Keyes Memorial Park

THE FUTURE OF MILFORD'S DOWNTOWN GEM.

Committee Members

- Arene Berry (Director of Recreation Department)
- Claudia Lemaire (Recreation Committee Member)
- Hub Seward (Conservation Commission Member
- Jacob LaFontaine (Planning Board Member)
- Janet Langdell (Planning Board Member/Keyes Trust Trustee)
- Jerry Guthrie (Resident)
- Lincoln Daley (Director of Community Development Office)
- Marc Maurais (Director of Milford High School Athletics)
- Mike Putnam (Board of Selectman's Representative)
- Pamela Alleyne (Milford Area Seniors Member)
- Paul Bartolomucci (Recreation Commission Member)
- Rick Riendeau (Director of Department of Public Works)
- Tim Barr (Resident, MIT Board of Director's Member)

Acknowledgements

- Tony DaCosta and his team
  @ Turnstone Corporation

- Karen Baker and
  Nashua Regional Planning Commission

Brief History – Keyes Park

1952 - Henry Laxon inherited the property from the heirs of original owner Josiah Crosby

1957 - Arthur L. Keyes Memorial Trust purchases & donates the land to the Milford School District (need = playing fields)

1964 – Orchestrated land exchange between Milford Town Government and Milford School District – Endicott Park for Keyes Park (need = swimming pool)

Starting with playing fields, Keyes Park has grown over the years in response to our community's recreation needs and with the help of many volunteers and community organizations.

Current Park Amenities

- Swimming Pool
- Wading Pool with shade canopy
- Concession stand
- Playground
- Pavilion & Pergola
- Picnic area & grills
- Stage
- Parking

.....continued

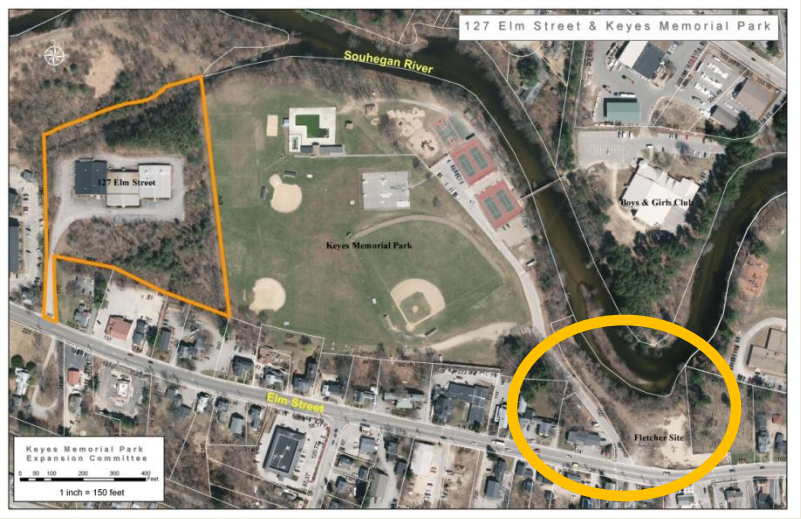
Current Park Amenities

- Skate Park
- Four Tennis courts
- Basketball court
- One 90’ Baseball diamond
- Two 60’ Softball diamonds
- One Multi-purpose field
- Volleyball court
- Horseshoe pits
- Portable Toilets

Recent History – Closure??

The Threat of Multi-year Closure ~ 2011 – 2015

- 2-3 year closure of Keyes Park during EPA clean-up of Fletcher site
- Closure of Keyes Drive for public access
- Loss of access easement over 127 Elm property



Recent History – The Solution

The Solution

- Purchase 127 Elm Street
  - Provides access for immediate need
  - Provides long-term secondary access
  - Provides additional space for parking
  - Provides additional space for recreational activities and facilities
- The Cost (original figures)
  - $190,000 – Cash payment - ALL donations
  - $ 88,000 – Property tax forgiveness
  - $220,800 – Value/Tax write-off by owners

Now what? How to integrate….

What we got–

- A second/west entrance to Keyes
- 5.8 acres of relatively flat land
- Additional parking space
- 33,000± SF building space

Keyes Memorial Park Expansion Committee

- The Board of Selectman appointed a committee and charged it with developing short and long term recommendations for the integration of 127 Elm into Keyes Memorial Park.
- The group consisted of 13 Milford citizens and employees with various knowledge of the parks, recreation, facilities and community planning.
- The committee has been meeting bi-monthly since April to research, analyze and formulate a set of recommendations.

The Charge

- Best use for the property – short & long term
- Include Keyes Park as a whole (master plan)
- Community recreational priorities that could be located on the property - Additional playing fields and parking?
- Other Town space needs that could be accommodated
- Building evaluation – current conditions & potential uses including potential ongoing costs
    - Rent portions of building to generate income?
    - Opportunity for short term lease of existing building while planning activities are underway?

Methodology

- Reviewed current status of the Keyes Park facilities
- Obtained professional evaluation of the 127 Elm Street building(s)
- Sought input from other Municipal Departments and the School District
- Sought public input on our community's recreational interests and needs, and current use of Keyes Park

Incorporate the priorities included in the Milford Master Plan and (pending) Recreation Chapter

DPW in Action!

- Cleared significant sections of scrub & trees
- Created additional parking
- Added striping etc.
- Cleaned-up perimeter
- Cleaned-out building
- Property secured

In addition to revamping the playground at Keyes Park!

Findings – Keyes Park

- Swimming Pool - *leak, surface, deck*
- Wading Pool - *leak*
- Concession stand - *ventilation*

☑ Playground

☑ Pavilion & Pergola

- Picnic area & grills - *more/old*

☑ Stage

- Parking - *more, safer, lighting*
- Skate Park - *longer term issues*
- Tennis courts - *surface*

"Fix & Maintain"

- Basketball court - *surface*
- Baseball - *surface*
- Softball - *surface*
- Multi-purpose field - *surface*

