



## CAMP JIM B: THE FOREST THEY WANT TO FLATTEN

**What's at Stake?** The only recommended site right now to build a new water tower is on property known as Camp Jim B located at 7851 Shawnee Run Road. If approved, Indian Hill would build a **130-foot water tower** (the equivalent of a 12-story building) on the property. This plan would:

- Destroy **5 acres** of mature growth walnut, sycamore, and beech trees.
- Replace preserved green space with a **5-acre industrial area**.
- Create a structure that rises **50 to 60 feet above the tree canopy**, making it visible throughout the Central Village.

This plan would forever alter the landscape and contradicts Village values of rural preservation, minimal development, and environmental stewardship.

**Why Camp Jim B Matters to All of Us.** Camp Jim B is a 13-acre Boy Scout camp in the heart of Indian Hill's Central Village. Purchased in 1950 by Ranger Jim "Jim B" Blankenship and developed with the help of local Scout families, it has been a cherished place for outdoor learning, leadership, and community building for more than 70 years. Camp Jim B is home to a dense, rare grove of mature walnut, sycamore, and beech trees — one of the last old-growth forests in the Central Village.

**Preservation and Public Value.** For over 40 years, **Camp Jim B has proudly stood as part of Indian Hill's Green Areas Trust**, a vital component of our community's identity, values, and natural heritage. Its preservation serves our community in three key ways:

- **Environmental Significance:** a thriving old-growth forest supporting local wildlife.
- **Historical and Cultural Legacy:** Generations of local Scouts became Eagle Scouts at Camp Jim B. The land's protection honors the legacy of community leaders like Jim Blankenship and Fred Meyer, the first Scoutmaster at Camp Jim B.
- **Visual and Property Value:** Camp Jim B contributes to Indian Hill's rural, green character — a key reason why families move here and why property values remain high.

**Shocking Reversal: Camp Jim B's Green Area Status Denied.** In a small group meeting held on **April 30, 2025**, the Indian Hill Administrative Government stated that **Camp Jim B is *not* in the Green Areas Trust**. This reversal was done unilaterally, without notice and due process to residents, and is **in direct contradiction** to decades of Village documentation, official maps, ordinances, and public representations that clearly confirm Camp Jim B's inclusion in the Green Areas Trust.

**The Facts Are Clear and Undeniable:**

- **Ordinance No. 11-80 (1980):** This law authorized Indian Hill to acquire Camp Jim B specifically for Green Areas.
- **Village Green Area Maps (since 1985):** Map consistently show Camp Jim B included in the Green Areas Trust.
- **Email from Assistant City Manager Jon West (2019):** Email includes an attachment that states Camp Jim B was transferred to the Green Areas Trust on December 8, 1981.
- **Indian Hill Historical Society:** in article about Camp Jim B written by the Historical Society it states Camp Jim B was transferred to the Green Area Trust in 1981.





- **Fred Meyer, former Ranger and First Scoutmaster at Camp Jim B, stated in Oral History (1996):** “Camp Jim B is now part of the Green Belt.”

This new position by the Administrative Government **defies the record, betrays public trust, and threatens the integrity of our Green Areas Trust.**

#### **Our Village's Core Values.**

- **Preserve Natural Beauty:** Indian Hill was founded on the principle of safeguarding its unique topography and natural features.
- **Ensure Appropriate Development:** Development should harmonize with our environment, not disrupt it.

Choosing Camp Jim B for a 130-foot water tower goes against **everything our Village was built to protect.**

#### **Why This Should Alarm Every Resident.**

- **Breach of a 40-Year Promise:** If Green Areas status can be revoked without notice or vote, no protected land is truly secure.
- **Violation of Indian Hill's Values:**
  - Increases land-use conflicts, disrupts natural topography, and undermines the rural character Indian Hill is committed to preserving.
  - **Subdivision Regulation §154.113:** Limits mature canopy tree removal to 30%. This project would exceed, but conveniently Indian Hill states this law does not apply to them.
  - Completely at odds with Indian Hill's “Reforest the Hill” initiative.
- **Environmental Loss:** Mature forest takes **generations to replace**. Once destroyed, it's gone forever.
- **Property Value Impact:** Green Area designation increases property values. Removing it risks financial losses for nearby homeowners.
- **Boy Scout Camp:** water tower will overwhelm camp and removal of trees make it unusable.

**A Better Way Forward.** We are not opposed to infrastructure improvements — but there must be alternative sites that does not destroy a vital part of our natural and historic legacy. Camp Jim B is not just another piece of land. It is a living example of what makes Indian Hill exceptional. If we let this grove be turned into an industrial site, we lose more than trees—we lose part of our identity.

#### **What Can You Do to Help?**

- **Contact Village Leaders:** Ask why Camp Jim B's protected status is being denied.
- **Raise Awareness:** Share this information with neighbors and on social media. Most residents don't know the full story.
- **Demand Accountability:** Ask the Village to pass a resolution reaffirming Camp Jim B's Green Areas status — or correct the record if a legal error was made.

**Say NO to the water tower at Camp Jim B. Say YES to keeping Indian Hill green, honest, and protected.**

**\*\*\*Please visit the website for more details on this topic, including a detailed FAQ\*\*\***



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