

The Navy Street File

Every source behind the Navy Street video: the primary documents, the city records, the news reporting — and the things no public record answers.

Compiled August 2026 from the record itself; where a claim is disputed, both sides are here.

The short version

Hancock has been planning a road and walking path along its canal waterfront since at least 1986, across multiple planning documents.

Daily Mining Gazette, Oct. 8, 2025 & Aug. 20, 2026

In October 2000, City Manager Glenn Anderson asked every waterfront owner for a free 20-foot easement — enough for a 12' one-way lane, 2' shoulders, and a 4' walking path — and put the city's end of the deal in writing: "If all the easements were granted, the City would agree to construct the road."

City memo MEM135, Oct. 2, 2000

By January 2001 the city reported favorable responses from all owners, and six or seven parcels signed easements at no charge. The easements never covered the full route. The road was never built.

City letter, Jan. 2, 2001; Daily Mining Gazette, Aug. 30, 2023

The 2024 Master Plan designates the corridor Shoreline Mixed Use and calls Navy Street the city's principal public access to the canal.

2024 Hancock Master Plan, pp. 30–32

The city restarted the project in 2025 — preliminary plans, a \$10,000 survey, a six-member committee, and Anderson rehired as facilitator — and now proposes building in a 33-foot easement granted in 1996 behind the Portage Lakeside Condominiums garages.

DDA minutes, Oct. 6, 2025; Council minutes, Nov. 19, 2025; TV6, Nov. 26, 2025

The easement runs along a steep hillside behind the condo garages — building there means deep cuts and a large retaining wall, and fourteen of fifteen condo owners say that isn't safe. Their attorney has presented the city a Memorandum of Law with Demand to Cease and Desist. The mayor says a 2011 lot split obligates the city to build; residents dispute that. No legal opinion has been published.

PC minutes, Sep. 25, 2023; Daily Mining Gazette, Apr. 17 & Aug. 6, 2026; Council minutes, Apr. 15, 2026; 1997 engineering cross-sections, facilitator's packet, Aug. 19, 2026

The city has spent **\$83,840.50** on the project from 2021 to 2026 — \$64,793 of it with engineering consultant OHM. Attorney fees so far: \$1,697.50.

City cost report to council, responsive to the Apr. 15, 2026 motion

The timeline

Dates link to the record they come from wherever one is posted online.

BEFORE 2000

- **1978** A quit-claim deed along the shore already reserves "a twenty (20) foot easement for driveway, highway and/or roadway purposes" — the corridor appears in the chain of title decades before the city's project.
Houghton County deed record, 1978 (in city easement packet)
- **1986** Waterfront road plans first discussed; carried through the 1995–2015 master plan, which showed a one-lane road behind the condo garages.
[Gazette, Oct. 8, 2025](#); [Gazette, Aug. 20, 2026](#)
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1996

As the condominium project seeks its permits, the neighboring landowner — Carmody-Lahti Real Estate — presses the Army Corps for an access road; the developer relocates the road the full length of his property in response and, on Dec. 3, grants the city *"a permanent easement exclusively for public roadway and utility purposes"* for \$1.00, with express rights to construct and pave, binding on successors. This is the 33-foot corridor in today's plan, and today's legal dispute is over its *scope*, not its existence.

Conveyance of Easement, Dec. 3, 1996 (recorded pp. 685–686); Valmer Mattila Contracting letter to the Army Corps, Jan. 21, 1997; Corps letter to Carmody-Lahti, Jan. 27, 1997 — all in the facilitator's packet to council, Aug. 19, 2026; [TV6, Nov. 26, 2025](#)

Aug 1997

The Portage Lakeside Condominiums Master Deed is recorded — its site plan shows the "33' ROAD EASEMENT" and a proposed road behind the garages, so unit buyers took title with the roadway easement on record.

Master Deed, recorded Aug. 7, 1997, Liber 140/423 (site plan in the facilitator's packet, Aug. 19, 2026)

THE 2000 DEAL

Aug 2000

Four waterfront owners propose giving the city free easements for a single-lane road on the existing two-track, which follows the sewer interceptor.

Resident letter to City Manager Glenn Anderson, Aug. 15, 2000

Oct 2000

City Council, with the Planning Commission and DDA, asks all owners for a 20-foot easement: 12' paved one-way lane (east to west), 2' gravel shoulders, 4' pedestrian walkway.

"If all the easements were granted, the City would agree to construct the road."

Glenn Anderson, City Manager — memo MEM135, Oct. 2, 2000

City memo MEM135, Oct. 2, 2000

Jan 2001

"The City received a favorable verbal or written response from all property owners." Construction is planned for that summer.

City transmittal letter, Jan. 2, 2001

2001

Six or seven parcels sign 20-foot easements as gifts — but the city "did not receive an easement all the way through," and the road is never built. No public record names the owner who declined.

