

Stonington Borough Comfort Station Task Force Special Meeting

Wednesday, November 15, at 7 pm

Stonington Borough Hall

## Draft Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order: 7 pm

2. Task Force members present: Amanda Barnes, Jean Fiore, Allegra Griffiths, Ellen Wightman, Sarael Sargent, Karen Von Ruffer Hills, Al Razzano, Tim Olson, Jesse Diggs, Kevin Bowdler, Chuck Hartmann, Michael Schefers(ex officio), and about 8 members of the public

3. Review of November 9 meeting minutes: Updates: add Jean's name to the list of attendees; add Karen's name to list of those who visited Bodega and Borough Hall

4. Review DRAFT Report to Warden and Burgesses

Page 1: Will delete "31,000" as that figure was not verified/validated by this committee;

Page 3: Correct spelling of Tim Olson's, Sarael Sargent's, and Michael Schefers's names on Comfort Station Task Force Objective page;

Page 6: This is a sample analysis page.

Page 7: Al explained that this is what we did at the 10/5 meeting and what we looked at in terms of putting the rubric together. It explains why we have 1's, 2's, and 3's, and which corresponds to the green, red, and yellow. It shows what was included in the criteria.

On 10/5, we reduced from 25 to 12 locations and discussed and agreed on the rubric. There was a suggestion to have the small font language under the date displayed across the top of each page.

Page 8: On 10/11, we reduced from 12 to 7 locations

Page 9: This page displays rankings from 10/26 meeting

Page 10: This is a combination of 11/2 and 11/9. On 11/2, the committee discussed the Boro Bodega with Andrew Field; first pass at numbers (initial estimate).

Page 11: These are updated numbers, but they need to be adjusted for Porta Loo High End.

Michael mentioned that work needs to be done on sewerage at Borough Hall. The 70 year old 3" sewer pipe is rusting. Al replied that this is an issue that will need to be addressed and repaired by the Borough either way; it should

therefore not impact the work of this committee. Michael mentioned it could be the difference between the cost of a sleeve or bringing it up to current code, a 4-inch pipe, which could be costly. The committee is concerned that new information is arriving at the ninth hour, and it has not had adequate time to evaluate this new information.

**Chuck made a motion to suspend the conclusion of the committee until such time that the members can evaluate the new information brought tonight to evaluate the costs of the sewage pipe and the impact of it on our recommendation. We as a committee have an opportunity to review and agree upon the final edits to be made to the document that summarizes the analysis conclusion and recommendation. The motion was seconded by Jean.**

Discussion: Kevin is voting no because he feels there is enough information for the warden and burgesses to make a decision. Allegra and Jesse suggested putting in an asterisk that says tbd based on estimates from plumber; he doesn't think it will cost more than \$20k. Ellen suggested getting an estimate immediately and putting it in the financial - even though this is money that will need to be spent by the Borough either way. Al mentioned that the Borough Hall bathroom should be brought up to code.

**The motion was not approved (6 opposed, 5 in favor).**

Recommendation page: Sarael: The committee was tasked with finding a permanent solution; we should therefore recommend the two permanent options in Borough Hall: with one or two bathrooms. Jesse: The porta potty at the point is managed by SVIA and the divers; the porta potty at the playground is handled by the Town. The wording on the second bullet should be changed.

Kevin suggested that the second bathroom is needed, and if the Borough receives \$50K from the Town, we have to spend very little to make this happen.

Tim commented on the porta potties: further research revealed that ADA compliant upscale portaloos 12X6 do not exist. The smallest available is 17X6 and includes three units. It cannot be a trailer, so any thoughts of moving it around would not work. It would have to be skid mounted, and it would be hard-plumbing and tied into the sewer, rather than transportable to different sites.

The committee's recommendation is to move the existing standard porta potty to a more discreet location at the playground, possibly add an additional unit, put a fence around it, and have the units cleaned and maintained more frequently. Jean recommends that the Borough works with the Town on this. The committee agrees that this recommendation is independent of the permanent recommendation in Borough Hall.

Page 13 - no comments.

1. Discuss correspondence received: A letter was received from (Mr. Post) who does not want to see trailer porta potties at the playground. A letter was received from Amy Nicholas who requests a comparison of the current recommendation to the Wadawanuck Square proposal.

Al responded that this was not what this committee was tasked to do.

Karen supported Amy's request for a Wad Square/Borough Hall comparison and stated that two years of effort by two task forces made up of residents/community - along with organizations that raised a substantial amount of funds for a Comfort Station at Wad Square deserve an update and that a comparison was the appropriate thing to do to honor these efforts. Karen expressed her concern that the committee was biased by removing Wad Square from even making it past the first round to the evaluation phase and Jean asked why? Amy responded that at least one member stated during the appointment process that "I am for a comfort station as long as it is not on Wad Square"

*Amy Nicholas* commented that

- Two Committees recommended Wad Square
- Over 200 people signed a petition supporting the Wad Square location
- Over \$50,000 was raised exclusively for Wad Square
- The Garden Club contributed \$10,000 to Wad Square
- Finally, many in the community need to know why it was eliminated and/or why Borough Hall is better

Allegra asked why we wouldn't want to compare and have an opportunity to explain why our current recommendation of Borough Hall is better than Wad Square.

The committee had a brief conversation comparing Borough Hall to Wad Square:

- there are fewer residents around Borough Hall than there are around Wad Square;
- the cost and ease of construction is substantially easier for Borough Hall;
- re personal safety, Borough Hall is in a supervised site; the Wadawanuck Square restroom would be unmanned. Some members thought that Church St was very quiet at times whereas Wad Square has constant traffic. It was recommended that we just use the more objective measures for comparison.
- Borough Hall is closer to the commercial district;
- with a two bathroom option, the same comforts are available for less money.
- there is no need to physically change a building or a park.

There will be a page comparing the committee's recommendation to Wad

Square.

Chuck mentioned that he thought the cost of construction for Wad Square should be increased by 30% to \$520,000 to reflect the change in construction prices since year end 2020. We did not discuss this as a group.

1. Public Comment

*Doug Mola*, 2 Church Street, was wondering if the second floor bathroom in Borough Hall could be employee only.

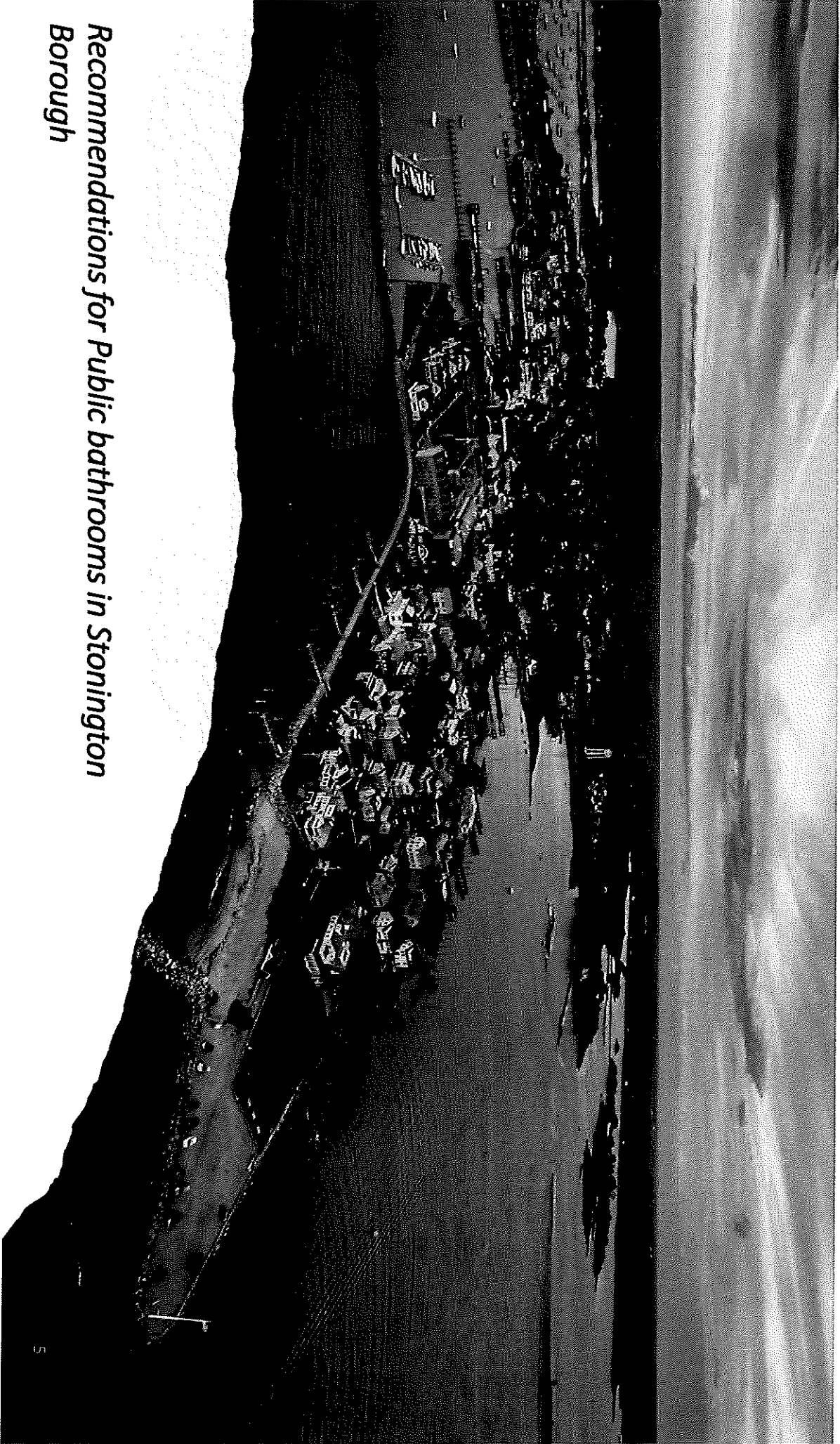
*Jennifer Olson*, Northwest Street, thanked the committee members for their time and for not putting a 17 foot trailer at the playground.

