



# RIVERSIDE PARK





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# New London City Charter as it relates to Riverside Park

## Article XIV. Public Improvements

### Sec. 96 Board of Compensation

The council shall appoint a board of compensation of three members who shall serve at the pleasure of the council.

Members of the council shall not be appointed to the board of compensation, but officers in the administrative service of the city, other than the city manager, may be so appointed. Persons holding any other office under the city shall receive no compensation for service on such board, but members thereof holding no other office under the city shall receive such compensation as may be fixed by ordinance. The board shall choose one of its members to be president and may determine its own rules of procedure, except as such rules may be established by ordinance. A vote of a majority of the members of the board shall determine the action thereof in all matters.

### Sec. 97. Resolution of intention; report by city manager.

Before proceeding to take any land for public use, lay out, widen, extend, exchange or discontinue any street, public way, place or park, establish any wharf, dock, landing place or building line, or to lay or construct any sewer or surface drain, or to take any land or interest in land therefor, or to take any lands or interest therein within the limits of said city for the purposes of the city's water supply, or make any public improvement for which benefits or damages may be assessed against, or in favor of property affected thereby, the council shall first declare by resolution its intention so to do. Any such resolution shall give a general description of the action contemplated and shall direct the city manager to have a report prepared thereon. The report so prepared shall include all necessary surveys, plans, profiles and specifications; estimates of the total cost of any such action, work or improvement; estimates of the value of any land proposed to be taken; and estimates of the amount of benefit or damage which should be assessed against or in favor of any property affected. A copy of the report shall, when completed, be placed on file for public inspection in such office of the city as the city manager may designate. When any portion of the cost of a public work or improvement is to be assessed against, the resolution of the council shall so declare and indicate the portion of such cost to be so assessed. property benefitted thereby

### Sec. 98. Notice of contemplated action.

Upon the completion of the report, as provided in the foregoing section, notice thereof and of the contemplated action of the council shall be given to all parties in interest, by publication not less than three times in at least one daily newspaper of general circulation in the city to be designated by the council. Such notice shall be addressed to all persons interested in lands which would be affected by the proposed action, naming each person known to be so interested, and shall specify a time and place when such persons may appear before the board of compensation and be heard respecting the price of any land proposed to be taken, or any assessment of benefits or damages, as set forth in the report prepared under the direction of the city manager- The meeting of the board of compensation pursuant to any such notice shall not be sooner than one week after the last publication thereof as provided in this section.

### Sec. 99. Hearings; report of board of compensation.

The board of compensation shall meet at the time and place specified in such notice, and may continue to meet by adjournment to such time and place as it may deem proper until all parties in interest, as named in the notice, shall have had a reasonable opportunity to be heard. After such hearings, which shall be based on the report prepared under the direction of the city manager, the board of compensation shall report its recommendations to the council. Such report shall indicate the amount which, in the judgment of the board, should be paid for any land proposed to be taken, the probable cost of making any public improvement or of taking any other action indicated in the published notice as contemplated by the council, and shall assess benefits and damages against or in favor of property which would be affected by such improvement or action, if benefits are to be assessed and if there will be any damages. The report of the board of compensation to the council shall be in writing and shall have annexed thereto a survey showing the particular designation of any land proposed to be taken and the layout of any work or improvement contemplated.

**Sec. 101. Council action by ordinance.**

The council may accept as submitted, modify or reject a report made by the board of compensation. If, after receiving any such report, the council determines to proceed with the action, work or improvement described therein, it shall pass an ordinance directing that such action, work or improvement be carried out in accordance with the report as finally approved by the council, and the report so approved shall be recorded in the land records of the Town of New London. Upon the passage of such ordinance and the recording of the report, each and all actions, improvements and work provided for therein shall be deemed duly and legally authorized, and all assessments of benefits and damages so provided for shall be deemed duly and legally made.

**Sec. 103. Application to court by parties aggrieved by assessments.**

Any party in interest aggrieved by the price fixed for any land to be taken, or by any assessment of benefits or damages, may make written application for relief to the superior court, provided that he shall have filed a copy of such application with the city clerk within thirty days after the first publication of the notice provided for in section one hundred two of this act. No such application shall operate to vacate any appraisal, assessment or lien based thereon, but the same shall stand until modified or revised by the court. The court may, by committee or otherwise, inquire into the allegations of such application and may confirm, modify or annul the appraisal, assessment or action complained of, or make such order in the premises as equity may require. The court may, at its discretion, allow costs to either party. All such appeals shall be privileged cases in the superior court and the director of law shall cause them to be heard as speedily as possible.