Gazette, Aug. 30, 2023

THE YEARS BETWEEN

Aug 2011

The lot split west of the condos, in both its documents: the application form designates access by "a new public road, proposed road name: *Navy Street Extended*" (four parcels; approved by Assessor Matthew Arko, Sep. 2, 2011) — while the developer's cover letter frames the revised split as giving the condo association "room to put snow in the winter." Whether the form's designation obligates the city to build is exactly what's disputed today.

Parcel Division Application & cover letter, Aug. 19, 2011 (facilitator's packet, Aug. 19, 2026); Gazette, Aug. 6, 2026

2011–12

City records acknowledge the informal two-track sits off the city's easement; the DPW plans to relocate it.

Council worksession, Dec. 21, 2011; Council minutes, Apr. 18, 2012

Oct 2017

Mattila's company quit-claims the three Navy Street lots to Finlandia University (deed of Oct. 13, 2017; reported to the Planning Commission that January).

Houghton County parcel record 051-310-003-17; Planning Commission minutes, Jan. 22, 2018

THE RESTART, 2023–2026

Aug 2023

J.S. Stringer applies to build a 9-unit building (6 more units proposed) on the west end — the application lists J.S. Stringer as owner and Andrew Lahti

as contractor, at the same address and phone number. Days later, Finlandia's receivership deeds the three ex-Mattila lots to **Taylor Auguston for \$215,000** (Aug. 21). On Aug. 28 the Planning Commission tables the application — fire access and the incomplete easements are the reported obstacles.

Zoning application 2023-013, PC packet Aug. 28, 2023; Houghton County parcel record 051-310-003-17; PC minutes, Aug. 28, 2023; Gazette, Aug. 30, 2023

● Sep 2023

No motion is made in support of the 9-unit application, and the applicant rescinds it before the commission reaches any final determination. There is no denial in the record — the project was withdrawn, not rejected.

PC minutes, Sep. 25, 2023 ("No motion made in support"); withdrawal per the application file — not reflected in posted minutes

● Oct 2023

The Finlandia receivership's property sell-off — including the Navy Street parcels — is reported publicly.

Copper Beacon, Oct. 20, 2023

● Nov 2023

First public cost figure: \$1.6M "for paved one way road (east to west)."

DDA minutes, Nov. 6, 2023

● Oct 2025

The DDA approves preliminary plans and a \$10,000 topographic survey, 7-0 with one abstention over property interests. Written objections from four condo households are read into the record.

DDA minutes, Oct. 6, 2025

● Nov 2025

Council hires Glenn Anderson — city manager in 2000 — as project consultant at \$75/hr, capped at \$2,000; he is later titled "Navy Street Facilitator." Kurt Rickard is elected mayor the same night. TV6 reports the cost dispute: "closer to \$2 million" (Rickard) vs. \$3 million (opponents).

Council minutes, Nov. 19, 2025; TV6, Nov. 26, 2025

● Apr 2026

The condo association's attorney presents a Memorandum of Law with Demand to Cease and Desist over the 1996 easement. Councilor Givens' motion demanding a report on the project passes. A gravel-road option is sent for costing. The Gazette reports the committee "could not come to an

agreement" with the west-end owners, and an estimate of \$1.8–2.3M with DDA recoupment in roughly 18.5 years.

Council minutes, Apr. 15, 2026; Gazette, Apr. 17, 2026

● Aug 2026

Mayor Rickard tells council the 2011 split means "the city has an obligation to build a road through the parcels"; a condo resident answers, "I would not characterize it as an obligation." Anderson presents the project history: the committee is two council members, two planning commissioners, two DDA members; the west-end proposals are reported at 10 units / \$4.5M (Auguston) and 15 units / \$6.75M (Lahti).

Gazette, Aug. 6, 2026; Gazette, Aug. 20, 2026

● Aug 2026

The cost report council ordered in April itemizes project spending, 2021–2026: Seaton appraisal \$12,100.00 · M&M \$250.00 · Stantec \$5,000.00 · OHM \$64,793.00 · attorney \$1,697.50 — **\$83,840.50 in all.**

City cost report to council, responsive to the Apr. 15, 2026 motion

● Aug 2026

The facilitator's written comments and recommendations go to council (Aug. 18–19). Anderson states that council "did not make a motion to create the work group" and never authorized it — or him — to negotiate, and that under the Open Meetings Act an advisory group cannot perform a governmental function. He recommends: the city attorney, Patrick Greeley, deliver a legal opinion on building on the recorded easement; the work group's alternative road options go to the condo association for review; council consider *ending* the work group and the facilitator role; and, after the opinion and the association's response, a public hearing and vote — with construction funded by a residential tax-increment plan repaid from the new development's tax capture. No motion creating the work group appears in minutes posted through Aug. 21, 2026; the minutes of several 2026 meetings, including the April 1 joint session, are not yet posted.

