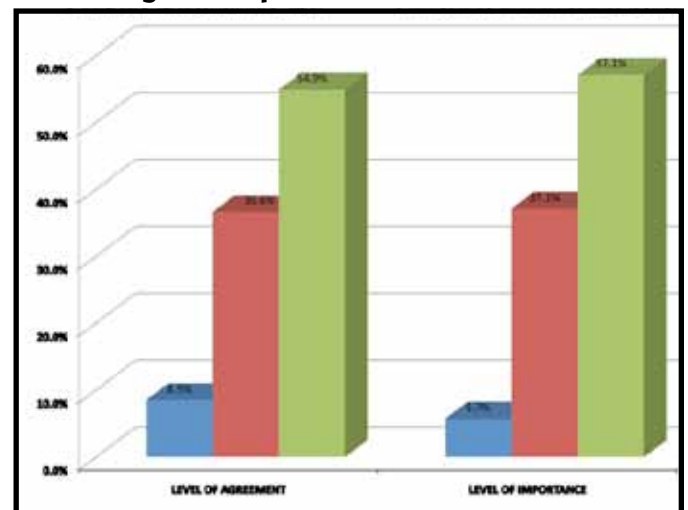
2. The first impression of Higganum Village is positive.



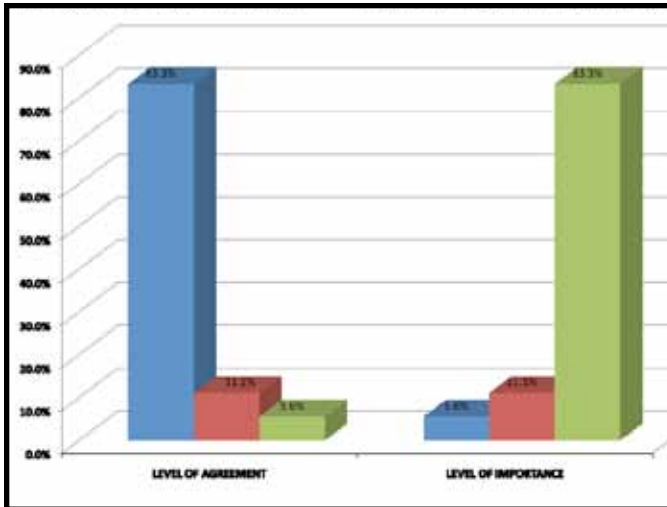
3. There is a good mix of retail, business, and residential development.



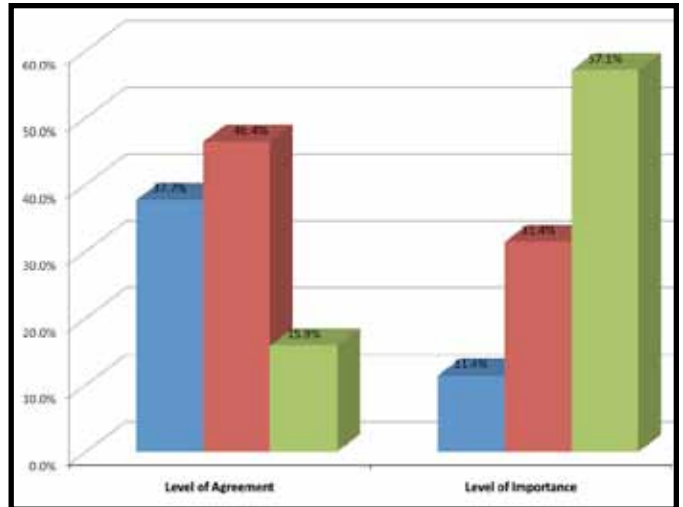
4. Parking is adequate and convenient.



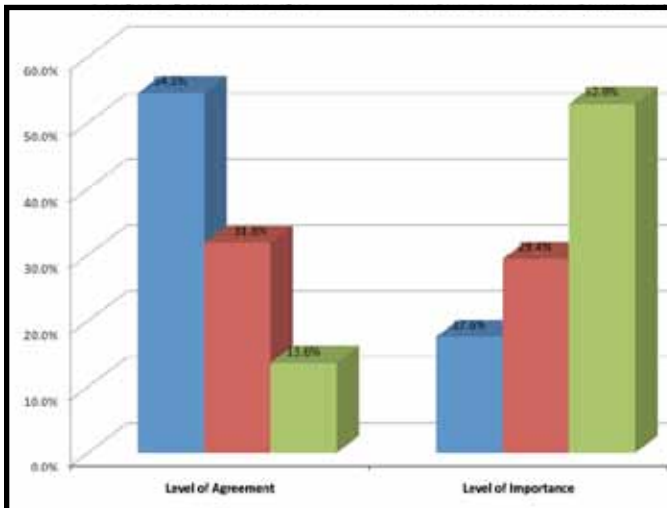
5. I am happy with the level of retail stores and services available.



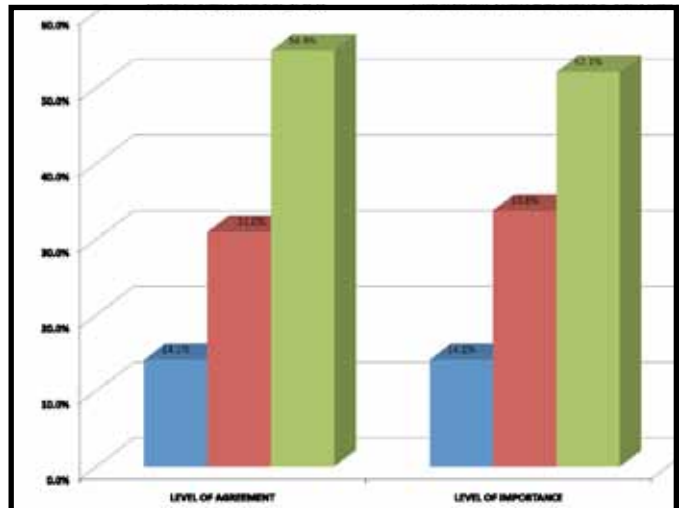
6. Walking to and from Higganum Village is safe and comfortable.



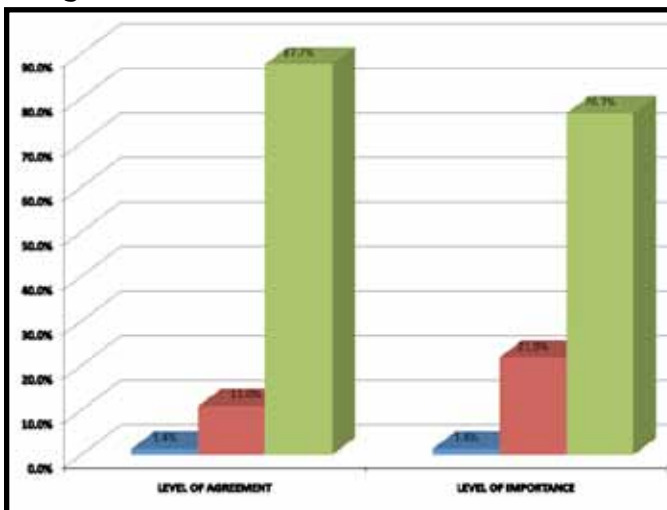
7. Bicycling to and from Higganum Village is safe.



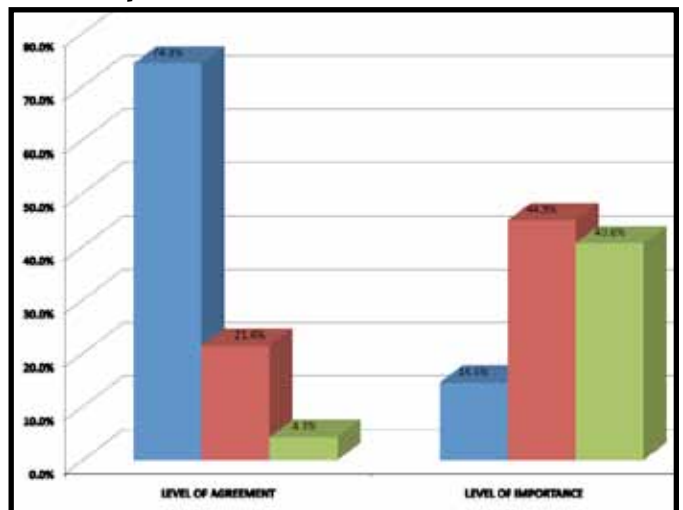
8. There are buildings in Higganum Village that should be preserved.



