

# Addendum to the Recommendation Regarding the Purchase of Edgewood Sports Complex

Addendum Date: April 20, 2020

## **Ballantine Project Estimated Cost from Aquatectonic**

In response to public and Selectman feedback seeking further confirmation of the estimated cost for replacing the Town Pool at Ballantine Park, the Edgewood Ad Hoc Task Force engaged Lothrop Associates LLP architects, dba Aquatectonic, to provide a third, municipal-caliber, project estimate.

Aquatectonic specializes in designing pools, water features, and spas for municipal and community use in the tristate area. Aquatectonic has designed and built pools for municipalities such as White Plains, Armonk, and Somers, as well as community organizations such as the YWCA of Greenwich and the Westchester Country Club.

Our project lead, William Simmons, AIA, is the head of the Aquatectonic division. Mr. Simmons has over thirty years of professional experience designing for communities and municipalities. He is LEED-certified and has been a managing partner at Lothrop Associates for 13 years.

Mr. Simmons was asked by the Task Force to provide a cost estimate to replace the Ballantine pool and bathhouse to meet ADA standards and building code compliance. As he was not able to make a site visit due to the ongoing public health concern, Mr. Simmons was provided the Weston & Sampson engineering report of the pool and the Bennett Sullivan Associates Inc. analysis of the pool house for reference. Note that the Task Force did not provide Mr. Simmons with the detailed cost breakout spreadsheets from either Weston and Sampson or Bennett Sullivan.

Mr. Simmons submitted a project cost estimate of **\$3,979,276** to replace the Ballantine pool and bath house. This estimate is consistent with the previously obtained estimates:

Bennett Sullivan Associates, Inc.	\$3,729,000
Aquatectonic	\$3,979,276
<u>Weston and Sampson</u>	<u>\$4,650,000</u>
<b>AVERAGE PROJECT ESTIMATE</b>	<b>\$4,119,425</b>

Mr. Simmons allows that several site-specific factors, such as parking lot drainage, that may increase the project cost. Mr. Simmons' report also diverges from the Weston & Sampson and Bennett Sullivan Associates Inc. reports in two meaningful ways:

1. Mr. Simmons suggests an appropriate area for concrete decking, for a pool the size of Ballantine, is 12,000 square feet. Ballantine currently has only 6,400 square feet of decking, and both Weston & Sampson and Bennett Sullivan Associates Inc. based their estimates on that surface area. For comparison, Edgewood features 14,250 square feet of concrete decking.
2. Mr. Simmons suggests a project contingency of 15%. W&S includes a contingency of 10% and BSA factors, a ~7% contingency. Mr. Simmons has relayed in a phone conversation that pool projects have a higher degree of construction variance than other municipal projects, and his 15% contingency allocation is based on experience.

### **Additional Information on the Hamilton Pool Project in Waterbury**

The Task Force has received public feedback skeptical of the estimates obtained for the replacement cost at Ballantine. Often, this skepticism cites an estimated cost of \$1,500,000 to replace the pool at Hamilton Park in Waterbury. One such comment:

*“Waterbury is building a pool for \$1.5 million dollars. Did the task force contact Waterbury to understand why their pool is so much less expensive than our estimates for \$4 million?”*

This number originated from a February 8 article in the Waterbury Republican-American titled, [“Waterbury Officials Contemplating the Future of City’s Pools.”](#) The article states: “The most durable solution would be construction of an entirely new pool, with a cost estimate of up to \$1.5 million, according to the [Superintendent’s] report.”

The Superintendent of Recreation report cited in the article was informed by cost estimates provided to the City of Waterbury by William Simmons and Aquatectonic. Mr. Simmons has shared with the Task Force several key differences between the Ballantine and Hamilton projects, specifically:

1. The Hamilton Park pool is approximately 60% the size of Ballantine, at about 2605 square feet of surface area.
2. Aquatectonic’s estimate did not include decking, site work, or landscaping in the Hamilton Park estimate, only replacement of the pool.
3. Aquatectonic was not asked to provide an estimate for updating the bathhouse at Hamilton Park, which, in the opinion of Mr. Simmons, is clearly overdue.

Mr. Simmons’ insight dispels two common misconceptions about the Hamilton Park pool project:

1. That it would be possible to execute the entire project (the bathhouse, pool, and grounds) for the cited cost of \$1.5mm, and;
2. That pursuing the same engineering firm that estimated the cost to rebuild the Hamilton pool to determine the Ballantine pool cost would lead to a significantly less expensive estimate.

## **Conclusion**

The Aquatectonic estimate provides the Task Force with additional confidence in their belief that a Ballantine replacement project would cost roughly double the negotiated sale price of the Edgewood complex. The Task Force has uncovered no convincing evidence that a Ballantine replacement project could be completed for an amount significantly less than the established range above. At this point, if the Town were to receive such an estimate, it would be considered an outlier, and should be viewed with apprehension.