## **MUNICIPAL PARK, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION LAND REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

By: John Rappa, Principal Analyst

You asked us to (1) analyze the law requiring towns to replace parkland they take and convert to other purposes, (2) provide its legislative history, and (3) describe the types of issues and problems that generally arise when towns have to comply with it.

### **SUMMARY**

Enacted in 1975, CGS § 7-131n requires towns to replace parks, open spaces, and lands used for recreation when they take them for other purposes. It requires towns to hold a public hearing before taking any such land. A 1977 provision requires towns to describe the replacement land at the public hearing. The statute's legislative history gives few clues about why the legislature believed that the state needed the law.

Most of the environmental organizations and municipal agencies we contacted reported that they had little or no experience with the statute. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) periodically receives calls about it, but officials can remember no examples of towns that had to replace lands under the statute. They have advised many towns about the procedure for converting land acquired with federal funds. Federal law specifies the process towns must follow if they want to convert parkland acquired with federal funds.

New Haven's Parks Commission is awaiting a response from the city's attorney about the degree to which replacement land has to be comparable to the taken land. The issue arose because the Board of Education needs a site containing tennis courts to relocate a road serving a new facility. The commission wants to know if the city's recent acquisition of a 10-acre parcel for passive recreation would satisfy the statute. The city acquired the parcel before the board proposed taking the parkland.

### **LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

#### **PA 75-534**

**Summary.** This act established the replacement requirement. It specifically required towns to replace any parcel that was purchased or dedicated for park, recreation, or open space if they take it for highways or other unspecified purposes. The requirement also applies to parcels towns intended to acquire for parks, recreation, or open space if they issued bonds to finance acquisition. Towns must replace parcels they take with ones of at least equal value and per unit area size.

The act required towns to hold a public hearing before taking the parcels. They must do so between 15 and 30 days after any other hearing the law requires them to hold on the taking. They must publish at least two notices about the hearing's time and place in a local newspaper—the first notice 10 to 15 days before the hearing and the second at least two days before the hearing. Each notice must describe the parcel the town intends to take, the intended use, and the reasons for taking this specific parcel.



**Environment Committee Public Hearing.** One person testified on the bill at the Environment Committee public hearing. Paula Elterick, a member of Governor Dempsey's Environmental Policy Committee, discussed problems regarding parklands in Trumbull, but did not explain how the bill would address them. She supported the bill, but recommended that it require an environmental impact study (*Environment Committee Public Hearing*, March 17, 1975, pp. 292-295).

**House Debate.** The House adopted the bill without amending it. The debate was brief, but touched on the bill's purpose. After Representative Serrani summarized the bill, Representative Villano described how the state and the City of New Haven took parkland and converted it to different uses:

Now, you're familiar with the fact when the Highway Department went through they took up City Point Park; they took up a park where they built the high school...the Hillhouse High School; they took up parkland where they built the Wilbur Cross High School; and I'm in favor of the bill, and I move its passage (*House Proc.* , June 3, 1975, p. 6394).

**Senate Debate.** The Senate also adopted the bill after a brief debate. Senator Hansen summarized it, stating that its replacement requirement applied to state takings. Senator Amenta opposed the bill, arguing that the state should not force towns to replace land. "I think that we've got to allow the municipalities to make their own determination as to whether they want to replace it exactly as it was taken or whether they want something else" (*Senate Proc.* , June 4, 1975, p. 3609).

## **PA 77-172**

**Summary.** This act required towns to describe the land that will replace the land to be converted from parks, recreation, or open space to different uses. Towns must describe the replacement land in the public hearing notice and at the hearing.

**Environment Committee Public Hearing.** Representative Belden, the only person who testified on the bill, explained that it would "require that at the time of the public hearing that the proponents of taking of the land, which would be the municipality, or the state, whatever it may be, would have to designate what land was going to be used to replace the land that was taken from recreational or park use" (*Environment Committee Public Hearing*, February 22, 1977, p. 443).

**House and Senate Action.** Both chambers adopted the bill on consent (*House Proc.* , April 22, 1977, p. 1939 and *Senate Proc.* , May 4, 1977, p. 1604, respectively).