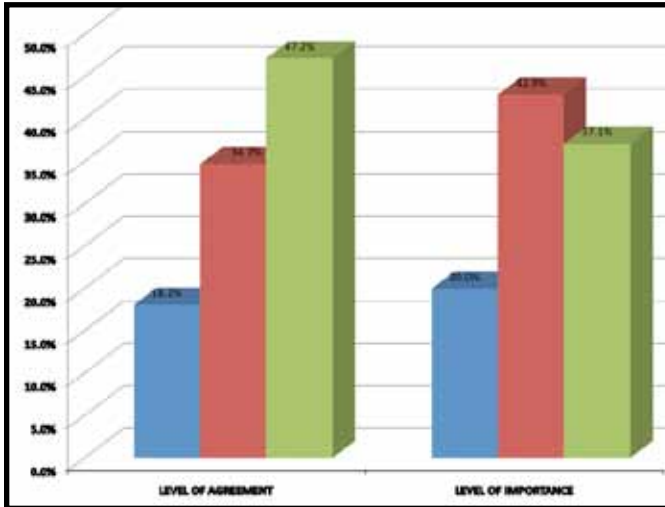
9. There are properties/buildings in Higganum Village that could be better utilized.



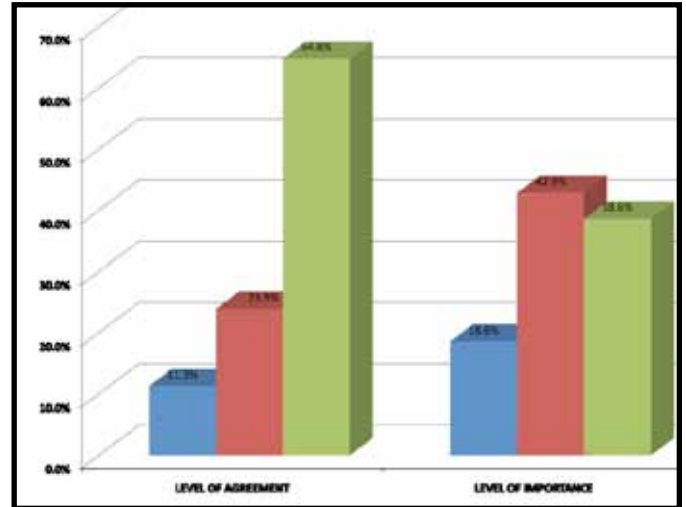
10. Employment opportunities in Higganum are adequate.



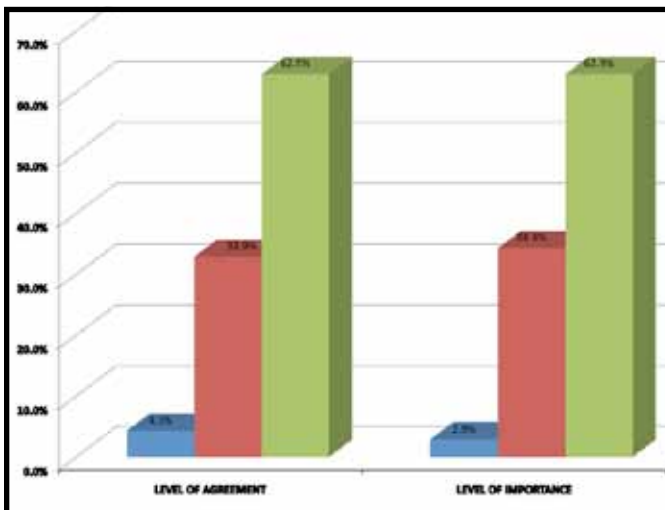
11. A community meeting place would be positive addition to Higganum Village.



