

June 23, 2017

SaveCRS

Re: **Review and Comparison of Engineer's Reports for  
CRS Clinton and CRS Red Hook**

To the SaveCRS community:

I recently reviewed the Improvements and Expansion Assessment Report for the CRS site in Clinton, prepared by Crawford & Associates Engineering, PC and PSA Studios, and dated March 6, 2017. I thought it would be helpful to review the contents of this report and contrast it with the Facilities Evaluation Report for the CRS site in Red Hook, also prepared by Crawford & Associates Engineering, dated December 23, 2015

**Improvements and Expansion Assessment Report, CRS Clinton 3/6/17**

This report was prepared based on information from the September 2016 "Site Evaluation Report" by the LAJF Buildings and Grounds Committee which identified several campsite maintenance and upgrade requirements, along with estimated costs and a proposed budget. The report also addresses items discussed at a December 2016 site meeting between the authors and representatives of LAJF which included possible "programming modifications and expansion goals".

In general, the report describes the existing conditions at the campsite and identifies repairs and upgrades that require immediate attention. It also details projected improvements that would facilitate the LAJF's desired programming goals, presumably discussed at the December 2016 site meeting. As part of this analysis, and to "assist" LAJF in planning and budgeting, the report includes a phased five-year plan for improvements with target dates, estimated costs, and schematic design sketches. The report also provides a list of suggested improvements for beyond 2021.

In my opinion, there are two important items that need to be highlighted in this report. The first, and most important, is that this assessment essentially acknowledges that all of the structures on the Clinton campsite are currently in a condition that permits continued, uninterrupted use. I assume this was evident after the authors sufficiently examined the buildings and systems on site. For example, the report states that Crawford inspected the sewer septic system on March 16, 2016, after all the tanks and a grease trap were pumped and after the absorption fields were reportedly jet cleaned. Crawford also assisted in obtaining reissuance of the State Pollutant (SPDES) permit for the sewer system.

The other item to note is that the report includes an analysis of potential programming and expansion options in order to "support possible consolidation [of] the Red Hook camp on the Clinton site" (page 19). The goal would be to increase "the capacity of the existing facilities to accommodate more staff and campers, including mixed gender" (page 19). The stated goal is to double capacity to 150 people. This would be partly accomplished by alterations to the main building, at an estimated cost of \$84,000. This work would be addressed in 2018.

### **CRS Facilities Evaluation Report, Red Hook 12/23/15**

The stated intent of this report from December 2015, was to “provide an analysis of existing conditions of the site and to provide recommendations to improve the camp facilities such that the camp can be opened during the 2016 season.” The report addressed a number of repairs and improvements that were needed and suggested in order to make the campsite operational for what would have been the 2016 summer session. The conclusions reached in the report included the need for a completely new sewer system at an estimated cost of \$349,700, and a complete overhaul of the water system at an estimated cost of \$223,730. It also included improvements to the Willy Assembly Building, projected to cost \$227,500.

When I reviewed this report in May 2016, I was concerned with the evidence presented and used to justify the proposed improvements and costs. I was not convinced, and remain skeptical, that the full scope of work outlined in the report was/is necessary. It was my opinion that the existing building systems were not adequately tested and that they were being unnecessarily graded according to current code requirements. Also, there was no mention of current in-force permits for the site. Attached is copy of my May 2016 letter to SaveCRS that expressed my concerns.

In contrast to the Red Hook site report, the Clinton report is more thorough in its analysis of the campsite facilities. As mentioned, the Clinton report describes the testing and cleaning that went into assessing the condition of the sewer system. It presents a more palatable assessment of the repairs and upgrades, and the estimated costs, needed to keep the campsite in good condition. The Clinton report also includes plans and costs for the possible expansion and consolidation of Red Hook. If LAJF still intends to reopen Red Hook, why are limited funds being used to expand the Clinton site?

### **Summary**

There are a few key points to note when comparing the two reports:

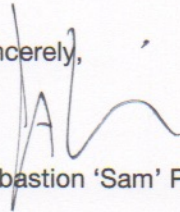
- The Red Hook report states that the camp site septic “system appears to be generally failing”. This assessment is based only on visual inspection and without specific testing to prove failure. Subsequently, LAJF has repeatedly claimed publicly that the septic system has “failed”, misrepresenting Crawford’s actual written statements.
- None of the septic tanks at Red Hook were pumped clean for evaluation (at a nominal cost) while all the tanks at Clinton were cleaned and then reviewed for the Crawford Clinton report.
- The Red Hook report, unlike the Clinton report, did not distinguish between required short term repairs and long term upgrades, nor did it lay out a phased strategy, for reopening the camp in 2016 - despite LAJF’s stated commitment to donors to “make the necessary emergency repairs to Red Hook and to plan for the following Camp season (2016)”



**Other Considerations**

In order to open the Red Hook campsite in 2016, the alumni of CRS raised \$550,000 in record time, after being challenged with a September 2015 deadline. The Board of LAJF established this target amount. Instead, the Board decided to cancel the 2016 season at Red Hook based on the 2015 Crawford Report and the conclusion that \$850,000 was needed. Even if this amount was actually required, an additional \$300,000 could have been drawn from the LAJF investment portfolio. LAJF refused to make this withdrawal despite the fact that in the three years before 2015, LAJF made portfolio withdrawals averaging about \$600,000, exceeding the limits of their internal financial policy.

A \$300,000 portfolio withdrawal to add to the \$550,000 that was already raised would have had many positive effects. Alumni donors would have remained engaged, fundraising would have gained momentum, over \$8000,000 in contingent pledges could have been collected, and above all, LAJF would have kept its commitment to reopen Red Hook.

Sincerely,  
  
Sebastian 'Sam' Pugliese