Hon. Carol Jean Doyle
Mayor

TOWN OF KEARNY

HUDSON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
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Stephen D. Marks
Town Administrator

MEMORANDUM

TO: HON. CAROL JEAN DOYLE, MAYOR & KEARNY TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: STEPHEN D. MARKS, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
(PROFESSIONAL PLANNER LICENSE NO. 33LI00568500)
DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
RE: GREEN ACRES APPLICATION FOR RIVERBANK PARK/HARTUNG CENTER AND KEARNY CREW HOUSE ADDITION AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has announced funding availability through its "Green Acres" program. Funding may be used for development of parks and recreation facilities. Applications are due February 5, 2025. Applicants may request up to $1.4 million for eligible projects. As both an "Urban Aid" municipality and an "Overburdened Community" Kearny is eligible for 100% grant funding with no local match required. In addition to "brick-and-mortar" construction costs, applicants may request up to 13% of project expenses for design and construction inspection, administration and monitoring services (i.e. "soft costs").

Applicants must conduct an official public hearing for their proposed project, advertise in the official newspaper of public record, post public notices on their website and social media platforms, and invite members of the general public to the public hearing to ask questions and/or submit comments. A resolution in support of the application must also be approved by the governing body after the public hearing. A public hearing for Kearny's proposed application has been advertised for the next Mayor & Council meeting scheduled for January 21, 2025.

Concept Plan

The Town proposes to submit a Green Acres application requesting funding to construct a second story addition on the existing one-story Kearny Crew House, replace the existing one-story masonry garage behind the Hartung Recreation Center with a new one-story storage building for boats owned and managed by the Kearny Recreation Department, and make other site improvements on the property as may be necessary. As a public building, the second story addition to the Crew House must be "ADA accessible" in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The existing one-story Crew House building (approximately 80'x75') is jointly occupied by the Kearny, Belleville, Nutley and St. Benedict's Prep high school Rowing/Crew teams. The high school programs have outgrown the existing building and more space is necessary. The existing building houses a large garage space for storage of rowing shells, boys' and girls' locker rooms and rest rooms, weight training rooms, and a central hallway corridor. In addition, the one-story masonry garage (approximately 32'x25') behind the Hartung Recreation Center is structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. It is in extremely poor condition and needs to be replaced. Finally, the Town of Kearny is proposing site improvements as may be necessary.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Hartung Recreation Center and Kearny Crew House are located at 925-927 Passaic Avenue (Block 89, Lot 4) near Route 7 (the Belleville Turnpike). The site is located in Kearny's "Riverbank Park" between Passaic Avenue and the Passaic River. The site is listed on the town's official "Recreation and Open Space Inventory" ("ROSI") which was approved by resolution of the Mayor and Council on May 2, 2023. The existing Crew House was constructed in 1969 and is currently utilized by the Kearny, Belleville, Nutley and St. Benedict's Prep high school Rowing/Crew teams. The site has been long developed and is characterized as "urban" by the NJDEP's "Land Use/Land Cover" survey. The site appears to be in a flood hazard area ("Zone X") on the National Flood Insurance Program's Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 34017C0017D) effective August 16, 2006. Site disturbance from construction is likely to be limited, so soil erosion permits by the Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District will not likely be necessary. However, the site's proximity to the Passaic River will likely require a Waterfront Development Permit by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). In 2021, the NJDEP's Green Acres program funded stabilization of the nearby shoreline and replacement of the existing dock. The project is currently under construction and expected to be completed in 2025. If funded, the second-story addition to the existing Crew House and replacement of the existing garage with a new one-story storage building at the Hartung Recreation Center would enhance a previously funded Green Acres application.