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

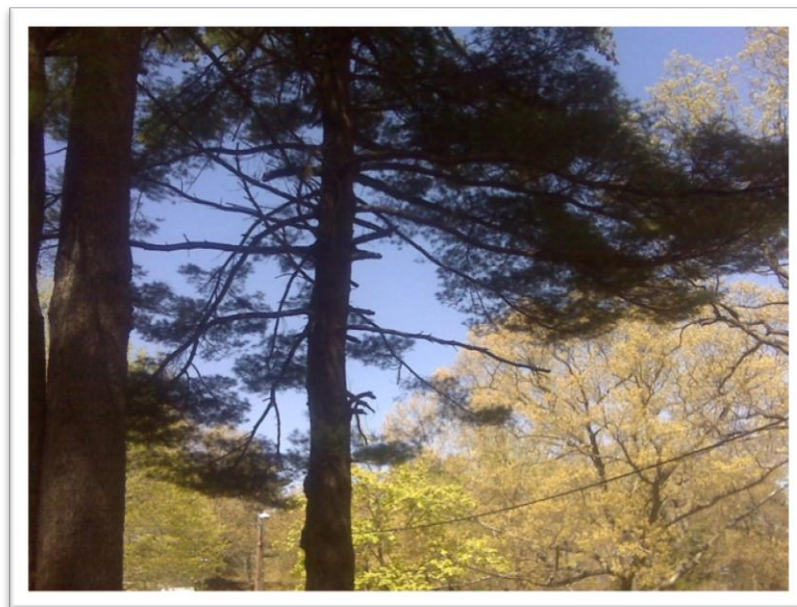
Most of the environment and municipal organizations we contacted know about the law but had little or no information about the issues and problems towns face when they have to comply with it. DEP periodically gets calls from towns about the law's requirements, but these towns do not appear to follow through with taking the parkland and converting it to other uses. The replacement requirement may cause towns to find other types of land for conversion, DEP official Charles Reed speculated.

Reed noted that the law's replacement requirement mirrors a federal one that applies to open space land towns had acquired with federal funds. Most of the conversions DEP knows about involve this type of land.

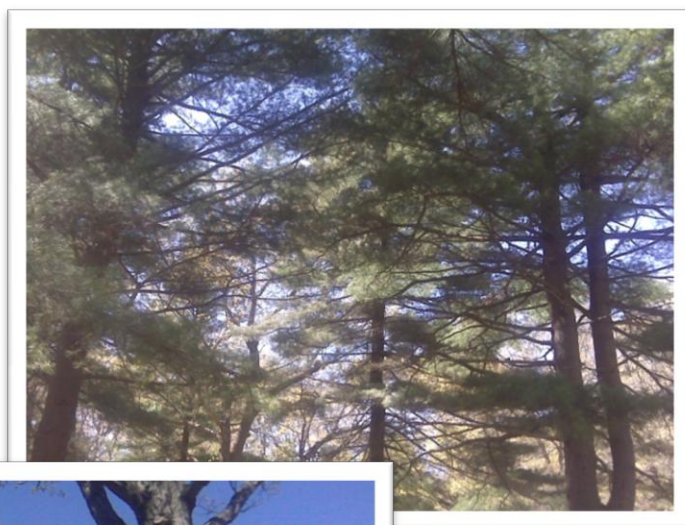
New Haven's Parks Commission recently asked that city's attorney for an opinion about the extent to which the replacement land has to be comparable to the taken land. The commission requested the opinion because the Board of Education wants to take a site containing a tennis court to relocate a road to serve a new fieldhouse for Hillhouse High School.

The commission asked the city attorney if the site of a former quarry the city recently acquired would satisfy the replacement requirement. The city plans to use the site for passive recreational uses. It acquired the site before the board presented its proposal. The commission wants to know if the replacement parcel must be near the taken parcel and the degree to which the new use (i. e. , passive recreation) must be comparable to the existing use (i. e. , tennis courts).

The board's first inclination is to take parkland when it needs space for new schools, explained New Haven Parks commissioner Robert Schmalz. This may be due to the fact that the city has over 2,000 acres in park and open space land, which costs less to acquire and develop than developed land. Planning officials in Bridgeport and Hartford could recall no examples of having to replace parkland under the law. JR: ro







# NEW LONDON PLAN - 1928

## Parks

Few cities of thirty thousand population are supplied with better park facilities than the city of New London. Altogether there are about 220 acres of parks in the city. This area is distributed among eight parks, scattered in all parts of the community. A great advantage is the varied character of these parks; some of them, such as Williams Park and Memorial Park are small neighborhood parks treated formally as retreats off the busy streets of the city; Ocean Beach on Long Island Sound is one of the most popular bathing resorts in Connecticut; Riverside Park is primarily a scenic park affording extensive vistas over the Thames River and Long Island Sound; and Bates Wood is a wild, undeveloped park still forested with its original trees and underbrush. Nearly every kind of park, therefore, is found within the city limits.