*Nancy Donahue* raised a point of clarification - last week, Al said porta potty isn't going anywhere? Michael mentioned that Danielle Chesebrough seems willing to work with the Borough on porta potties. Nancy asked if the units would be accessible; they are.

*Sarael* suggested that a committee member, rather than a burgess, present the proposal to the Board of Warden & Burgesses. Al will make the presentation.

*Kevin Rogers* thanked the committee.

2. Adjourn: 8:24 pm



*Recommendations for Public bathrooms in Stonington  
Borough*

# Background

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- A survey of merchants and non-profits was done in July 2023 and suggests a daily need in summer. This does not include any estimates for parades or events like the Lobster trap Tree which draws hundreds of visitors every day.
- A two-year analysis - and two previous Taskforce committees - had identified and designed a two-bathroom option for Mad Square at a cost of \$400K, of which over a \$140K of funding had been raised.
- However, during a community meeting held in August 2023, there were concerns raised about the location and a 3rd Taskforce was created to do another analysis of possible locations.




## Comfort station Task force Objective


*The objective of the task force - find permanent public bathroom solutions(s) for Stonington Borough that are acceptable to its residents*


### Opportunity/Focus/Criteria for Comfort Station:

 **Optimal solution**- In an ideal world unisex restroom(s) could include a toilet or two, sink, baby-changing station, urinal, bottle filling station and or drinking fountain and a dog bowl filler

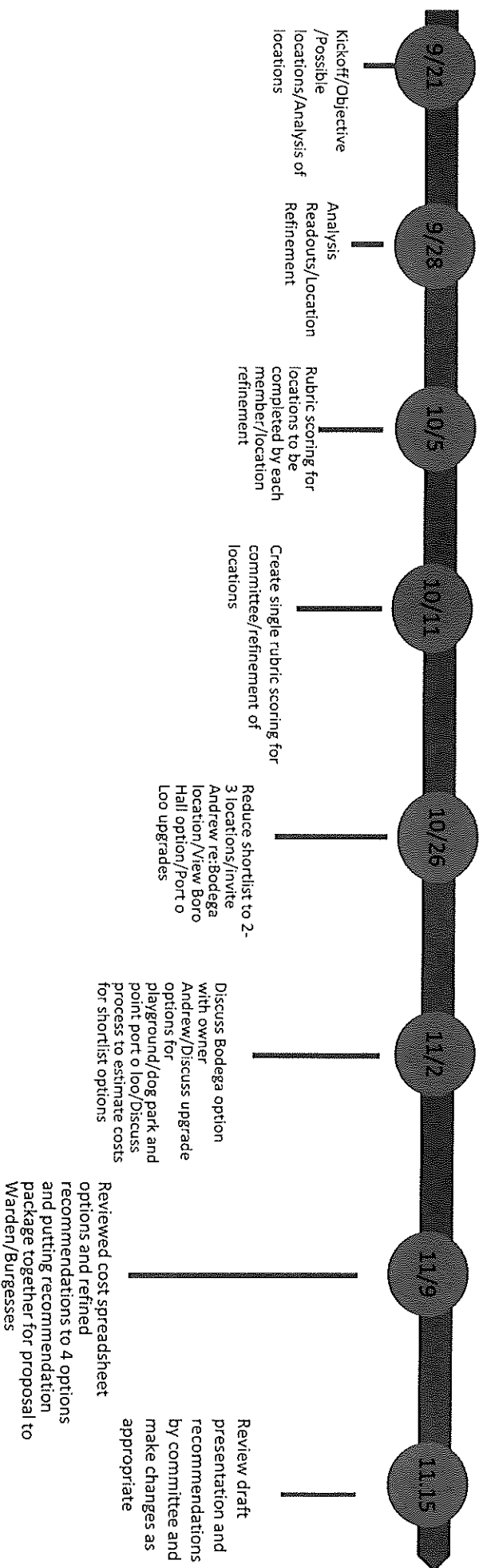
 **Selection Criteria** each location focused on the needs of the Residents/Merchants and Visitors including easy, central convenient location, handicap accessibility, cost-effectiveness, infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity) attractive, safety, impact on neighbors, flood plain, community support.