Cost Estimate

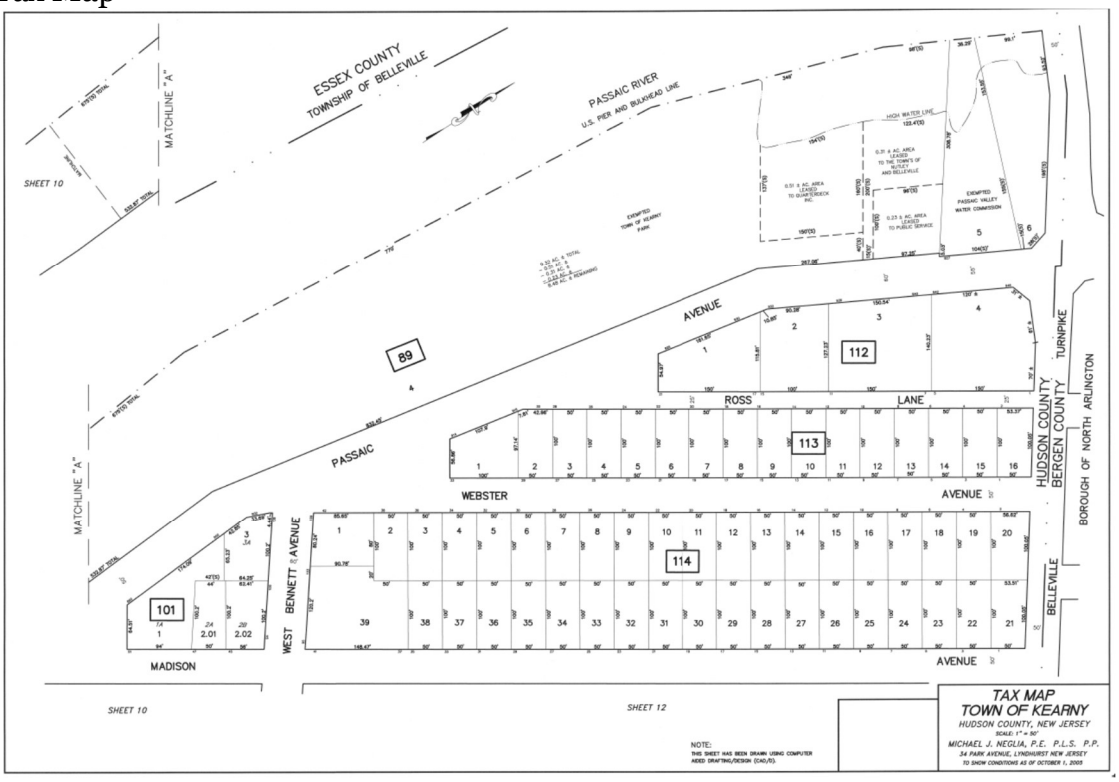
The estimate of probable construction costs to build a new second story addition to the existing Crew House, including ADA accessibility, is likely more than $1,120,000. Construction materials would include a combination of brick, concrete, steel, lumber, glazing, a wood-framed roof, and asphalt roof shingles, along with mechanical, electrical and plumbing materials. Demolition of the existing one-story masonry garage behind the Hartung Recreation Center and replacement with a one-story concrete block storage building with a wood framed roof and asphalt roof shingles will likely be more than $80,000. Site improvements consisting of concrete, macadam, porous pavers, lighting, signage and landscaping will likely be more than $100,000. Finally, professional service fees for design and construction administration, inspection and monitoring services will likely be more than $100,000.

Public Participation

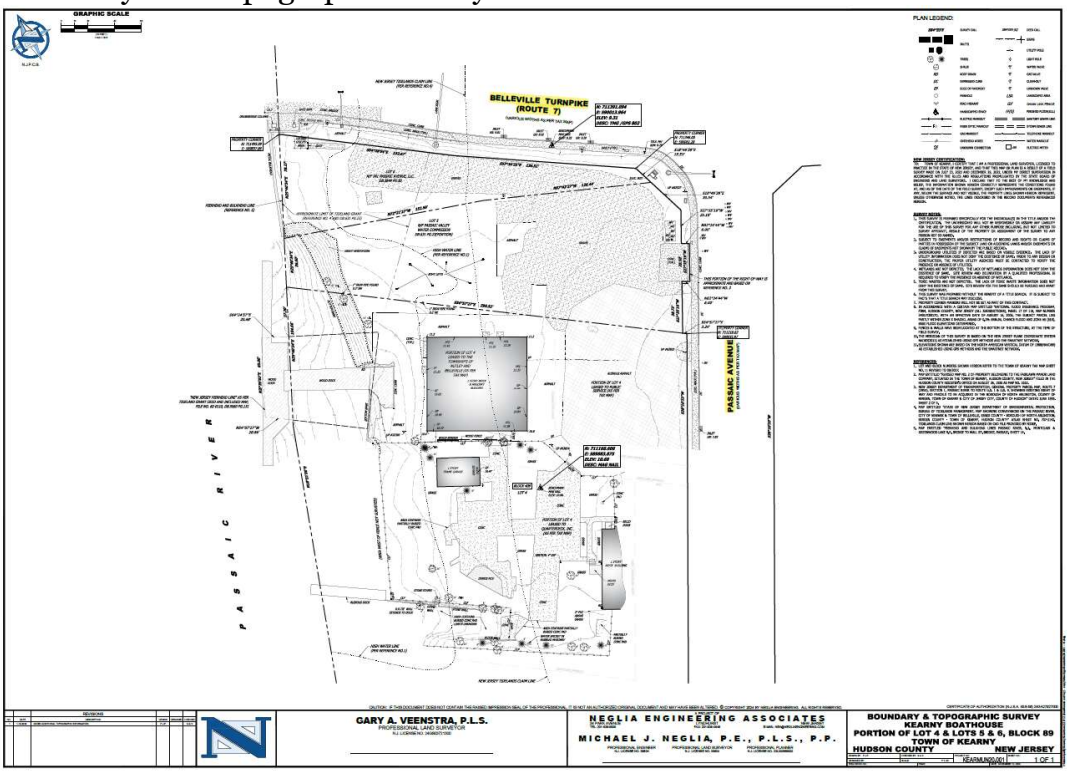
In 2022, the Kearny Planning Board approved a resolution accepting the town's comprehensive master plan. The Town solicited robust public input and comments through meetings, interviews and an online public opinion survey which garnered 845 unique responses. According to the public opinion survey, 92.5% of Kearny residents were in favor of preserving unique public spaces and 62.08% of Kearny residents were in favor of additional parks and recreational facilities.