Facilitator Comments & Recommendations, Aug. 18, 2026 (packet to council, Aug. 19, 2026); posted minutes index, cityofhancock.com

The players

Roles as the record shows them. Every entry cites its source; where a link rests on inference, the entry says so.

The city. Mary Babcock, City Manager, led the project until handing it off in November 2025. Kurt Rickard, elected mayor by council that same month, also sits on the Planning Commission and the DDA, and is the project's most vocal advocate on the record — telling council in August 2026 the city "has an obligation to build a road through the parcels."

Council minutes, Nov. 19, 2025; Daily Mining Gazette, Nov. 18, 2025 & Aug. 6, 2026

The Navy Street work group. Dean Woodbeck and Laura Givens (council), Kurt Rickard and Johnathon Nagel (Planning Commission), Stephen Olsson and Frank Fiala (DDA). It held six sessions and a waterfront walking tour, met with the two west-end owners, and "could not come to an agreement." How it was created is now itself a question: the facilitator told council in August 2026 that no motion created it, and none appears in minutes posted to date — though several 2026 minute sets remain unposted.

Daily Mining Gazette, Aug. 20, 2026 (membership) & Apr. 17, 2026 (impasse); Facilitator Comments, Aug. 18, 2026

Glenn Anderson. City manager in 2000 and author of the easement memo that promised the road; now a Houghton County commissioner. Rehired by council in November 2025 as project consultant at \$75/hr, capped at \$2,000, and titled "Navy Street Facilitator." In August 2026 he recommended council end the work group — and his own appointment — and route the next steps through the city attorney and a public hearing.

City memo MEM135, Oct. 2, 2000; Council minutes, Nov. 19, 2025; Facilitator Recommendations, Aug. 18, 2026

Taylor Auguston. Bought the three ex-Finlandia lots west of the condos on Aug. 21, 2023 for \$215,000 — the parcels created by the 2011 "Navy Street Extended" split. Reported plans: 10 residential units at an estimated \$4.5M. No application or site plan appears in any posted city record.

Houghton County parcel record 051-310-003-17; Daily Mining Gazette, Aug. 6 & Aug. 20, 2026

Andrew "Andy" Lahti. The 2023 nine-unit application lists J.S. Stringer as owner and Andrew Lahti as contractor — at the same Hancock address and phone number — and its

OHM-prepared site plans are titled "Andrew Lahti Contracting, Hancock Waterfront Development," client "Andy Lahti." A DDA member, he has abstained from the project's votes "citing potential conflicts of interest due to property holdings in the area."

Zoning application 2023-013 & site plans, PC packet Aug. 28, 2023; DDA minutes, Oct. 6, 2025; Daily Mining Gazette, Oct. 8, 2025

OHM. Engineering consultancy appearing on both sides of the record: it received \$64,793 of the city's \$83,840.50 in project costs from 2021–2026, and it prepared the site plans for the 2023 Stringer/Lahti application ("Andrew Lahti Contracting — Hancock Waterfront Development").

City cost report to council, responsive to the Apr. 15, 2026 motion; site plans, PC packet Aug. 28, 2023

Portage Lakeside Condominiums. Fifteen owners at 340 Navy Street, on whose land the 1996 easement runs. Association president Glenn Bugni; represented by attorney Matt Eliason; 14 of 15 owners oppose the road behind their garages. Their core objection is physical: the easement climbs a steep hillside, and building the road means deep cuts and a large retaining wall — shown in the project's own 1997 engineering cross-sections — which they contend is unsafe ("The construction could disturb the hillside and it could cause a landslide that could take out their garages" — Bugni, minuted 2023; "The slope is extremely steep" — 2026). The work group's six alignment options largely exist to shrink or eliminate that wall.

PC minutes, Sep. 25, 2023 & Sep. 23, 2024; Council minutes, Oct. 15, 2025; Daily Mining Gazette, Apr. 17, 2026; facilitator's packet, Aug. 19, 2026

Michael Mattila / Yalmer Mattila Contracting. Developed the condominiums, signed the 2011 lot split whose public purpose reads "Navy Street Extended," and quit-claimed the three lots to Finlandia University in October 2017.

Daily Mining Gazette, Aug. 6, 2026; Houghton County parcel record 051-310-003-17

The five options on the record

As raised publicly through August 2026. Costs are shown only where a public figure exists.

1. Full one-way street + walking path

The 2000 specification, restarted in 2025 as the "Navy Street extension and trail."

Estimates range \$1.6M–\$3M, depending on who's counting.

2. Shorter road to the west parcels

Build only to the Auguston/Lahti parcels using existing easements — the mayor's stated position.

No estimate made public.