 **Locations to be considered** - throughout the Borough

 **Cadence of meetings** – Thursday evenings 7-8pm Borough Hall, 26 Church St.

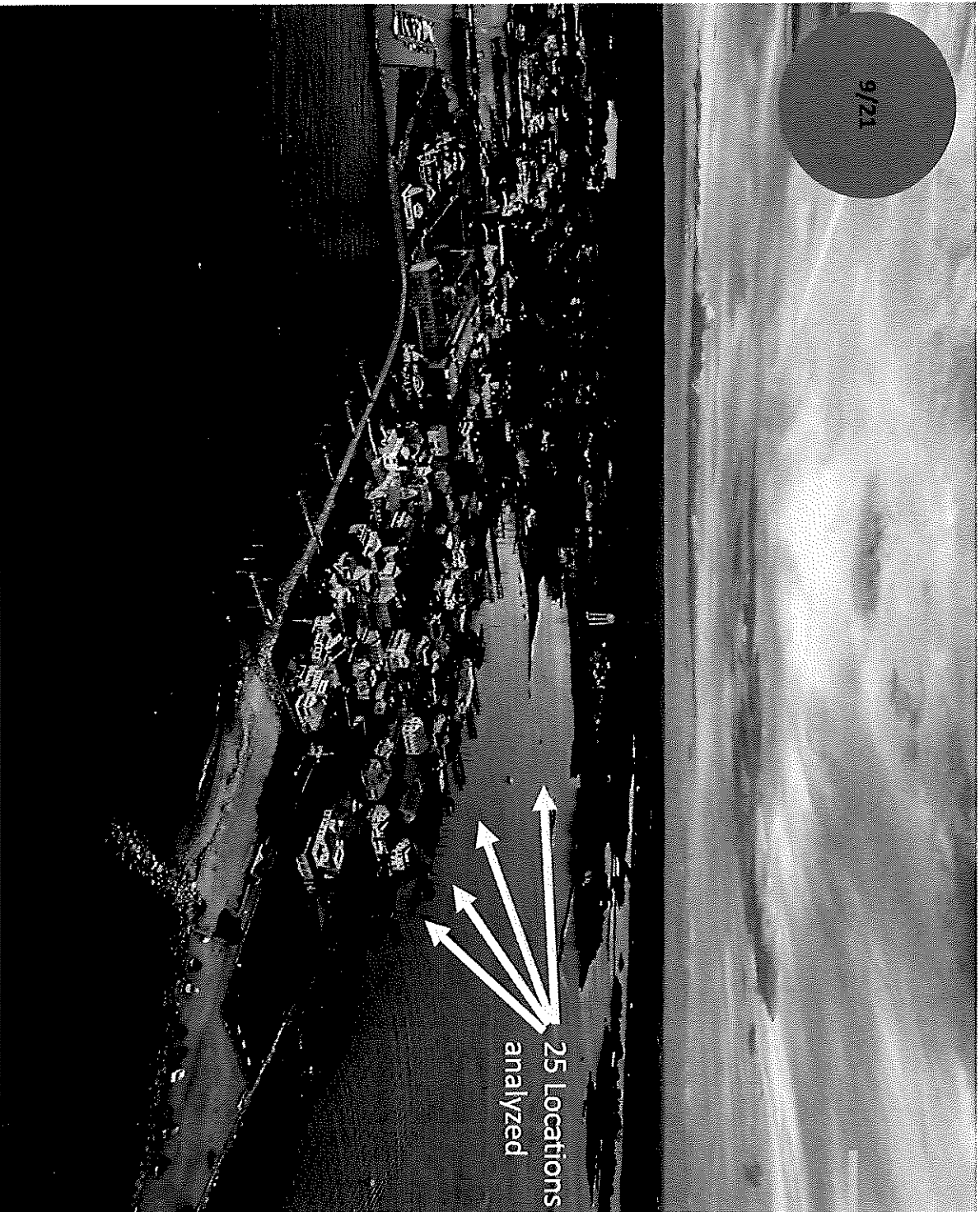
 **Members** – Amanda Barnes, Burgess, Kevin Bowdler, Burgess, Jesse Diggs, Annette Bienkowski(ex-officio), Sarael Sargent, Ellen Wightman, Al Razzano, Julia Leeming (ex-officio), Janet McClendon, Allegra Griffiths, Karen Von Ruffer Hills, Tim Olson, Chuck Hartmann, Jean Fiore, Michael Schefers,(ex-officio)