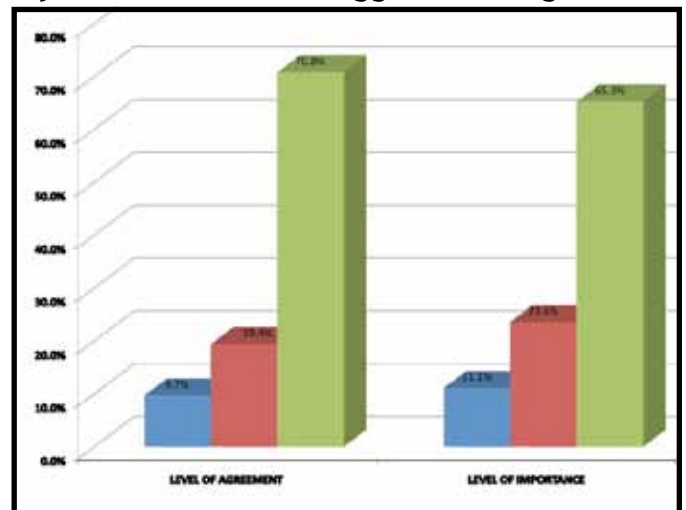
12. Opportunities for cultural activities would be a positive addition to Higganum Village.



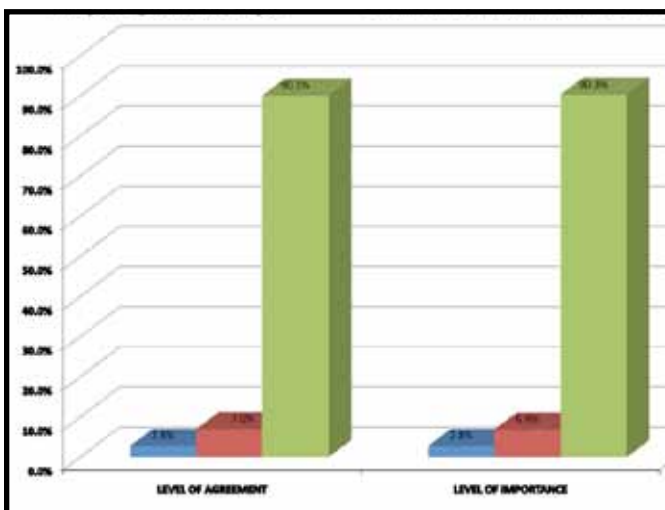
13. Higganum has an abundance of unique natural resources.



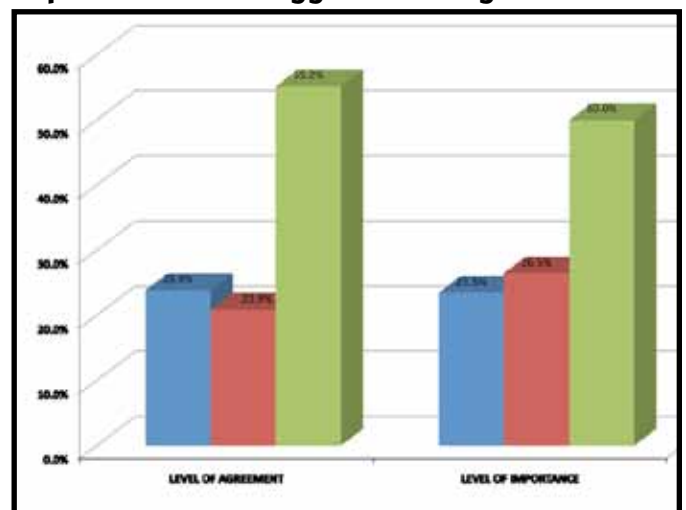
14. Increased opportunities for outdoor activities (hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, etc.) would be a positive addition to Higganum Village.



15. Development of Higganum Village can be accomplished wisely with a positive result for residents and business owners.



16. Waste water treatment is essential to improvements in Higganum Village.



The following are compilations of survey respondents comments to open-ended questions.

What additional features of Higganum do you feel are important?