This being true, what then are the shortcomings of the park system of the city of New London? What should be done to make it still more useful to the people who use it? What additional park areas are required? What new facilities should be installed to supply present deficiencies in the existing parks? These are all questions that confront the city in developing its recreation facilities.

### PEQUOT BEACH PARK

Pequot Avenue, adjacent to the waterfront gives a magnificent view of the harbor and its approaches from Long Island Sound. For almost three miles it extends along the Thames River. The shore here is varied in character — a considerable portion of it is excellent beach; other portions, as at the New London Light,

are picturesque rocky headlands. The beach, the rocks and rock formations as well as the islands, all combine to make this strip of harbor rival the most interesting seaside resorts.

Greens Harbor Beach, a city beach, has already been established on Pequot Avenue. This beach is of such an excellent character and so near the heart of the city that it has proved exceedingly popular. It is a small beach but it is so close to the central part of the city and so easily reached that many people use it. Its location at the head of Greens Harbor is such as to retain the sand necessary to maintain the artificial beach. Its milder waves are preferred by some to Ocean Beach. Much of the shore front is capable of development similar to Greens Harbor Beach.

Most of the frontage on the east side of Pequot Avenue is unimproved, for the reason that the ownerships on the west side of Pequot Avenue, in order to preserve their view as well as to give them access to the river, quite generally extend to the water. The narrow shore area between Pequot Avenue and the Thames is in consequence virtually a park. A few owners have, however, sold their frontage on the east side of Pequot Avenue. As a result, several buildings which obstruct the view of the Thames and the Sound have been erected. Apparently, unless the land should soon come into public possession, it is only a question of time when further building will seriously obstruct or shut off this magnificent view. The unmatched vista along the harbor is of priceless value and distinction to New London. The city simply cannot afford not to preserve it.





It is *the* Thames River that makes New London different from other cities. If the view of the waterfront is to be shut off through the erection of private buildings, then although New London may be situated on a river, it will then be little different from an inland community.

The entire stretch between Thames Street and Neptune Avenue on the east side of Pequot Avenue should be reserved for park purposes. Some of the upland owners could possibly be appealed to cede their property on the east side of Pequot Avenue to the city. Certainly, the maintenance of the view over the harbor would be directly reflected in increased property values on the west side of Pequot Avenue. In ceding the frontage on the easterly side of Pequot Avenue, these property owners would, in effect, be enhancing the value of their own upland property.

The more valuable buildings situated in the proposed park need not be acquired immediately. Their acquisition could be deferred for a good many years, but the vacant land should be acquired as rapidly as the means of the municipality would afford. The area included within the park is approximately 70 acres.

The Pequot Beach Parkway would be to New London what Front Street is to Harrisburg, the Charles River Embankment to Boston or Seaside Park to Bridgeport. The greatest natural asset the city has is its frontage upon the Sound and the Thames River. Pequot Beach Park would be a recognition of this fact.

## OCEAN BEACH PARK

In the southerly end of the city, New London owns a strip of land about 1,000 feet in length fronting upon the ocean. This little ocean park of some six acres with its boardwalk is by all odds not only the most useful but the most valuable park area in New London. That the public makes full use of it may be attested on any warm summer's day by witnessing the large crowds that resort to it to enjoy the ocean surf.

The vicinity of the beach is built up with cottages; a large public bath house and an ocean pier at which boats can land add to the usefulness of the resort. Bathing is excellent at all stages of the tide and the sand is fine, white and clean. Alewife Brook, the westerly limit of New London is also the westerly limit of the beach.

Although small in extent, the park is comparable in a measure with Seaside Park in Bridgeport, Rockaway Park in New York, and the ocean beaches at Asbury Park and other New Jersey watering resorts. The area of the park, however, is exceedingly limited, considering the demands made upon it. Unfortunately, the development in New London is such that the beach park can scarcely be extended in a northerly direction. Existing developments along the Sound are such that an enlargement would be achieved only with a great deal of difficulty.

The only direction in which the park may be extended is in a southerly direction involving the inclusion of land outside the city of New London within the town of Waterford. This, however, is of comparatively insignificant importance as against the demands for additional park area. The city should lose no time in acquiring the shore front south of Ridgewood in the town of Waterford for the enlargement of this park. Fortunately, the area to be included in the extension has a very attractive natural beach with sand dunes back of it. It

themselves. Located on the Thames River, the park would afford a very commanding view, not only of the river but of the Sound and the city.

