

Executive Summary

Over a period of three months, a ten person, two-credit unit Studio course in Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania embarked on a study of a 150+ acre parcel of land owned by the YMCA in the northwest corner of the Town of Groton, Connecticut. This parcel is known as the Gungywamp area. Significant in part for its open space designation, it has also developed lore and reputation for the complex of archeological structures (walls, underground chambers, foundations) situated partially within parcel boundaries. This archaeological complex has been at the center of controversy and inquiry for decades. Poised to transfer from public to private hands, the site's future is uncertain.

This document summarizes the research and analysis, work process and new findings of the Studio. It concentrates on a conceptual level of recommendations for the transfer of the parcel from private to public ownership, including site design, management and finance. The purpose of this report is to reveal the essence of our studio's collective thoughts on the site to the interested public as they have developed so far and to solicit ideas and suggestions for their improvement.

The core of the Studio investigation proposes the preservation of the Gungywamp archeological complex and analyzes the significance of the cultural and historic landscape around the site.

Some salient features of the Studio recommendations include commitments and expectations to:

- Preserve the historical features on site;
- Develop a design which diverts traffic and impact from the stone structures on site;
- Facilitate community ownership, pride, respect and care of the site and its sensitive features;
- Prepare a visitor framework/initiative to lure money to protect and maintain the site, culminating in a facility to house site artifacts and related research documents;
- Expect that a portion of the new infrastructure will embrace, celebrate and reinterpret one of the more intriguing features of the archeology on site: the solar equinox chambers and their significant role marking time through the interplay of light and solid form;
- Develop recreational features which allow use of the site by the public, including trails for a variety of user groups;
- Secure ongoing financial and staff needs for maintenance and protection of the site and to pursue financial self-sufficiency;

- Afford the site political and legal protection from any future development that would adversely impact the ecological health and archeological significance of the landscape;
- Practice science-based and community-oriented adaptive management;
- Expect the site to be tied to a larger town, state and regional network of ecological and historic sites, all with public access, doing so will provide new and experimental opportunities for managing historic and ecologically valuable resources.

The Studio invites readers of this report to forward their suggestions concerning the ideas and research findings presented in the document.

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