Common responses

- Businesses:
 - Grocery store
 - Drug store
 - Restaurants
- Outdoor Activities:
 - Swimming
 - Hiking
 - Biking
- Natural Resources:
 - Reservoir
 - Brooks
 - River
 - Cove
- Sewers
- Old-world, rural, homey feeling

What buildings in Higganum Village should be preserved?

Common responses

- Claddagh House
- Drugstore
- Grange
- Higganum Feed Store
- Historic Churches
- Historic Homes
- Rossi Building
- Scovil Building/Factory
- Town/State Garage
- Veterans Museum
- Youth Center

What properties/natural resources do you feel could be better utilized? How would like to see them used?

Common responses

- Brooks
- Frismar Factory
- Higganum Cove- kayak launch, beach, trails
- Higganum Green
- Picnic area
- Rossi Property
- Reservoir- beach, paddle boats, canoe rental
- Riverfront
- Scovil Property
- Town/State Garage Property
- Youth Center
- Unused rail line would make a fabulous trail along the river

List 5 services that you would like to see available in Higganum Village

Common responses

- Access to Waterways
- Antique Store
- Art Gallery
- Bakery
- Carwash
- Chinese Takeout
- Coffee Shop
- Community Center
- Community Garden
- Deli/Caterer
- Drugstore
- Gas Station
- Gift Store
- Gym
- Hardware Store
- Ice Cream Shop
- Market
- Model/Toy Store
- Music Store
- Nice Restaurants
- Park
- Retail Stores
- Tailor/Seamstress
- Walking/Hiking/Biking Trails

What other Connecticut town would you like to be similar to? Why?

Common responses for towns

- Chester
- Clinton
- Collinsville
- Deep River
- Essex
- Guilford
- Madison
- Old Saybrook
- Simsbury

Common responses for why

- Artistic
- Connection to Nature/Natural Resources
- Events
- Good Shopping
- Looks Nice
- Places to Walk/Pedestrian Friendly
- Quaint
- Sense of Community
- Variety of Restaurants
- Variety of Services
- Well-Preserved Homes

What is your favorite feature of Higganum?

- Feed Store
- Higganum Cove
- Historic homes
- Market (when it arrives)
- Quiet
- Relaxed pace
- People
- Small town feel/rural character
- Trees
- Waterways

What is your least favorite feature of Higganum?

- Drinking crowds/reckless driving
- Noisy motorcycles on Rte 154 & Rte 81 in the warmer weather
- Lack of services at Center. Need to go out of town for almost everything but beer, pizza, and banking.
- "Strip mall" buildings
- Ugly architecture (flat tops, steel building, Rossi)
- Underused/empty buildings

What word or phrase best describes Higganum Village today?

- Bucolic
- Dead/desolate
- Home
- Dormant
- It really does not feel like a "village" setting right now. It will be wonderful when that title fits our town center!
- Lonely
- Odd, but OK
- Pizza infested
- Sad
- Sleepy

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

At the May 14, 2010 Higganum Vision Group Debut, those who attended were invited to post any comments they thought were important to their goals for Higganum Village. The comments are below.

"We desperately need "hard" services (i.e. grocery, pharmacy) but would be so nice to see a REASON for people to "get off" [highway] at Higganum, not just drive through — Perhaps a village of small shops in area between Grange & Post Office. Services such as grocery, drug store, bank could be in one area (i.e. old Grange Hall) and the more artsy or "soft" services" (i.e. jeweler, specialty shops, art gallery, etc.) could be a "come to" place for outsiders as well as Hig. residents."

"TURN RAILROAD INTO RAIL TRAIL FROM MIDDLETOWN TO SHORE TO MAKE USE OF RIVER."

"GET RID OF ROSSI MESS."

"Safe place to ride bicycle and stop for picnic — how about making a real park at the reservoir — for swimming, boating, picnics, hiking? YES!"

"Put a fence up TO COVER TOWN GARAGE MESS ON DEPOT ROAD."

"a place to sit by the reservoir"

"TOWN BEACH ACCESS TO RESERVOIR!"

"- Food Shopping (Market)

- Place to have concerts, and annual community events

- Gourmet Restaurants (no chains)

- Architectural Charm"

"SIDEWALK ON RT 154 FROM RT. 81 TO CHRISTIAN HILL RD."