# Comfort Station Timeline/Evolution/Activities/Scope of work





9/21



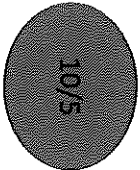
• Locations for Analysis

1. Stonington Free Library
2. Stonington Borough Sewer Treatment Plant
3. Borough Bodega
4. Merrill House
5. Playground
6. Borough Hall
7. Fire House
8. La Grua Center
9. St. Mary's Church
10. High end Porta Loos
11. Wimphemer Park
12. United Church
13. Matthews Park
14. Dodge Paddock
15. NESS
16. PHGS
17. Wadawanuck Square
18. Stonington Point
19. Wayland's Wharf
20. Calvary Church
21. Stonington Lighthouse
22. Open Space between St. Mary's Church and Post office
23. La Grua Park
24. Docks
25. East Lawn at the Point

# Example of the Comfort Station Location Analysis Document

- **Comfort Station Location Analysis**
- 
- **Location:**      **Team Members**      **Date**
- 
- **Brief Description of the project**
- **Review xxxx site as a potential candidate for Public Bathrooms**
- **Advantages (at least Three)**
- **Disadvantages (at least Three)**
- **Would you recommend that this project be recommended for further analysis? **YES/NO****



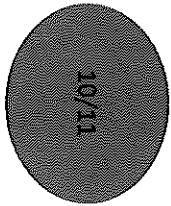


Reduced locations from 25 to 7 + 4 TBD.  
 Agreed upon criteria for rubric. The criteria is how the weightings 1,2,3 calculated the total points for each location. Each member to complete their own rubric for 10-11 meeting.

<b>Cost and Ease of Construction</b>
<b>Annual Operating Cost</b>
<b>Personal Security</b>
<b>Site Safety: Vandalism, Drug Use, Vagrancy</b>
<b>Easily Found / Close to Commercial District</b>
<b>Handicap Accessible</b>
<b>Attractive</b>
<b>Surrounding grounds able to be camped upon</b>
<b>Car Traffic &amp; Parking Availability</b>
<b># of Residences within 100 feet</b>
<b>Zoning change of use</b>
<b>Flood Zone</b>

## Agreed Rubric Design

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
<b>Example Criteria Evaluation</b>			
New Build/Infrastr		Renovate Existing	No Renov Needed / Portable
Standalone Facility		Part of Existing Building	Vendor Liability / Portable
Unmanned Facility		Part Time Oversight	In Supervised Site
Remote/Vacant Facility		Busy Location/Stand Alone	InTown/Busy Facility
Distant		Walkable	Inside Comm District
Challenging		Doable	Exists Today / Portable
Eyescore to Majority		Impacts 3-7 Homes	1-2 Homes / Exist Facility
Much land around		Little Land around	Secured Area
Narrow Road/Little Parking		Average for Borough	Widest Road/Ample Parking
8+ Homes Adjacent		3-5 Homes Adjacent	1-2 Homes or Comm zone
High		Medium	Low
VE (New Build or Renov Only)		AE (New Build or Renov Only)	Portable Potts, Existing Building or no Flood Zone



# Consolidated Rubric

Rubric scoring for locations to be completed by committee consensus for single spreadsheet and 7 locations