☑ Volleyball court

☑ Horseshoe pits

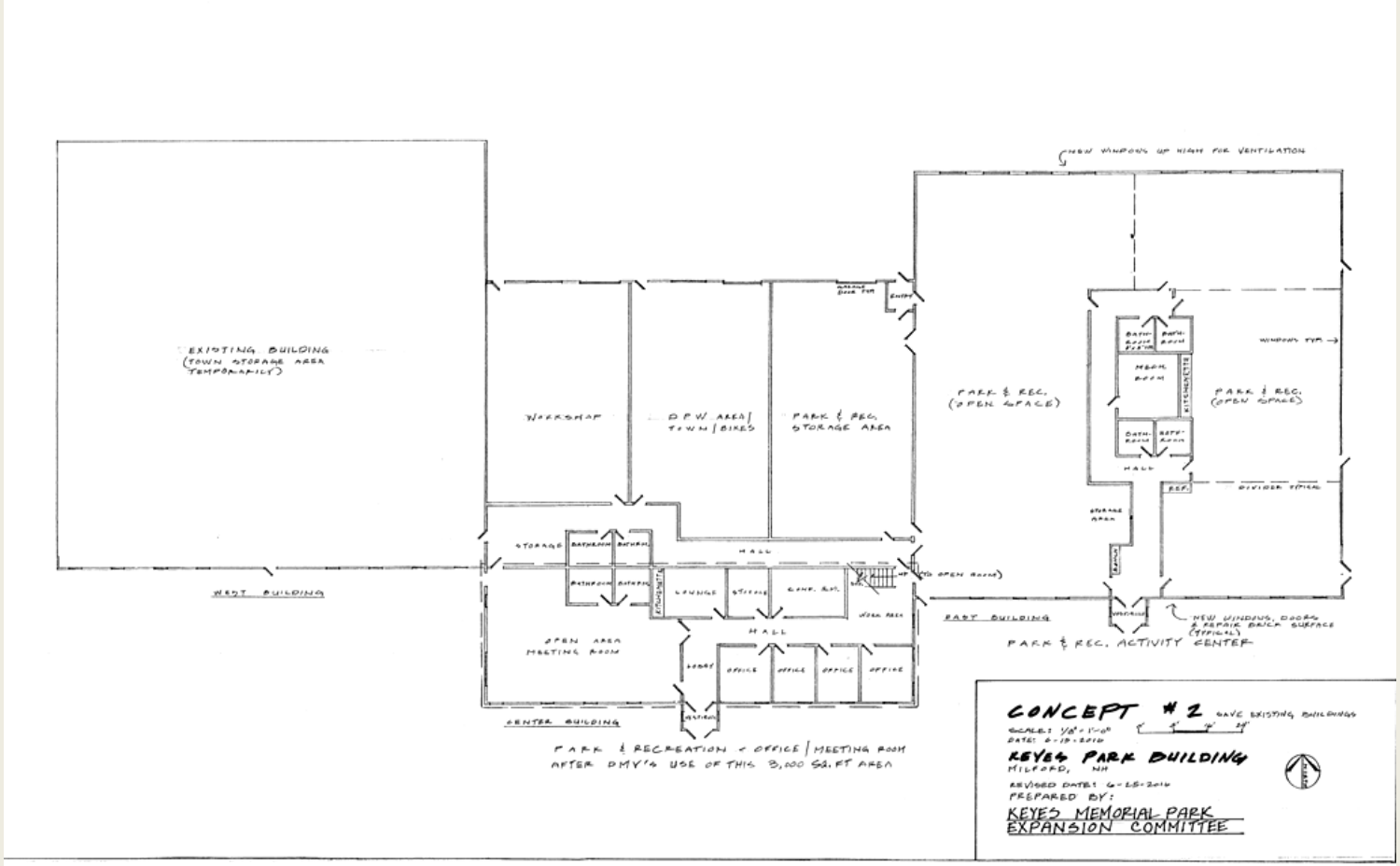
- Bathrooms - *insufficient*

Findings @ 127 Elm St

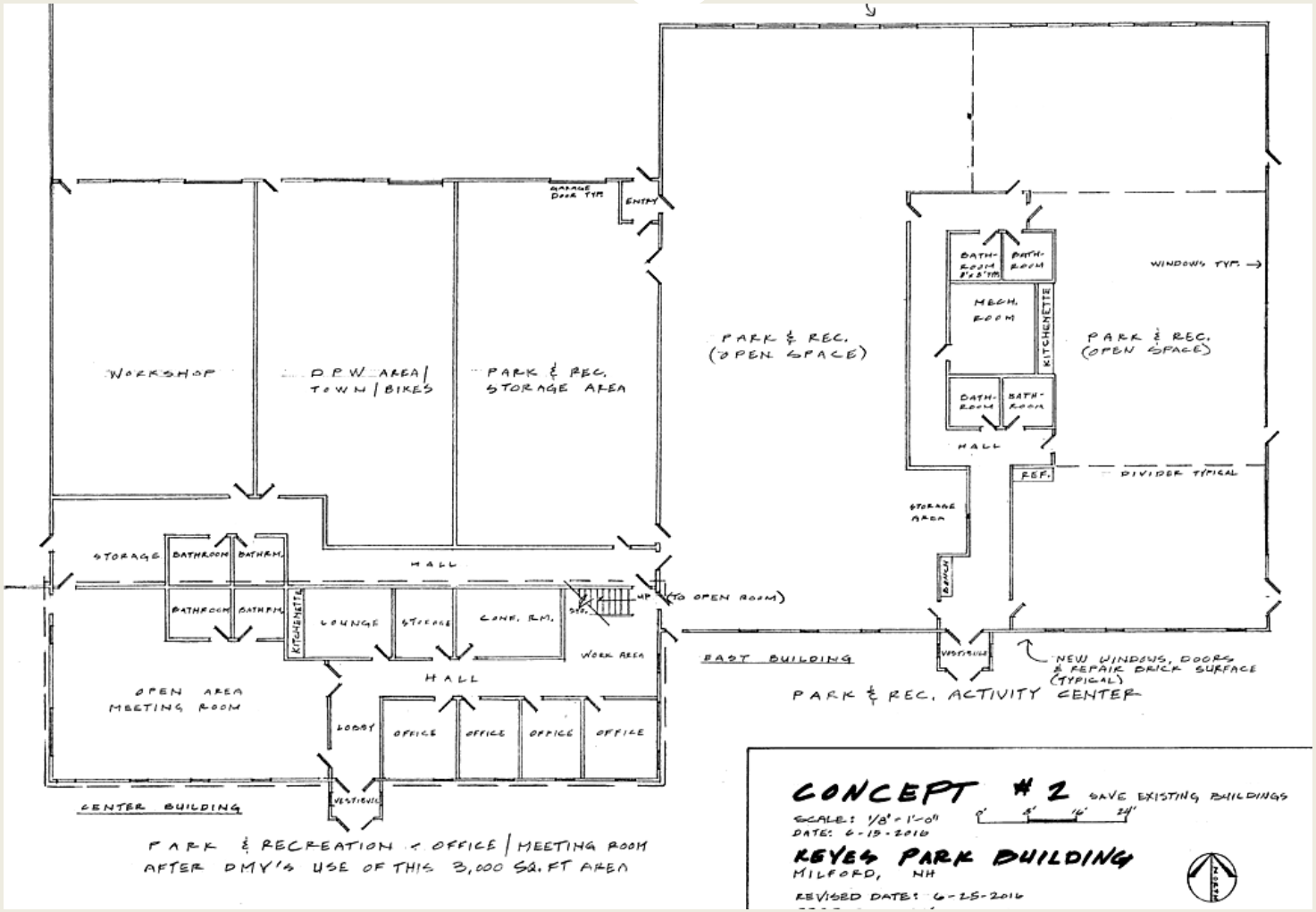
Findings @ 127 Elm St

- Structural steel/”Bare bones skeleton” - fine
- Roof - all needs replacement
- Floors - combination of replacement, fill and other work
- HVAC, Electrical & Plumbing - all need replacement
- Fire suppression system - enters complex through the west building

Possible Renovation Plan



Plan Detail (with DMV consideration)



Findings @ 127 Elm St

Professional Estimates

Renovation of the existing 30,000 SF building – primary space in middle and east buildings; west section for storage	**$2,856,306**
Demolition of the existing building and construction of a new 30,000 SF building with an unfinished second floor	**$3,797,502**

Note: The fire suppression system for the three structures enters from the west building. Any changes of that entrance point would require a complete re-design of the system with additional costs.

Public Input ~ Survey & Open House

308 Surveys completed!

Survey Highlights - Use

Top Current Uses

- Playground
- Special Events
- General area for walking
- River trail
- Picnic areas
- Pool

Committee discussion points included -

- Used for more general activities
- Consider promoting park for special events & possibly rentals
- Consider ways to enhance public awareness of this resource
- Development within the context of overall planning for town-wide recreational facilities & centralize Recreation Department

Survey Highlights - Improvements

Top 6 “Improvement” Items Selected –

- More permanent restrooms
- Fix & maintain what is currently at Keyes
- Walking-biking path around the park
- More shaded areas*
- Pedestrian bridge to North River Road fields*
- More parking

* Tied for 4th most frequently selected response

Survey Highlights – Budget Ranking

Please rank the following on how you would allocate Milford's budget resources for recreational facilities at Keyes Park. Number 1 being the most important to you and number 8 being the least important to you. If Other, please list your preferences.