"Cute shops in village setting — walkable — parking outside shop area — As well as Grocery! DrugStore! Bakery/café!"

"Clean-up Higganum Cove"

"Rail to Trail Bike Path — Yes!"

"Public Access to the CT River!!! Higganum Cove restore to be a public park"

"A village with shops, cafes — a place to walk + meet friends, etc."

WALK-THROUGH INVENTORY SUMMARY, MARCH 2010

Nine HVG members participated in a walking survey in Higgaum, and compiled the following results.

	Maximum Score	Higgaum Village Score (Average Value)	Ratio Max/Higgaum Ave
Streetscape			
Cleanliness	5	3.7	
Placement of utilities	5	3.1	
Landscaping	5	2.4	
Appropriate street lighting	5	3.4	
Banners/public decoration	5	2.3	
Benches	5	2.1	
Trash cans	5	2.1	
SUBTOTAL	35	19.1	0.546
Buildings and Architecture			
Condition of building facades	5	2.0	
Appropriateness of architect styles	5	2.1	
Appearance of buildings	5	2.1	
Utilization of upper floors	5	2.3	
SUBTOTAL	20	8.5	0.425
Parking			
Availability of parking spaces	5	3.6	
Availability of handicapped parking	5	3.0	
Convenience of parking	5	3.3	
Safety of access and exit parking	5	2.7	
SUBTOTAL	20	12.6	0.63
Signage			
Appropriate commercial signs	5	2.7	
Appropriate public signs	5	3.2	
Quality and condition of signs	5	2.8	
SUBTOTAL	15	8.7	0.58
Businesses			
Mix of commercial businesses	5	1.9	
Hours of operation	5	3	
Product selection	5	1.7	
Available eating and drinking est.	5	2.9	
Quality of window displays	5	1.6	
Store front appearance	5	1.8	
SUBTOTAL	30	12.9	0.43
Sidewalks and Traffic			
Condition of sidewalks	5	3.3	
Condition of street crossings	5	3.5	
Condition of street crossing lines	5	3.1	
Condition of street curbs	5	3.1	
Volume of traffic	5	3.3	
SUBTOTAL	25	16.3	0.652
Public Amenities			
Condition of parks/green spaces	5	3.3	
Condition of memorials/statues	5	3.9	
Post office	5	3.4	
Municipal buildings	5	2.6	
SUBTOTAL	20	13.2	0.66
TOTAL SCORE	165	91.3	0.553

WALK-THROUGH INVENTORY — SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Total score reflects an average to poor rating for items inventoried.

Weakest areas: buildings and architecture and quality, mix, and appearance of businesses

Strongest areas: condition of public amenities (green spaces, statues, memorials, P.O.), condition of sidewalks, street crossings

COMMENTS FROM WORKSHEETS:

Streetscape

"In spite of significant improvements, the streetscape remains bleak. The intersection is entirely dominated by traffic signs, Lighting should bring out facades, not just aimed down at the sidewalk. Trees will improve things as they grow but on the east side of 81 they have been planted under the wires, where they will have to be trimmed or removed by the power company as they mature. Buildings are small, lack unity, and provide little shelter for any pedestrian. For example, how much better the place would look is there was a single continuous façade and arcade uniting the buildings on the east side and running from the north corner of the pharmacy bldg. down to the south corner of the liquor store."

"We only have a 'T-bone' intersection with very little ambience, but it's a start! Let's not forget that!"

Buildings & Architecture

"As noted, because the buildings along 81 are so broken up, they are overwhelmed by the road. Ideally we would want them taller. Admittedly, there is no economic reason for multi-story buildings in this area (at least until sewers are provided). However if a developer were to come in and replace the multitude of buildings (esp on the east side of 81) by a single long building, things would improve tremendously. In general, there is a drastic need for new investment. The green is not imposing as it should be because at the uphill 'base' there is no building facing it, rather than a fence, trees, and the side of a house which faces towards 154 and the school."

"Love the vintage Federal style, but we need to be open-minded about other styles too!"

