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News

City receives \$100K deposit from Army

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By JENNIFER SPRAGUE, Press staff

MIDDLETOWN — The city has received a non-refundable \$100,000 deposit for Cucia Park from the U.S. Army, which plans to build an Armed Forces Reserve Center there.

The check arrived in the mail Tuesday, along with a formal option to purchase agreement, said Mayor Sebastian N. Giuliano.

The sum will be applied toward the total price of \$2 million, should the final sale take place.

The Army has until the last day of the fiscal year, June 30, 2010, to exercise the option to purchase the property.

“This formalizes our agreement with the Army, but we can’t count our chickens before they’re hatched,” Giuliano said. “Anyone that has been part of any land transaction knows there is only one way for everything to go right, but a hundred ways for it all to go wrong. There is always the possibility that this site could prove unsuitable and the Army could decline to purchase it.”

The option agreement covers Cucia Park and adjoining land, almost 42 acres, where the Army is planning to construct a 160,000-square-foot Armed Forces Reserve Center and a 35,000-square-foot vehicle maintenance shop.

Construction on the facility, by law, must be complete by Sept. 14, 2011. The center was mandated by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act, which mandates smaller bases be closed and replaced with larger combined locations.

Todd Hornback, spokesman for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, said making the payment indicates “We truly are interested; reserve it for us. We wanted to show we are truly interested in the project.”

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