3. Gravel road on the existing easement

A minimal build; council sent it for costing in April 2026.

Figure not yet public.

4. Walking path only

The non-motorized corridor drawn in the Master Plan, without the road.

No published estimate.

5. Stop the project

Urged by condo residents and letter-writers; DDA funds would go elsewhere.

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Paying for it: the DDA does not have this kind of money on hand. Building would mean issuing a bond. The facilitator's August 2026 recommendation proposes repaying it with tax capture from the new development; if that capture falls short, repayment falls to city taxpayers.

Within the condo parcel, the work group has sketched six alignments

1 — build on the existing easement per the original condo-era plans · 2 — road on the easement, with a new pedestrian easement in front of the garages (narrower road, shorter retaining wall) · 3 — shift the easement tight to the garages (shorter wall;

combinable with 2) · 4 — acquire land or an easement in front of the garages and put the road and path there (no retaining wall at all) · 5 — road in front, walkway behind · 6 — open to alternatives. Several of these move some or all of the build off the disputed strip.

Source: "Suggestions from the Navy Street Group," facilitator's packet, Aug. 19, 2026

What no public record answers

The legal weight of the 2011 split and the 1996 easement. Asserted as an obligation by the mayor; disputed by residents. No legal opinion has been published — but as of August 2026, the facilitator has recommended council authorize the city attorney to produce one.

How the work group was created. The facilitator says no council motion created it; council members' recollections differ; the minutes that would settle it (including the April 1, 2026 joint session) are not yet posted.

Who declined the easement in 2001. No record or news account names them.

What the alternatives would cost. Neither the shorter road, the gravel option, nor a path-only build has a public figure.

Where this gets decided

Hancock City Council — first & third Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m., City Hall, 399 Quincy St.

The DDA and Planning Commission also take up the project; agendas are posted before each meeting. Public comment is taken at every one.

Complete source list

Primary documents

- City of Hancock memo MEM135, "Hancock Waterfront Road, from Mattila Condo's to Forest Street," Glenn Anderson, City Manager — Oct. 2, 2000.
- City of Hancock transmittal letter re: "Waterfront Road Easement, 20' wide" — Jan. 2, 2001.
- Executed Conveyance of Easement (20', roadway and utilities, granted without consideration) — Feb. 16, 2001; survey of Oct. 26, 1999, Surveyor's Map Index Vol. 3, pp. 16–19, Houghton County Register of Deeds.
- Resident proposal letter to the City Manager — Aug. 15, 2000.
- Quit-claim deed reserving a 20' road easement — 1978, Houghton County.
- 2024 Hancock Master Plan — adopted 2024, City of Hancock.
- Facilitator's packet to City Council, Aug. 19, 2026 — Facilitator Comments & Recommendations (Aug. 18, 2026); "Suggestions from the Navy Street Group"; Conveyance of Easement, Dec. 3, 1996; Portage Lakeside Master Deed excerpts (recorded Aug. 7, 1997); parcel division application & cover letter (Aug. 19, 2011); Army Corps correspondence (1996–97); Iskra letter to the Planning Commission (Jan. 15, 1996); Auguston development proposal drawing.
- The 2000–2001 documents are from the city's easement file; they are not posted online. The Aug. 2011 split document and the 2026 Memorandum of Law have been described in public meetings and reporting but are not posted.

City records (posted at cityofhancock.com)

- [Council worksession minutes, Dec. 21, 2011](#) · [Council minutes, Apr. 18, 2012](#) · [PC minutes, Jan. 22, 2018](#)
- [PC minutes, Aug. 28, 2023](#) · [PC minutes, Sep. 25, 2023](#) · [DDA minutes, Nov. 6, 2023](#)
- [DDA minutes, Oct. 6, 2025](#) · [Council minutes, Nov. 19, 2025](#) · [Council minutes, Apr. 15, 2026](#)

News reporting

- ["Hancock tables approval of zoning application for Navy St. development" — Daily Mining Gazette, Aug. 30, 2023](#)
- ["Unsold and Neglected" \(Finlandia receivership\) — Copper Beacon, Oct. 20, 2023](#)
- ["Moving forward" — Daily Mining Gazette, Oct. 8, 2025](#)
- ["Hancock waterfront construction project raises concerns" — TV6, Nov. 26, 2025](#)
- ["Navy Street: A closer look" — Daily Mining Gazette, Apr. 17, 2026](#) · ["Hancock's Navy Street" — Apr. 17, 2026](#)
- ["A new approach" — Daily Mining Gazette, Aug. 6, 2026](#) · ["The controversy continues" — Aug. 20, 2026](#)

Compiled August 2026 from public records and published reporting. Where a name is spelled differently across sources, this page uses the spelling confirmed locally. Quotes are verbatim from the cited document or article. Nothing here is legal advice, and this page takes no position on which option the city should choose.