## Stonington Borough Public Facility Task Force

Criteria	Existing Facilities							New Facilities				Weight	
	Example Criteria Evaluation							Play Ground		Point Parking			Dog Park
	1	2	3	Church	Center	House	Hall	Bodega	Portable Permanent	Portable Permanent	Portable Permanent		
Cost and Ease of Construction	New Build/Infrast Standalone Facility	Renovate Existing Part of Existing Building	No Renov Needed / Portable Vendor Liability / Portable In Supervised Site	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	3	1	3
Annual Operating Cost	Unrenovated Facility	Part Time Oversight	Inside Comm District	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Personal Security	Renovate/Vacant Facility	Busy Location/Stand Alone	Exists Today / Portable Potts	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	2
Site Safety: Vandalism, Drug Use, Vagrancy	Distant	Walkable	Exists Today / Exist Facility	2	1	3	3	2	3	3	1	1	2.5
Easily Found / Close to Commercial District	Challenging	Doable	Exists Today / Exist Facility	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Handicap Accessible	Eyesore to Majority	Impacts 3-7 Homes	1-2 Homes / Exist Facility	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Attractive													
Surrounding grounds able to be camped upon	Much land around	Little land around	Secured Area										
Car Traffic & Parking Availability	Narrow Road/Little Parking	Average for Borough	Widest Road/Ample Parking	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
# of Residences within 100 feet	8+ Homes Adjacent	3-5 Homes Adjacent	1-2 Homes or Comm zone	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3
Zoning change of use	High	Medium	Low	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	3
Flood Zone	VE (New Build or Renov Only)	AE (New Build or Renov Only)	Portable Potts, Existing Building or no Flood Zone	3	3	2	13	2	3	2	3	3	3
Sum of Points (Less is Bad, Higher is Better)				29	27	28	29	29	28	19	27	17	

10/26

Reduce shortlist to 2-3 locations/invite Andrew re:Bodega location/View Boro Hall option/Portaloo upgrades

# Consolidated Ranking

Committee Members	Total	Rankings													
		Al B.	Alliegra G.	Amanda B.	Chuck H.	Ellen W.	Janet M.	Jean F.	Jesse D.	Karen H.	Kevin B.	Sarah S.	Tim O.		
Borough Hall	29	1	2	1	1	1	4	4	5	3	2	1	4		
Bodega	34	3	1	7	7	3	3	1	2	1	1	4	1		
Fire House	41	2	4	2	2	5	2	6	4	2	6	2	1		
Dog Park Portable	49	4	6	3	3	4	6	4	4	5	5	3	5		
Playground Portable	49	5	5	4	4	2	5	1	1	6	3	5	6		
St Mary's	59	6	3	6	6	6	1	7	7	4	4	7	3		
Point Portable	75	7	7	5	5	7	7	3	7	7	7	6	7		
<b>Total</b>															
<b>Ex-Officio Members</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Annette</b>	<b>Julia L.</b>	<b>Michael S.</b>											
Borough Hall	11	5	2	4											
Bodega	5	1	1	3											
Fire House	15	6	3	6											
Dog Park Portable	11	3	6	2											
Playground Portable	10	2	7	1											
St Mary's	13	4	4	5											
Point Portable	19	7	5	7											
<b>Total</b>															
Borough Hall	40														
Bodega	39														
Fire House	56														
Dog Park Portable	60														
Playground Portable	59														
St Mary's	72														
Point Portable	94														

### Recommended Next Steps:

- Discuss each Committee Members' rationale for above rankings
- Collectively decide on top three alternatives for which we should pursue detailed cost and zoning assessments as a primary site solution
- Discuss approach on how to evaluate / rank any potential secondary concurrent site solution
- Pursue bids for detailed cost estimates for each of the recommended primary and any concurrent solution
- Discuss zoning issues / challenges / process for each of the three alternatives with Borough and Town Zoning Officers
- Evaluate contractor bids and zoning assessments
- Make final recommendation(s) to Borough Warden and Burgesses

11/2

Discuss Bodega option with owner Andrew/Discuss upgrade options for playground/dog park and point port o loo/Discuss process to estimate costs for shortlist options

11/9

Reviewed the findings of the Borough Hall and Boro Bodega working groups. Also reviewed cost spreadsheet options and refined recommendations to 4 options and putting recommendation package together for proposal to Warden/Burgesses//Initial Estimates of costs  
 Significant Dialogue on Porto Loo options and Public comment