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Response Count
Fix and maintain what is currently available at Keyes Park	126	42	31	21	18	5	2	1	246
Improve baseball and softball fields (quality of fields, concession areas, lighting)	21	22	22	30	28	43	32	14	212
Improve multi-purpose field space	2	31	20	39	48	41	26	12	219
Improve areas for activities such as picnicking and sitting	17	34	51	41	38	29	10	8	228
Create a walking-biking path around Keyes Park that connects with Milford's sidewalk and trail system	54	63	43	27	21	19	13	3	243
Improve and expand use and views of the Souhegan River	8	24	38	48	30	35	31	10	224
Expand facilities for indoor sports	26	17	20	15	25	29	59	39	230
Other: please specify below	12	7	6	4	3	0	3	28	63
								answered question	281
								skipped question	27

Keyes Park Master Plan – Phase 1

Phase 1 – 6 months to 1 year

1. ADA compliant walking /biking path around Keyes Park
2. Move ball field & create multi-purpose field
3. Revise parking & add lighting on east side of park
4. Lighting on west side of park
5. Signage
6. Interconnected road between east and west side of the park
7. Install (10) exercise stations along the river side of walking/biking path
8. Create shaded areas with seating
9. Development of a town wide parks and recreation maintenance plan including fields

Keyes Park Master Plan – Phase 2

Phase 2 – 5 years

1. Smaller new building with space to accommodate future expansion
2. Hockey/basketball courts
3. Remove pump house
4. Remove current basketball and create picnic area
5. Multipurpose field and parking
6. Remove existing 127 Elm building

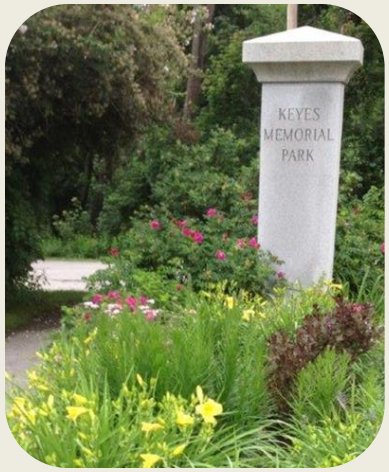
Keyes Park Master Plan – Phase 3

Phase 3 – 8-10 years

1. Complete landscaping
2. Final lighting
3. Complete walkways through park
4. Bridge to North River Road fields

Keyes Park Master Plan – The Vision

Keyes Park Master Plan – East Entrance



A Work In Progress

Overall Recommendations (1)

- Integrate the two parcels in word & deed as Keyes Memorial Park
- Secure the three buildings to prevent further vandalism or deterioration – Remodel/prepare for renting?? Major concerns about return on investment (costs, liability, loss of parking etc.) and about undermining the stated reasons for purchasing the property - Recreation
- In the next 12 months, the BOS, Recreation Department & Commission, and DPW collaborate to develop a prioritized plan to repair and maintain the facilities at Keyes Park – some of this work is already underway at DPW

Overall Recommendations (2)

Move forward with the “low hanging fruit”

- Build a gravel connector road on the south side to connect the east and west parking areas – improve access management
- Expand the east parking area and add lighting as identified on the Fieldstone plan and add lighting in the west parking lot
- Build a walk-bike path around the perimeter of Keyes Park
- Beautify the fields by adding some shaded areas and landscaping
- Reactivation of the yellow blinking light on Elm St at the west entrance for use during high volume events – promote traffic and pedestrian safety
- Complete design requirements for the east entrance to Keyes Memorial Park (aka the Fletcher site)

Overall Recommendations (3)

- Centralize Milford's recreation programming and department at Keyes Park – build a Community Recreation Center - frees up space at Town Hall and parking around the Oval & increases accessibility to programs
- BOS collaborates with the Recreation Department & Commission to appoint a committee to develop a strategic plan to design and fund a Community Recreation Center at Keyes Memorial Park
- BOS asks the voters in March 2017 to establish a capital reserve fund for the design, development, and construction of improvements to Keyes Memorial Park starting
- Longer term goal – feasibility study of building a pedestrian connection between Keyes Memorial Park and the North River Road recreational fields.

Questions ~ Comments ~ Next Steps