Parking

"There is plenty of parking, even if some of it is underutilized because it is located where no one finds it useful: e.g. the area south of the Grange building."

"Horrible curb upon entering 'grocery' parking lot from rte 81 - A BAD IDEA!"

Signage

"Judging by the large amount of informal and temporary signs and banners, the current zoning regulations are not allowing signs to do what they should, namely advertise the businesses located therein. The most coherent signage is at Brookside, but because it is far from the road, it lacks the desired prominence. More importantly, there needs to be some signage system that would enable businesses along Rte 81 to advertise their presence to vehicles traveling along Rte 154. Also, there needs to be a sign announcing 'Higganum Village' or 'Higganum' as cars approach along Rte 154 or Rte 81. Are there models for CT DOT signing that might show us how better to indicate the intersection of Rte 81 and 154? The present DOT signs add to the messiness of the scene?"

Businesses

"The business density in the Village is very low, especially since the market and the drug store closed. There are, practically speaking, no offices. (e.g. professionals such as doctors or lawyers, or office workers). Also, there is little cross-fertilization. In the past, people who came to the market, stopped also at the drug store and the bank, or vice-versa. But how many people who go to the Post Office bother to make another stop? We need to make a survey!"

"Too many "little" coffee spots"

Sidewalks & Traffic

"The new sidewalks along Rte 81 are superb. However there is no sidewalk across Rte 154 from the school, as there should be. There could be more crosswalks, but since there is so little pedestrian traffic, it is hard to argue that they are needed, especially where there are no lights."

"Who uses sidewalks? There's no place to walk to or from."

"Rotten, horrible rte 81 access to 'grocery' lot —horrid plan"

Public Amenities

"Except for the post office, they are generally underutilized because there is not enough density to sustain them."

"Gorgeous town green!"

"You know I believe we need to tread lightly with regard to creating a village 'scape' building facade. I see the beauty in a cohesive type of architecture, saying keeping the quaint old colonial charm- after all, it's what tourists are looking for. They spend those tourist dollars that we need! They say things like 'quaint' and 'quintessentially New England'— it all adds up to a certain village charm; but I'd like us to be progressive in thinking. That is, a round shaped concrete building w/fish eye window can co-exist w/ an 1800's colonial! I would love for our town's buildings to represent our fresh and lively creative energy!"

"Have been to other downtown areas such as Chester, Essex, Madison; would love to have something similar in Higganum."

"Other" Attributes Mentioned to Add in Higganum Village:

Wi-Fi

Planters (more)

Public art

Building adjacency w/sidewalk

Traffic speed- too fast; slow it down

Community meeting space

Informational signage

Pedestrian walkways

WALK-THROUGH INVENTORY — SUMMARY OF FINDINGS (continued)

Strengths

The Hardware Store (Historic),
the 2 banks
the Post Office.
The Brookside and Pizza stores
The recent sidewalk improvements
Liquor stores and bar.

Weaknesses

Many underused or unused buildings and spaces
Empty spaces between buildings
General messiness.
Poor signage
Lack of cohesiveness
Not enough going to sustain pedestrians.
State ownership of 81 and 154, both having right-of-ways that encumber far more than the paved area..

Opportunities

Few
Better utilization of existing buildings, esp. empty ones
Higher gasoline prices making local business more competitive with Middletown.

Threats

Further loss of businesses
Elimination of Post Office
"Inappropriate" uses moving into both Rossi's and Town Garage properties
Underground pollution limiting the area's renewal
Additional development along 154 drawing business away from the Village Center
A sewer coming down 154.

Protect & Enhance Strengths

Assist local businesses via promotion, tax credits, etc..
Attract new business by similar devices, esp. if they invest in new or rehab construction
Enforce codes to ensure timely building maintenance.

Overcome Weaknesses

(same as above) : nothing will change unless there is more private investment
Review zoning & subdivision regs to enable more continuous frontages.
Create or strengthen a Merchant Association that can undertake joint endeavors & lobbying to benefit the Village

Capitalize on Opportunities

Learn more about shopper habits (via a survey) to determine what would enhance their use of local businesses, and why they do so few multiple stops, what stores they miss the most not having locally, where they now go to get services that might be available locally, and why.