DRAFT ONLY

Item	Boro Bodega	Borough Hall 1 ADA bathroom	Borough Hall 2 Bathrooms	Porta Loo High End - Rent	Porta Loo High End - Buy	Porta Loo Low end Buy	Porta Loo Low-End Rent	Expand Existing Porta Potte
Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Estimated Comfort Station Annual Operating costs	\$30,000	No additional cost	No additional cost	\$48,000	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$48,000	\$5,750
Initial Rent/Lease	\$1,000	No additional cost	No additional cost	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	na
Lease	\$1,000	No additional cost	No additional cost	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	\$2,160 part of elect bill	na
Electric	\$1,400	No additional cost	No additional cost	\$14,280	\$14,280	\$14,280	\$14,280	na
Painting - twice per day 4 months, once per day 8 months	\$3,250	\$3,250	\$3,250	\$3,250	\$3,250	\$3,250	\$3,250	na
Painting Materials & Supplies - Paper towels, toilet paper and Maintenance	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	na
Water/Sewer	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$1,568	\$1,568	na
Other	\$53,998	\$21,778	\$21,778	\$69,258	\$23,758	\$23,758	\$73,198	\$8,640
Subtotal	\$59,975	\$21,775	\$21,775	\$69,258	\$23,758	\$23,758	\$73,198	\$8,640
Annual operating Costs	\$149,000	\$30,000	\$79,000	\$6,000	\$86,500	\$87,000	\$6,000	\$3,000
10 Year Total	\$658,975	\$247,775	\$298,775	\$698,580	\$324,080	\$324,590	\$24,980	\$99,400

DRAFT ONLY

Description	Boro Bodega	Borough Hall 1 ADA Bathroom	Borough Hall 2 Bathrooms	Porta Loo High End - Rent	Porta Loo High End - Buy	Porta Loo Low end Buy	Porta Loo Low-End Rent	Expand Existing Porta Potte
Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Estimated Comfort Station Capital Expenditure Costs	\$149,000	\$30,000	\$80,000	\$6,000	\$46,500	\$87,000	\$6,000	\$3,000
Remove interior door/wall at Borough Hall and open up stairway so you can see to the elevator and bathroom. Include security camera's, locks on second floor doors. Maybe glass panels in Church St door. Electronic lock-out on elevator, lock upstairs doors, and perhaps a pushbutton ADA compliant access to the front borough hall door and bathroom door. Slink may need retrofit to be ADA compliant.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Add additional non ADA Bathroom to the left of Borough Hall entry door. 49 square feet. Using \$1,000 psf.	\$49,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Build 2 NON ADA compliant bathrooms at Boro Bodega. 148 sf X \$1,000 psf	\$148,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Porta-Loo High End: Improve appearance of all Porta-loo options	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$149,000	\$30,000	\$80,000	\$6,000	\$46,500	\$87,000	\$6,000	\$3,000
Cost over 10 years, assuming no inflation	\$149,000	\$30,000	\$79,000	\$6,000	\$86,500	\$87,000	\$6,000	\$3,000
Potential use of Town of Stonington allocated CAPEX \$0K	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Stonington Borough ARPA funds approved in 2022 for bathrooms	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000

Notes:  
 Permanent Structures: The very detailed cost estimates for Wood Square worked out at \$1,388/sf of which \$288 of that was for the civil/infrastucture work associated with the location. Both locations above, have infrastucture in place, let's assume we use \$1,000/sf for build out of Boro Bodega and Borough Hall. Additional bathroom at Borough Hall is 49 square feet. Borough Bodega space is 144 square feet for 2 NON ADA compliant bathrooms.  
 Portaloos: The buy option has an upfront cost that is once only in 10 years. Each port-loo option for both buy and rent have 'improve appearance' options. This is also a one time up-front cost.



## DRAFT ONLY 11/15/23

Description	Permanent Options		Supplemental Options	
	Option 1 Borough Hall. 1 ADA bathroom Amount	Option 2 Borough Hall 2 Bathrooms Amount	Option 3 Porta Loo High End - Buy Amount	Option 4 Expand Existing Porta Pottie Rent Amount
Estimated Comfort Station Annual Operating costs				
Annual Rent/Lease	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 5,760
Insurance	No additional cost	No additional cost	\$ 1,000	na
Electric	\$ 180	\$ 180	\$ 2,400	na
Heating	No additional cost	No additional cost	part of electric bill	na
Cleaning - twice per day 4 months, once per day 8 months	\$ 14,280	\$ 14,280	\$ 14,280	\$ 10,560
Cleaning Supplies +Paper towels and toilet paper	\$ 3,250	\$ 3,250	\$ 3,250	na
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	na
Water/Sewer	\$ 1,568	\$ 1,568	\$ 1,568	na
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 21,778</b>	<b>\$ 21,778</b>	<b>\$ 24,998</b>	<b>\$ 16,320</b>
Borough Budget 1.5MM . % of Borough Budget	1%	1%	1.7%	1%
<b>Cost over 10 Years for Capex plus annual operating costs</b>				
Annual operating Costs	\$217,780	\$217,780	\$249,980	\$163,200
CAPEX - One time upfront cost to renovate/purchase	\$30,000	\$79,000	\$ 130,153	\$ 5,760
<b>TOTAL - OVER 10 YEARS</b>	<b>\$247,780</b>	<b>\$296,780</b>	<b>\$380,133</b>	<b>\$168,960</b>

