



The Enterprise — Nicole Fay Barr

Preserving the battleground: *The Guilderland Town Board has applied for a grant to purchase the site of the Battle of the Normanskill, on Route 146. The area will be used as parkland, although the town will not build on it.*

Park, pool, and battlefield site

By Nicole Fay Barr

GUILDERLAND — It's springtime, and the town board's fancy has turned to parks.

Tuesday, the board decided to apply for grants to build a small park in McKownville, to improve the pool area at Tawasentha Park, and to preserve the site of the Battle of the Normanskill.

The grants would come from the state's Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation.

The site of the proposed "McKownville Reservoir Park" is near T.G.I. Friday's at Stuyvesant Plaza. Owned by the town, the land for the park will surround a body of water that, 40 years ago, was a reservoir.

If the town is awarded the \$97,450 grant, it will add fountains, a foot trail, a gazebo, picnic tables, and a foot bridge over the Krumkill River, said Donald Csaposs, the town's grant writer and development director.

"It's a potentially nice resting area for the residents and the people who work at Stuyvesant Plaza," he said.

But, Csaposs told *The Enterprise*, the town isn't doing this for the plaza. The McKownville Improvement Association has been requesting the town build a park here for a while, he said.

At the end of Tuesday's town board meeting, association President Don Reeb thanked the town for applying for the grant.

If the town is awarded a grant for its pool at Tawasentha Park, almost everything above water will be improved, Csaposs said. The pool's changing and restroom facilities and the pool apron need to be reconstructed, he said.

The pool house was built cheaply 40 years ago, he said.

"The floor is settling to one side and cracking," Csaposs said. "...It's not a good situation in terms of functional use of space."

The pool grant is for \$293,000, which the town would have to match, he said.

The Battle of the Normanskill site, on Route 146, is privately owned. The town has been interested in it for 15 years, Supervisor Kenneth Runion said.

"It is a piece that would be added to the Tawasentha Park land," he said.

The \$105,500 grant, which the town would also match, will be used to pay for the land, Csaposs said.

"The town will add it to its park system," he said. "It won't be used for anything active."

People can use the land in the winter for sledding or in the summer for running, but there will be nothing built on the land, Csaposs said.

"A long lost battle of the Revolution," occurred on the site, former town historian, the late Arthur B. Gregg, wrote in his book, *Old Hellebergh, Scenes from Early Guilderland*.

Schenectady militia and 40 Rhode Island troops, on their way to Schoharie, had an unsuccessful battle against the British there, Gregg wrote.

"There is an interesting tradition that those Tories who were captured in the barn where hidden under the hay, but that several forceful bayonet jabs in the mow brought forth bitter howls of pain and a quick surrender," Gregg wrote.

The town won't be notified that it has been awarded the grants until late in the fiscal year, probably next February or March, Csaposs said.

"We believe all of these projects are worthy of consideration by the state or we wouldn't bother to file the grant applications," he said.

Other business

In other business, the board:

— Heard from Jim Donovan, of Wilbur Smith Associates, about a study the Guilderland Pathways Committee did on the need for sidewalks and bike paths in Guilderland. Through a grant, Donovan was hired by the town to analyze the volunteer group's study.

He told the board he supported the study and made minor suggestions on how to improve it;

— Accepted a dedication from Abode Blue Chip, LLC of over an acre of land, at Mill Hill, that includes the Guilderland Ballet barn.

The non-profit dance school has been at Mill Hill off Route 155 for over a decade. For years, the school paid developer and former landowner Armand Quadrini \$1 per year to lease the

land and the town paid its heating bills. In 2003, Mill Hill was foreclosed and auctioned off due to what Quadrini called "unforeseen conditions."

Jane DeRook, director of the ballet, worried about its future and asked the town to bid for the land, but it did not. Abode Blue Chip LLC bought the land at the auction and the new owner told DeRook he was willing to negotiate, letting the ballet stay on the land. Tuesday, it was announced that the company is donating the land to the town.

"We've all realized what a significant part of the community the ballet is," said Will Powers, of Abode Blue Chip;

— Authorized the retention of CBIZ Valuation Group and the purchase of software for the town to comply to the state comptroller's requirements based on Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) recommendations;

— Authorized allowing Delaware Engineering to review projects to loop dead-end water lines in western Guilderland and Guilderland Center.

Looping these water lines will improve water quality for the whole system and save money, Runion said, because the water will be less polluted and not need as much chemical treatment;

— Changed its bid for a ton of chlorine gas from Slack Chemical to JCI Jones. The original low bidder, Slack Chemical, was not able to deliver the gas in a safe manner, Runion said. JCI Jones, the next lowest bidder, will be paid only 10 cents more, he said;

— Waived a building-permit fee for a pavilion at St. Madeleine Sophie church;

— Accepted sewer and water infrastructure for the Aliberti subdivision;

— Approved a water warrant adjustment for 6412 Zorn Road because the house there was converted from a two-family home to a one-family home;

— Authorized the supervisor to sign a collector's warrant for the Guilderland Water District, for May 1 to Oct. 31; and

— Announced that the Elks' Flag Day parade is this Saturday, at noon, starting at Lynwood Elementary School.