Minimize Threats

Support existing businesses (see above).
Provide a community sewage facility, in part subsidized and in part self-supported via assessment to users, that will make the area more attractive to businesses.
Resist plans that will bring a sewer line down 154.

PRECEDENT RESEARCH

HIGGANUM VISION GROUP VISUAL PREFERENCE EXERCISE

Submitted by Bill Organek

In May, the Higganum Vision Group (HVG) held a lively public “debut” event that attracted nearly 100 residents who wanted to learn about this grassroots group’s efforts to make Higganum a better place to live. In his opening remarks, First Selectman Paul DeStefano urged local citizens to get involved in the effort and provide their ideas for Higganum’s revitalization. He stressed that community input is essential to help planners preserve and enhance the village’s unique qualities.

During the event, attendees participated in a visual preference exercise by looking at posted photos of various generic community settings and rating the appeal of each photo with brightly colored stickers (green for “like”, red for “dislike”). The accumulation of stickers on each photo revealed remarkably consistent opinions about what would be desirable or undesirable for Higganum’s future.

A prioritized list of participants’ likes and dislikes follows:

LIKES	DISLIKES
Highlighting/incorporating natural and historical assets, especially waterways	“Suburban look”
Having a sense of community	Car-centric construction & configurations
Access to natural areas	Poor or no landscaping
Community gathering places	Lack of a town identity
Appealing landscaping and trees	Inadequate safe pathways for pedestrians
Balance of buildings and nature	Overhead wires
Irregular street pattern instead of grid	Monotonous architecture
Traditional architecture with diverse styles, conducive to socializing	Confusing or overpowering signage
Hometown feel to streetscape, looks like “Main Street, USA” (e.g., clean; variety of shop fronts; nice signage; awnings; flower boxes; trees; brick margin on sidewalk, old-fashioned streetlamps)	Structures that are either “shabby” or pretentious.
Pedestrian-oriented, bicycle-friendly	
Variety of goods and services	
Convenient yet unobtrusive parking	

Based on this and other input from residents and local business owners (including responses to a survey published in the March 2010 issue of the Bulletin and a Community Visioning Session planned for October 21st) as well as Haddam’s Plan of Conservation and Development , HVG will make recommendations to town officials for the implementation of projects that support the town’s collective vision.

The following is a sampling of the photos that drew the strongest responses.

● represents a positive preference. ● is a negative preference.

For complete results of the exercise and more news of HVG activities, please visit the HVG website: www.higganumvisiongroup.org.

THE POSITIVE "LIKES"

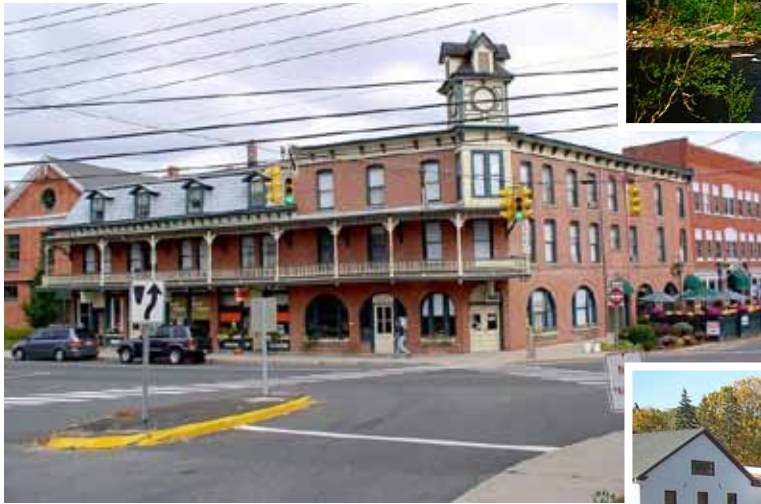


THE NEGATIVE OR "DISLIKES"



Members of the Higganum Vission Group visited other villages, with demographics similar to Higganum's, to see what could be learned. The following pages are the results of those visits to:

- Collinsville, CT
- New Hartford, CT
- Riverton, CT
- Woodstock, CT



NOTES