In 2022, the Town collaborated with the Kearny Board of Education, Kearny Crew Team, Kearny Crew Parents and Boosters Association and the Kearny Recreation Rowing Club to submit a grant application to Green Acres to replace the existing dock and stabilize the adjoining Passaic River shoreline. The effort resulted in a $1,200,000 grant from the Green Acres program. This current grant effort builds upon the success of the previously funded project. And once again, the Town is soliciting the feedback and comments of the general public as well as park users, including parents and schoolchildren.

Tax Map



Boundary and Topographic Survey



Google Streetview of the Hartung Recreation Center (925 Passaic Avenue) with one-story masonry garage appearing on the right of photograph.

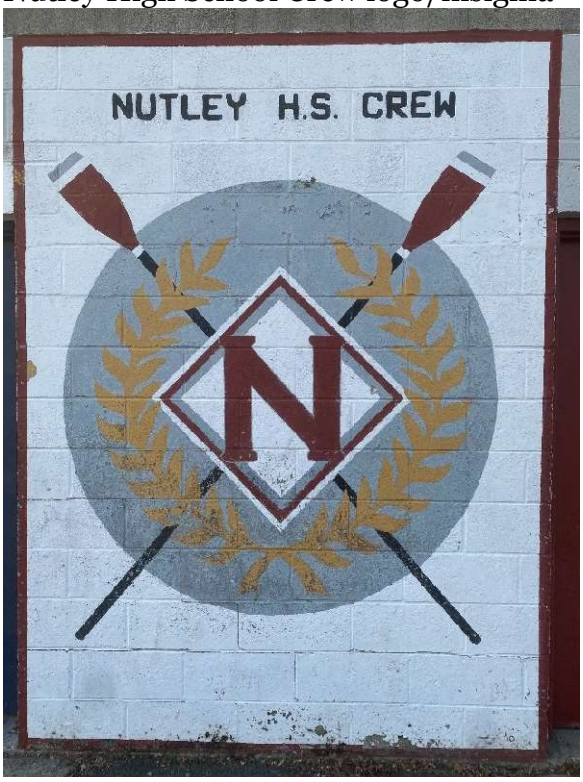
Google Streetview of one-story masonry Kearny Crew House (927 Passaic Avenue).

Western façade of Crew House facing Passaic Ave.

