

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

February 22, 2011

This is in response to the comments you submitted concerning the proposed transfer of the Seaside Regional Center.

As you are aware, the State is in the process of selling the former Seaside Regional Center (Seaside) which is located on Shore Road in Waterford and as such the Department of Public Works (DPW), in accordance with CGS 4b-47, placed the required public notice in the *Environmental Monitor* and the public was afforded the opportunity to comment upon the proposed transfer of this property.

No Identified State Reuse

In January 2008, the State solicited reuse proposals from State agencies for the Seaside property. One agency, the Department of Public Safety, did submit a reuse proposal to utilize a structure on the property; however, that request was denied by this office. The Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) comments indicate that DEP is currently working with DPW to transfer a Conservation and Public Recreation Easement on the subject property to the DEP. When the property is sold, the easement would assure public access to the entire waterfront portion of the site in perpetuity.

Determination of Current Market Value

To determine the current market value of the Seaside property, DPW obtained two (2) independent appraisals. The \$8 million purchase price exceeds the current market value for the property as established by these appraisals.

Town of Waterford's Establishment of the Seaside Preservation Zoning District

Since the State does not establish local zoning, the type and density of any future development on the property will be subject to the local zoning laws which have been established, and will be enforced, by the Town of Waterford.

Public Access, Open Space and Recreation

Prior to disposition of the property, the Conservation and Public Recreation Easement will ensure public access to Long Island Sound for passive recreation in perpetuity. The easement area will include the entire length of waterfront, all land within the 500-year flood zone, some adjacent upland area and access from Shore Road. Dedicated public parking and appropriate signage will be provided. The DEP will determine allowed and prohibited uses within the easement area as well as hours of operation.

In addition, the Seaside Preservation Zoning District, Section 17a.11 of the Town's zoning regulations states that *"All areas not approved for development as defined shall be set aside as permanent open space or recreation area in perpetuity to be held in common by the owners within the district."*

Connecticut Environmental Policy Act

After granting of the easement, the property is being conveyed in "as is condition." Therefore, the transaction is not considered to be a state action that would trigger the preparation of an Environmental Impact Evaluation pursuant to CEPA.

Natural Resource Inventory

The conservation easement area, which includes the entire waterfront and most of an existing watercourse, will protect any significant ecological resources on the property. The balance of the property is essentially developed, with lawns and buildings.

Site Plan Approvals

With regard to site plan approvals, Section 17a.12 of the Town zoning regulations states that "A site plan shall be submitted to the Commission in accordance with the provisions of Section 22 of these regulations and the purpose of this district, and no building or structure, parking lot, or outdoor use of land shall be used, constructed, enlarged, or moved until said site plan has been approved by the Commission. The development shall be constructed in accordance with these Regulations and the site plan as approved by the Commission. Changes to the approved plans may be made, the extent of which shall be set forth in the special permit."

In addition, as part of local planning and zoning approvals, the Coastal Site Plan Review requirements of sections 22a-105 through 22a-110 of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act would be applicable.

Development & Design

The design of any development of Seaside will be guided by Section 17a.13 of the Town zoning regulations which states "The architectural and site design of all buildings and improvements within the Seaside Preservation District, including typical floor plans and building elevations drawn to scale showing the exterior materials and treatment to be used, shall be submitted. The Plan submission shall specifically show how the development will result in the preservation and re-use of the Main Building, Employee Building I, the Duplex and the Superintendent's House, how the principal use is to be primarily located in these buildings and how all new construction will be integrated into a cohesive and unified development plan. The development shall be constructed in accordance with these design plans and the special permit shall specify the manner in which any changes to the design elements may be made."

Department of Public Works Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

The RFP for the sale of Seaside was conducted by the DPW and the disclosure of any information concerning the RFP process at this time shall be subject to applicable State law or regulation.

Council on Environmental Quality

Requests related to suggested actions which should be undertaken by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) should be sent directly to CEQ which can be reached at (860) 424-4000 or www.ct.gov/ceq

Subdivision of the Property

With regard to suggestions that the Seaside property be subdivided; it is the State's intent and desire to sell the Seaside property as a single parcel.

Harkness Memorial State Park

Comments concerning the operation of Harkness Memorial State Park should be directed to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). DEP can be reached at (860) 424-3000 or www.ct.gov/dep

Leasing of the Property

It is the intent and desire of the State to sell the Seaside property.

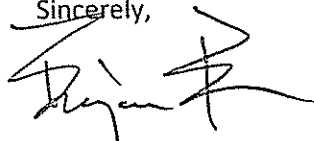
Public Informational Meetings

The disposition of the Seaside property is being conducted by the DPW in accordance with all applicable statutes, including Connecticut General Statute 4b-21 which does not include a public informational meeting requirement.

Alternative Proposals

With regard to suggestions for various alternative proposals; as the DPW's RFP process has concluded no alternative proposals are being solicited.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Barnes
Secretary

O'Brien, Patrick M.

From: Gerritt [gerritt@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2010 6:19 PM
To: O'Brien, Patrick M.
Cc: Kopetz, Kevin; kjacques@sbcglobal.net
Subject: Seaside Regional Center

Dear Mr. O'Brien:

I am alarmed to hear of the sale of the historic 32 acre parcel of prime oceanfront property at 36 Shore Rd., Waterford, CT for a mere 8 million dollars. I grew up in a private residence that bordered on this property and, as a lifelong resident of Connecticut, where public access to beaches is such a major issue, it seems decidedly short-sighted to sell this land at far below its potential worth. Why not a state park, similar to Harkness or Rocky Neck? Just like the Harkness Mansion, tours of the historic main building could be a substantial source of income, especially as a museum. In fact, I can't imagine a better setting for use by film studios—a little creative thinking/marketing is all that's required. We certainly don't need another exclusive condominium complex that cordons off more public land. Once this property is gone, it will never be retrieved. I implore you to reconsider this short-sighted plan. As far as this taxpayer is concerned, selling land at one-third of its value, makes no financial sense whatsoever.

Sincerely,

Reid P. Gerritt
53 Colonial Rd.
Middletown, CT 06457
860-344-8856