Note: Sewer repair/upgrade at Borough Hall should not be included as it will happen regardless.

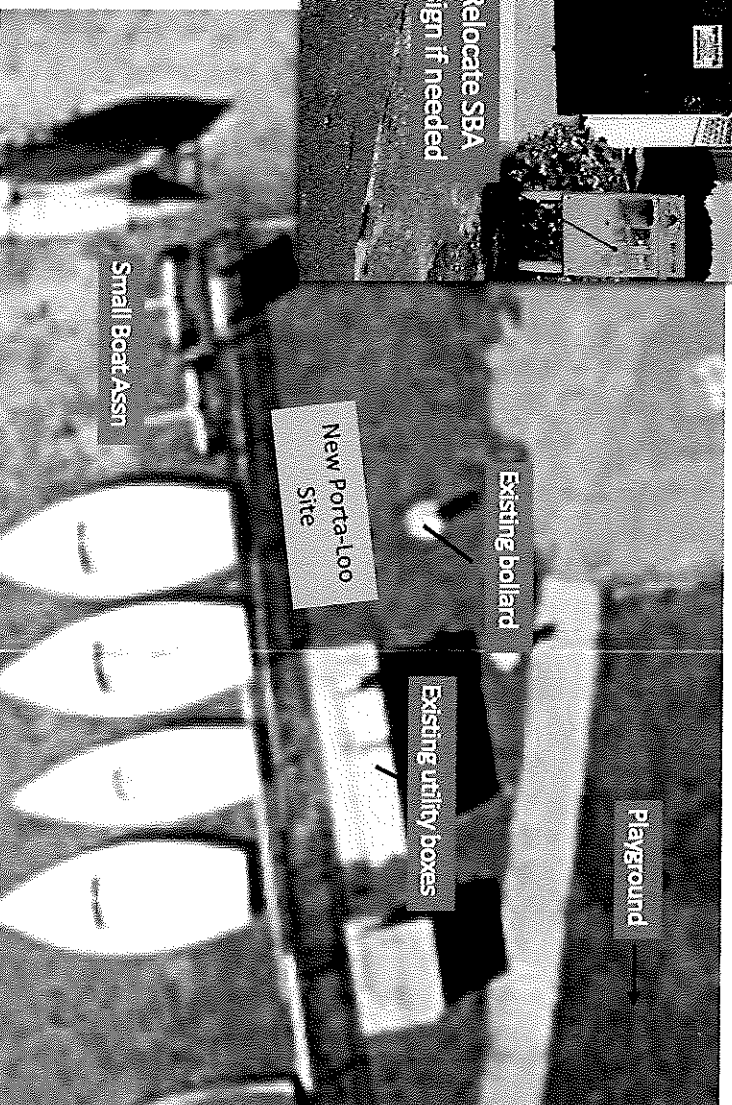


# Recommendations

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- The taskforce, through a process of elimination has reduced the number of options to two permanent options at Borough Hall.
- Borough Hall options:
  1. Use the (existing) ADA compliant bathroom
  2. Use the (existing) ADA compliant bathroom and add an additional bathroom to create two public restrooms.
- Additionally, there is an upgraded portaloos option. This is *in addition* to the bathroom options at Borough Hall.
  - Work with the Town of Stonington to add an additional portaloos at the playground in a new location with a fence, landscaping and increased cleaning.

## Playground Portalo Upgrade



2 ADA Units (Mens/Womens); or  
1 ADA Unit & 1 Changing Table Unit (Unisex)

# Comparison of Locations

Comparison of locations	Borough Hall Option 2	Mad Square
Cost and Ease of Construction	~79K for both 1&2	~400K
Close to Commercial District	Closer to Coml Zone	
Handicap Accessible	Yes	Yes
Comforts e.g. 2 Bathrooms	Yes	Yes
# of Residences within 100 feet	Less	
Physical Change to abuilding or a park	No	Yes