North-facing façade of Crew House facing Route 7/Belleville Turnpike

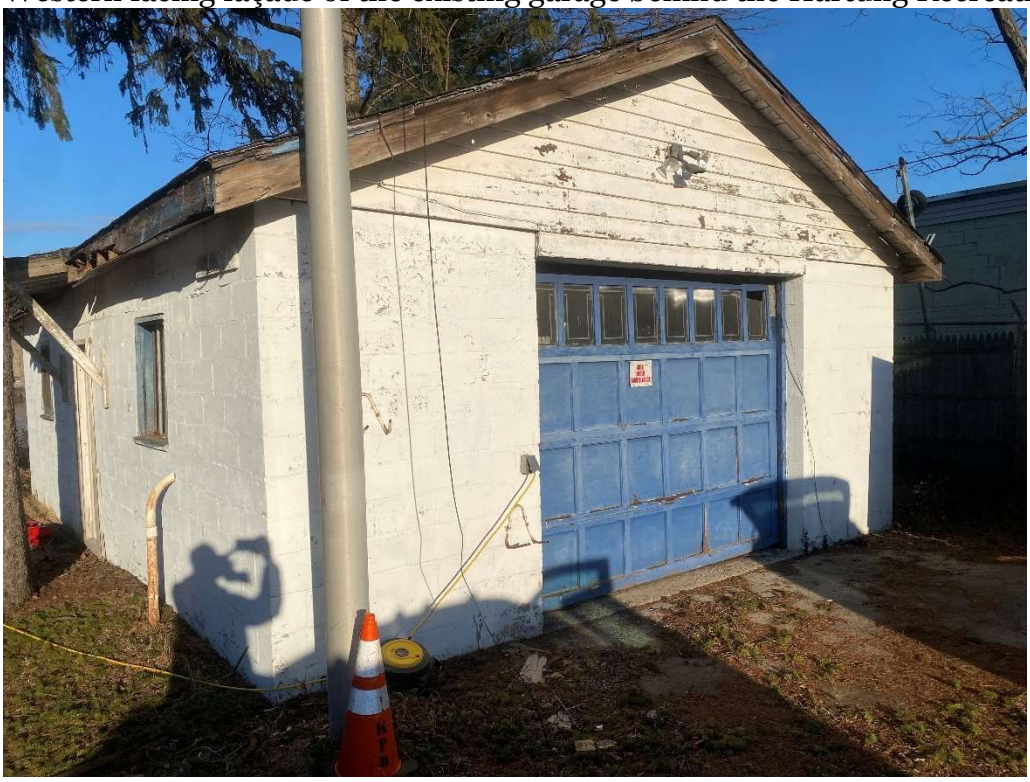
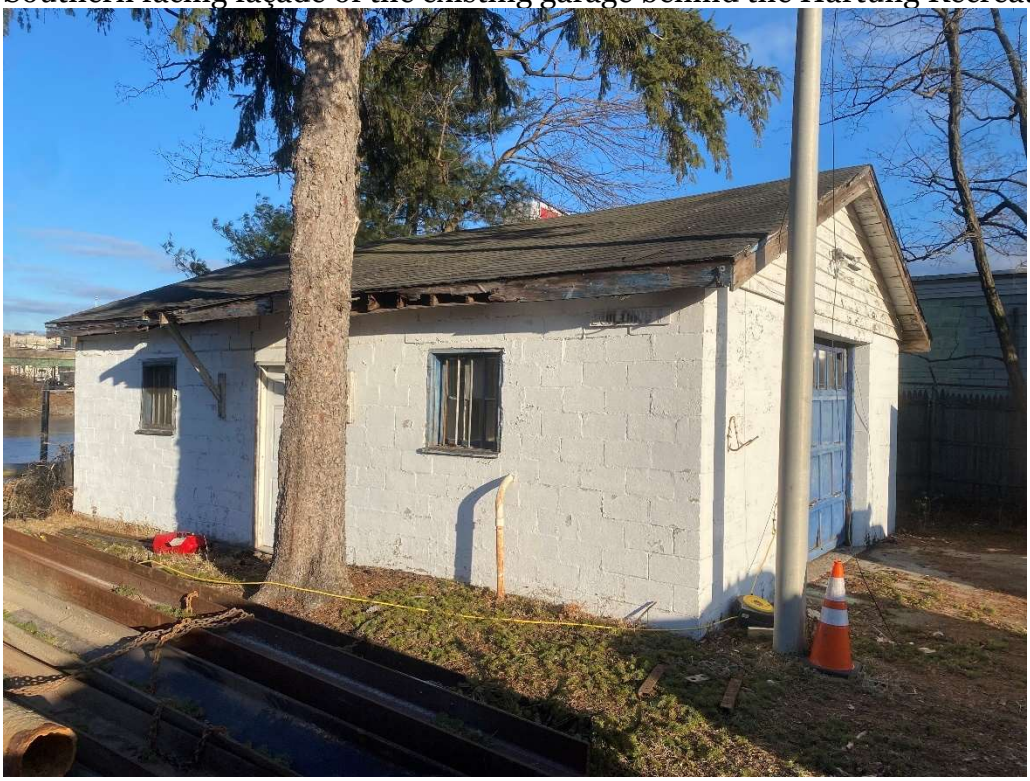
Belleville High School Crew logo/insignia

Nutley High School Crew logo/insignia



Kearny High School Crew logo/insignia

Western facing façade of the existing garage behind the Hartung Recreation Center.



Southern facing façade of the existing garage behind the Hartung Recreation Center.