



M. Jodi Rell
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

September 24, 2008

The Honorable Pete Geren
Secretary
United States Department of the Army
Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-1600

Dear Mr. Geren:

I write today concerning the on-going site selection process for the Armed Forces Reserve Center in the City of Middletown.

At the outset, I want to commend you and your staff for significantly improving the public process involved with the site selection effort. Engaging the public directly through a series of public meetings, creating a website to receive comments on various locations and utilizing local expertise through Mayor Sebastian Giuliano's Advisory Panel have gone a long way toward making the site selection process more open and, in the end, will result in a much better project for both the U.S. Army and the community.

At the most recent public meeting on the Reserve Center, which took place on September 17, 2008, the Mayor's Advisory Panel and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers unveiled their respective short lists of sites worthy of further examination and consideration. Based on the presentations and the information provided, a great deal of work has been put into the initial screening process and it appears that there are some viable sites that will move forward for further scrutiny.

While I understand this screening process was designed to perform a very basic analysis of the sites that met the initial criteria – within Middletown, buildable acreage and available – public concerns clearly remain about the prospect of a Boardman Lane site, including the Boardman Lane/Ken Dooley Drive parcels, going forward on the short list. I understand that if one just looks at the basic requirements necessary for further consideration, a Boardman Lane site would remain in the mix.

I also understand that each site on the short list will undergo more in-depth evaluations and analyses in the coming months, and, after these are completed, some sites will drop off of the list. While it is true that the Boardman Lane site meets the basic criteria, it is known to have

some fundamental flaws, including its proximity to residential areas, potential impact on wetlands and the high likelihood that Connecticut-listed species of special concern, such as the Eastern box turtle, are present on the site. There has been much local opposition to this site based upon these issues as well as the uncertain impact that the siting of the Reserve Center on Boardman Lane would have on the local economy. I would strongly encourage you, therefore, to remove Boardman Lane from the short list.

In addition, the other sites on the short list appear to offer greater potential for the Reserve Center for both the Army and the community. Building the Reserve Center on one of these sites would be consistent with the State's responsible growth principles. Each of these sites is near transportation routes and necessary infrastructure such as electric power, water and sewers. Furthermore, the use of one of these sites would allow us to preserve potential open space and 'greenfields' through their productive re-use.

Again, I thank you for enhancing public participation in this very important project. As I stated earlier, I strongly encourage you to remove the Boardman Lane site from the list as it is currently constituted. Very legitimate concerns remain as to the viability of this site for the Reserve Center. I ask that you move forward with your in-depth analyses of the three remaining sites – Cucia Park, Mile Lane and Bysiowiec Industrial Park.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Jodi Rell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

M. Jodi Rell
Governor

cc: Colonel Keith Landry, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers