

WESTFIELD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, INC
P.O. Box 373
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457
www.wraMiddletown.org



August 13, 2008

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress, 3rd District, CT
59 Elm Street, Second Floor
New Haven, CT 06510

Dear Congresswoman DeLauro:

I am writing on behalf of the Westfield Residents Association to thank you for your responses to our request for assistance regarding the Military Training facility on Boardman Lane in Middletown. Your letters to Army Secretary Geren and your joint letter with Secretary of the State Bysiewicz to Governor Rell should lead the army to consider sites that are suitable for the construction of the facilities, an outcome that is best for Middletown and best for the Armed Forces. We are particularly grateful for your visit to Middletown on July 28th, to meet with the WRA, other concerned citizens, and the Common Council.

Your letter to Secretary Geren on July 13th raised 8 serious concerns with the Boardman Lane site, and asked that the Army address them prior to moving forward with this site. You stated (and we agree) that further environmental assessment or investigation of the Boardman Lane site would be a waste of both time and resources. In your letter July 28th to Secretary Geren, you raised additional concerns about the site, including its impact by FEMA-determined 100-year flood zone, the presence of endangered or threatened wildlife, and the extensive wetlands that would need to be destroyed. You indicated that you would request a full Environmental Impact Statement if the Army proceeded with their plans for Boardman Lane. Your request that the Army work with the city to identify a truly suitable site for this facility was quite reasonable. Finally, your letter with the Secretary of State to Governor Rell, asked her to follow her Executive Order No. 15, which mandates the application of principles of smart growth.

As you know, since you became involved, the City of Middletown has reached consensus that the Boardman Lane site is unsuitable for the construction of a military training facility. This manifested itself last week in the unanimous passage of Resolution 134-08 (Concerning the Army Training Facility proposed for Boardman Lane), in which the city (among other things) expressed the opinion that a facility on Boardman Lane would violate the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and would absolutely require a full and complete Environmental Impact Statement.

On August 4th, Governor Rell decided to keep the 250th Engineer Co. in its present location, reducing the space needed for the new facility. She suggested that the Corps of Engineers “consider a wider range of possible locations.” Attorney General Blumenthal has written the Army Corps of Engineers, stating, “The site selection process should go back to square one.” Secretary of State Bysiewicz has indicated that the plain language of the bill authorizing this training facility does not require it in Middletown.

One of the legal issues that many Middletown residents have been concerned about is whether this base is required by law to be built in Middletown. An Army letter

of November 16, 2006 (attached) indicates that they required land for this base that was simply within 20 miles of the city limits. More recently, on their informational web site, the Corps state that the Office of the Secretary of Defense provided a legal opinion in the case of a base that BRAC 2005 proposed for Ayer, MA. This opinion was that the BRAC 2005 report legally required the base specifically to be built in Ayer. However, we would point out that the language used in BRAC 2005 regarding the Ayer base is substantially different from the language used in BRAC 2005 regarding the Middletown Base. I attach a side by side comparison of these two paragraphs.

Despite these many questions, despite the consensus at the citizen, City, and State levels, the Army continues to proceed with plans for a military facility at Boardman Lane. We would be grateful for your continued engagement in this dispute. Specifically, we would respectfully like to request the following:

- Copies of the responses, if any, that you have received from Secretary Geren. How has the Army responded to the 8 serious concerns about Boardman Lane in your July 13th letter and your conclusion that further consideration of the Boardman Lane site would be wasteful? How has the Army responded to the issues of flooding, endangered species, and wetland destruction that you raised in your July 28th letter?
- Copies of the responses, if any, that you have received from Secretary Geren. How has Governor Rell responded to your request that her military utilize a site that is consistent with her own principles?
- A legal opinion from the Office of the Secretary of Defense regarding the language in BRAC 2005 that pertains to the Middletown training facility.

The Westfield Residents Association is Middletown's largest neighborhood organization, representing more than 16,000 Westfield-area residents. We have written to all of our Federal representatives to provide them with information about this important issue. As the Congresswoman representing the largest portion of our city, we hope you will encourage other members of our delegation, in particular Joe Courtney, who serves on the House Armed Services Committee, to request responses from Secretary Geren to the serious concerns that you have raised about the Boardman Lane site.

Most of the Greater Middletown community is closely monitoring this military training facility and looking to our Congressional representatives for their active involvement and influence in the site selection process to create the "win-win" that we all wish for. We are very grateful for your continued, active involvement in this issue of great importance to both Middletown and to our Armed Forces.

Sincerely yours,

Stephen H. Devoto
Acting Secretary, Westfield Residents
WestfieldResidents@gmail.com

Attachments: BRAC language regarding Middletown and Ayer; Army letter of 11/16/06



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
696 VIRGINIA ROAD
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742-2751

RECEIVED
06 NOV 20 AM 9:20
CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
MAYOR'S OFFICE

November 16, 2006

Real Estate Division
Conveyancing Branch

Mayor Sebastian N. Giuliano
City of Middletown
245 deKoven Drive
Middletown, CT 06457

Re: New Armed Forces Reserve Center--
Available vacant land in the Middletown,
CT Vicinity


Dear Mayor Giuliano:

We are inquiring as to the availability of approximately 16-25 acres of land in the town of Middletown or within 20 driving miles of the town limits that could be used for an Armed Forces Reserve Center. We would appreciate information on any property owned by the city that might be available for a 99-year nominal-cost lease or for other terms. We also would welcome information on property owned by counties, other municipalities, or other parties that might be suitable for our requirements.

We placed an ad in the Sunday, November 12th edition of the Hartford Courant and will be writing to the State of Connecticut to ask if they would like to identify property for us to consider.

If you know of any property you would like us to consider, please contact Pam at the above address or by phone at (978) 318-8025 no later than November 22, 2006.

Sincerely,

for 
Joseph M. Redlinger
Chief, Real Estate Division

The USACE insists that 2005 BRAC language mandates a training facility be built in Middletown. They are basing this conclusion on a legal opinion, by the office of the Secretary of Defense, regarding a base proposed for Ayer, MA (<http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/poi/article.asp?id=463&MyCategory=309>). However, the language of BRAC 2005 is very different for Ayer and for Middletown. Below is the complete paragraph for Ayer and the complete paragraph for Newton and Middletown, CT, from the 2005 DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION REPORT.

From Page 38

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Close the Army Reserve Equipment Concentration Site 65 Annex, Ayer, MA, and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center in Ayer, MA; realign the Devens Reserve Forces Training Area, MA, by relocating the 323d Maintenance Facility, and the Regional Training Site Maintenance to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center complex in Ayer, MA; realign Ayer Area 3713 by relocating storage functions to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center complex in Ayer, MA. Realign the Marine Corps Reserve Center Ayer, MA, by relocating the 1/25th Marines Maintenance Facility, Marine Corps Reserve Electronic Maintenance Section, and Maintenance Company/4th Marine Battalion to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center complex in Ayer, MA. The new Armed Forces Reserve Center complex shall have the capability to accommodate all Reserve units affected by this recommendation, including Army National Guard units from the Ayer Armory and Consolidated Support Maintenance Shop, Ayer, MA, if the state decides to relocate the National Guard units.

From Page 26

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Close Turner US Army Reserve Center, Fairfield, CT; close Sutcovey US Army Reserve Center, Waterbury, CT; close Danbury US Army Reserve Center Danbury, CT, and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center and Maintenance Facility in Newtown, CT if the Army is able to acquire land suitable for the construction of the facilities adjacent to the existing Connecticut Army National Guard Armory in Newtown, CT. The new AFRC and OMS shall have the capability to accommodate units from the following facilities: Connecticut Army National Guard Armories in Naugatuck, Norwalk and New Haven, CT, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units. Close the US Army Reserve Center, Middletown, CT, the Organizational Maintenance Shop, Middletown, CT; the SGT Libby US Army Reserve Center, New Haven, CT; the Organizational Maintenance Shop, New Haven, CT; the Army Reserve Area Maintenance Support Activity #69, Milford, CT, and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center, Organizational Maintenance Shop and Army Maintenance Support Activity in Middletown, CT, if the Army is able to acquire land suitable for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC, OMS and AMSA shall have the capability to accommodate units from the following facilities: Connecticut Army National Guard Armories in Putnam, Manchester, New Britain and the CTARNG facility in Newington, CT, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units.