

October 7, 2022

Re: Town of Liberty Grove – Property Scope Observation Site Visits Memorandum

Property Tour Introduction

Ayres Associates toured 20 municipal properties owned by the Town of Liberty Grove, Door County, Wisconsin, on August 24, 2022, between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:00 pm. Mr. Kalms, Town Administrator, directed the tour and provided transportation and a narration of the existing uses and considerations for the properties that were reviewed. The following is a description of the properties as they were reviewed. A proposal of the next steps is provided at the end of each property description.

***Property No. 1 Ellison Bay Community Park
Bayview Road, Ellison Bay, WI***

This property of approximately 3.5 acres has tennis courts with pickleball court markings, flush toilet building, playground equipment, swimming beach, pier, and a community hall building.

The community hall building is an older building with a sitting room, kitchen, and large open meeting room. This building has water and a septic holding tank system, but it is only used seasonally and not open in the winter. There is one men's room and one women's room with one toilet fixture each. The building entrance is handicap accessible, but the second exit is not. There is low headroom in the meeting room space for the overall size of this room. There were signs of water damage to the ceiling in several locations, but Mr. Kalms mentioned that the building was re-roofed about 10 years ago and this damage occurred before that. The building sits on a slope with the grade near or at the floor level on the south side and spring thaw sends water up to and under the building into the foundation space. A drainpipe daylights down the slope to the rear of the building near the rain garden area. There is sentimental attachment in the community to the building to keep using it as it formerly belonged to the Women's Society, although this organization no longer exists.

There is a swimming area with a sand beach on the east side of the pier and natural beach on the west side of the pier. There is a sand dune and a rain garden buffer between the beaches and the rest of the park. This works as a barrier to keep Canadian Geese from wandering ashore and up into the park lawn areas.



Next Steps:

Ayres can provide a full code analysis of the Community Building to determine if any changes or accommodations are required based on use if it is intended to be used as a rental facility for meetings and group activities.

The Town may also wish to consider conducting a non-invasive structural evaluation to assess whether there are any structural issues associated with the water damage.

If this facility is being considered for year-round use, the Town will need to provide proper insulation, air & vapor barriers, and heating system for this purpose.

Extending the sand beach to the west side of the pier is a future goal and protecting this pier from winter damage is an on-going project. They have placed additional stone riprap where erosion was occurring. Ayres Civil Engineering group could be consulted to provide design and engineering services as required for a permanent solution.

**Property No. 2 Val-A Motel site
11976 Hwy 42, Ellison Bay, WI**

This property is 0.89 acre and was the site of a former motel. The mound septic system remains but may not meet current perk tests.



Next Steps:

The location is good for a business incubator space on the ground level with affordable housing apartments above.

Ayres can provide a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan, along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.

**Property No. 3 Town Hall South Property
1960 Waters End Road, Sister Bay, WI**

This property is currently farm field and wooded land and adjacent to Liberty Grove Town Hall and shops. The property is approximately 20 acres that is leased as farmland at this time along with about 10 acres of the parcel that the town hall and shops sit on currently. There are no utilities on this property. It is one mile to the nearest commercial area and 2.5 miles from this address to Al Johnson's restaurant in Sister Bay (for reference).



Next Steps:

The Town is interested in providing property that could be developed into affordable housing for low-income wage earners in the community. This property could be developed to include covenants that would require a portion of the development to provide low-income housing.

Ayres can provide a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan for duplexes and/or multi-family apartment buildings along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.

**Property No. 4 Garret Bay Park
Garret Bay Road, Gills Rock, WI**

This approximately 6-acre property has a boat launch that is severely in need of repair. Garrett Bay Road divides the boat launch from the parking area. There is a port-a-potty near the parking area. Orientation of the property provides challenges from the north/northwest winds. Waves and ice cause challenges with erosion.



Next steps:

The Town could consider replacing the boat ramp and exploring the option of a boat dock. It is currently used by swimmers, divers, and kayakers. Ayres Civil and Structural groups can provide a feasibility study for the costs of a new ramp or boat dock for the Town's review.

**Property No.5 Post Office
12055 Garret Bay Road, Gills Rock, WI**

This 1.3-acre property was originally a town fire station and a portion of it has been converted into space that the post office leases from the Town. The back half of the property is wetland. The original structure was a fire station with 4 apparatus bays, and an office and meeting room addition on one end. The post office uses about half the current facility and may want to expand into more of the former apparatus bay space.



Next Steps:

Ayres Architecture can perform a space needs analysis and conceptual floor plan layout after reviewing the future needs of the postal service and how much area they would require.

**Property No.6 Mariners Park
12689-12695 State Hwy 42, Gills Rock, WI**

This is three properties totaling approximately 2 acres with a boat launch into Garrett Bay and was donated to the Town. The northern parcel had a house on it that was removed. There is an existing well and septic system that may be able to be re-used. There are three out-buildings that should be removed due to structural and material deterioration. The Town has indicated the historical society will remove the arched rafter portion of one of the buildings. The other two do not appear to have enough materials of value and should be removed in their entirety.



Next Steps:

This area is large enough to support a pavilion structure for picnics and gatherings. The Town has cleaned up some of the shoreline across the two parcels. Toilets could be added to the north parcel and there is water available for service or public use. The concrete pier needs repair, and the out-buildings will need to be removed to have good access to the boat launch.

Ayres can provide a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the feasibility for future development.

**Property No.7 Grandview Park
11833 State Hwy 42, Ellison Bay, WI**

Adjacent to Liberty Grove Historical Society, this 15-acre site is undeveloped. There are wooded areas, two ponds and open grasslands. The elevation change and a thick grove of trees buffer this area from State Hwy 42 along the SE boundary. \$300 funds allotted for a new parking lot on the north side of the property. Property is under a land-trust agreement with the town.



Next Steps:

The natural habitat should be preserved. A survey of native plant species and animal habitats could be provided to support the Town on maintaining the property in the best manner.

Ayres Landscape Architects can provide a study, recommendations and design for site improvements that will enhance the experience of the park.

**Property No.8 Liberty Grove Quarry
11159 Mink River Road, Sister Bay, WI**

The Town owns 40 acres for a stone quarry that they use for roadway maintenance and construction. There is a small area they use for brush to create mulch for roadway use. This location is not suitable for community yard debris as it is too remote to easily monitor. There is a communications tower on the site. They produced 20,000 yards of crushed stone this year. They have a metal storage building on the site that is 35-40 years old. The width of the building is sufficient but not tall enough for the new equipment. Solution is to add on a taller section or demolish the existing building and build a new taller building for storage.



Next Steps:
Review desired size and style for a new storage building, or an addition to the existing building. Ayres can provide a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.



**Property No.9 Liberty Grove Town Hall and Shops
11161 Old Stage Road, Sister Bay, WI**

The Town owns 23.5 acres that the Town hall and shops currently sit on with a 5.1 acre parcel to the south of the Town hall. As mentioned in Property 3 above, 10 acres of this property could be combined with the property on Waters End Road. The town hall houses offices, conference room and a large meeting room for the town board meetings. There is a meals-on-wheels program that operates out of the large meeting room several times each week. These uses meet the needs of the town at this time.

Next Steps:
Review as desired other uses for the extensive property. Three properties here are owned by the Town and portions could be divided and used for other purposes.

Ayres can provide a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plans could be completed along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.

**Property No.10 Gus Klenke Garage
12026 Garrett Bay Road, Ellison Bay, WI**

The Town owns 0.1 acre with an historic building that served as an auto repair garage – one of the first in the area. The building has 4x4 columns, LVL headers and added trusses to shore it up. The Historical Society may want to renovate it into a museum site. Cleaning up abandoned materials in the structure is responsibility of the Historical Society.



Next Steps:
Review turning this site over to the Historical Society.

**Property No.11 Fire Station North
1487 Hwy 42, Ellison Bay, WI**

The Town owns 7.5 acres at this site with the Fire Station that was built in 2003 or 2004. This is an all-volunteer fire station, and it has a meeting room with kitchenette and a weight room with locker room space in the basement. The fire station is governed by a joint Fire Board with the Village of Sister Bay and Town of Liberty Grove.



Next Steps:
Review ways to use this building better during the day – meetings and classes. The fire fighters have access to the facility for weight training and exercise.

If the Town has a desire to further develop this site, a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan could be completed along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.

Property No.12 Wills Park and Boat Ramp
12033 Cedar Shore Road, Ellison Bay, WI

The Town owns 0.4 acres for a park and boat dock and boat ramp. The Town added new sheet piles at the boat ramp and re-directed the road run-off pipe to the water settlement/filtration system. The Town has added large limestone at the shoreline to reduce shore erosion. There are no amenities in this park. There is a capped well in the park which was once a residential property. There is a surface water settlement/filtration system in the park to filter salt from water runoff from the adjacent roadway.



Next Steps:
Well water is available at this site and pit toilets could be added. The green space at the park is relatively small, so a few picnic tables, benches and a small pavilion are all that it can support.

Ayres can provide a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.

Property No.13 Fitzgerald Park
1594 Old School Road, Sister Bay, WI

The Town owns 7.5 acres of parkland that includes a baseball diamond, ice-skating rink, warming shelter building and open pavilion.



Next Steps:
Ayres Architecture and Structures groups can provide a facility conditions assessment and a conceptual floor plan could developed if changes to the existing facilities are required.

**Property No.14 Holtz Memorial Park
349 Europe Bay Road, Ellison Bay, WI**

The Town owns 8.71 acres. The existing park has pit toilets, grills and picnic tables with boardwalks and observation decks. There is a nice sandy beach out to Europe Bay and wooded land for hiking, inland. There is a pit toilet located here but no well water.



Next Steps:
Ayres structural group can evaluate the structural condition of the pit toilet building and make recommendations on improvements. Our architectural group will work with the Town on improvements to the structure and its finishes. The boardwalks are in good shape at this time but will need scheduled repairs and replacement.

**Property No.15 Europe Lake Boat Launch
460 Europe Lake Road, Ellison Bay, WI**

The Town owns 0.11 acres. There is only the boat launch here on this narrow parcel of land with some parking and no amenities. There is a problem with people driving into the water here as it is directly in line with the road.



Next Steps:
Review a means to notify traffic after dark that this is the water's edge and not a continuation of the road.

Property No.16 Sand Bay Park
11154 North Sand Bay Lane, Town of Liberty Grove, WI

The Town owns 5.9 acres for this developed park facing out to Lake Michigan. There is a pit toilet with two seats for each, men and women. The park has a nice shoreline with a couple of boardwalks and look-out decks with seating. There are picnic tables and grills throughout the park and plenty of parking for visitors. There is wooded area for hiking besides the beach.



Next Steps:
Ayres structural group can evaluate the structural condition of the pit toilet building and make recommendations on improvements. Our architectural group will work with the Town on improvements to the structure and its finishes. The boardwalks are in good shape at this time but will need scheduled repairs and replacement in the future.

Property No.17 Gills Rock Park (Death's Door Maritime Museum)
11161 Old Stage Road, Sister Bay, WI

The Town owns 8.53 acres adjacent to the 2 acres that the museum and park sit on now. There is a seasonal flush toilet, running water, an open pavilion, grills, benches, play equipment and paved parking. The Town has plans to provide a frisbee golf course in the adjacent land.



Next Steps:
Ayres can provide preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plans could be completed along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.

Property No.18 North Bay Boat Launch
9883 North Bay Road, Sister Bay, WI

The Town owns 0.28 acres that consist of a parking area and boat launch. There are no amenities at this site and very little shoreline for beach. This boat ramp keeps getting filled in with sand due to prevailing currents.



Next Steps:
The Town would like to extend the boat launch ramp into the Bay farther to reduce the amount of effort required to keep it usable.

Ayres Civil group can provide a study, design and engineering services to investigate and provide solutions for this site.

Property No.19 Trinity Cemetery
11995 Mink River Road, Ellison Bay, WI

The Town owns an existing cemetery that is nearly full. It is close to downtown Ellison Bay and has historic value to the community.



Next Steps:
Review construction of columbarium type structures on remaining plots. Ayres Landscape Architects can be resources for this type of site design.

**Property No.20 Public Parking Lot
12030 Hwy 42, Ellison Bay, WI**

The Town owns 1/3 acre at this site. It is a main intersection in Ellison Bay of Hwy 42 and Mink River Road. Currently there are some information posters on the site, and it is used for public parking.



Next Steps:

This property is centrally located in Ellison Bay Village. Ayres can develop a preliminary site master plan and conceptual floor plan along with an opinion of probable cost to determine the cost and feasibility for future development.