### ALEWIFE COVE

Alewife Cove affords an opportunity of extending Ocean Park a considerable distance inland. The Cove constitutes in the southerly part of the city the boundary line between New London and Waterford. The stream meanders from side to side, frequently doubling on its own course, so that it is in places difficult to determine in exactly which way the stream flows. Since the land adjacent to the banks of the stream is not much higher than the stream itself, especially at high tide, these numerous curves of the stream would afford the possibility for a most unique landscape treatment. The many curves in the stream could be utilized in a way to make the area included in the park appear much larger than in fact it actually is. The upper portion of the stream, moreover, could be dammed so as to afford a fresh water lake, which would permit of winter skating.

In the plan, it is proposed to include both banks of the Cove as a park, from the Sound up to a point midway between Niles Hill Road and Thames Street. The park as then constituted would embrace an area of 120 acres. At its northerly end the park would terminate in Alewife Parkway, which would entirely circumscribe the city on the west and north, giving Ocean Park access to all of the highways entering the city on the west side of the river.



### ZOO

To the smaller children who frequent the parks there are few more interesting and entertaining features than a zoo. A zoo need not be an elaborate menagerie with all kinds of rare and expensive animals. A comparatively simple one composed of native fauna may be just as worthwhile for all practical purposes. And, of course, it need not cost nearly so much. A few simple shelters to house these animals will suffice. Elaborate cages and houses need not be built.

A zoo can be made a valuable educational auxiliary to the schools in familiarizing pupils with the more common animals, birds and reptiles. Zoos are to be found even now in a considerable number of cities. In Connecticut, both Hartford and Bridgeport have established them. Of course, these cities are much larger than New London, but the ultimate development of a menagerie, no matter how simple or meager, should be contemplated in the plans of the park system. Among the existing parks the one most available for the purpose is Bates Wood.

### DANCE PAVILION

For years past, cities have provided in their parks facilities for bathing, skating, horseback riding, tennis, golf and many other amusements. But they have all but universally failed to make any provision for dancing. Recently, however, a few cities are perceiving that there is as much reason to make ample provision for dancing as for any other recreation. Hartford and Syracuse both, to mention but two cities, have constructed commodious pavilions at which nightly dances are held during the summer season. Chicago, too, has made provision for dancing in the park houses maintained by the small parks board.

The provision of a dancing pavilion as an accessory to Ocean Beach Park would seem to be particularly apt. The huge crowds frequenting this popular



resort would, no doubt, during the summer months make this pavilion more than self-supporting.

## RECREATION PIER

A recreation pier built out several hundred feet into the water to obtain full benefit from the ocean breeze is a common facility afforded at many seaside resorts. Usually such piers are equipped with seats to accommodate large crowds. Band concerts are in some instances held on these piers to entertain visitors. Sometimes a dance pavilion is also a feature. Such piers are found at many different Jersey resorts, particularly at Asbury Park and Atlantic City.

In time, New London will probably wish to construct such a pier at Ocean Beach. Even though Ocean Beach may be extended in a westerly direction to Waterford, its shore frontage will always be limited. Such a pier would make the view of the Sound available to a far larger number of people than is accorded by the boardwalk. Although a recreation pier may not be an immediate necessity in New London, it is something the city should have in mind in its ultimate plan for the development of this park.

## WINTER SKATING

None of the present parks in New London makes satisfactory provision for skating. Yet this is a sport that should be amply provided for in the development of a satisfactory park system. It is altogether feasible to design Alewife Cove in a manner to admit of winter skating by damming the stream so that only fresh water will be contained in the upper reaches of the lake. This cove, because of its length and its accessibility to a considerable portion of the city can be made into an exceedingly satisfactory winter recreation field. Brandege Lake, too, has large possibilities in the development of winter sports. These two proposed parks particularly, can be developed to supply a long-felt want in New London.

## BOAT HARBOR

Although New London is the center for a considerable number of yachts and motor boats, there is no public boat harbor in the city. Most of the pleasure craft use Shaw's Cove. As soon as circumstances permit, more satisfactory provision should be made for these boats. Far better accommodations amid more agreeable surroundings can be extended to them. In time, one of the waterfront parks should be equipped with an efficient and up-to-date boat harbor. Such a facility would promote the enjoyment of boating and yachting by a far larger number of people than is now the case. A portion of Pequot Beach Park when acquired would probably be the most satisfactory site for such a basin and harbor.

## TOURIST CAMP

There is at present a small tourist camp in Riverside Park, but this camp lacks many facilities that a satisfactory tourist camp should possess. Riverside Park is, moreover, not as favorably situated for the purposes of a tourist camp as it might be. A portion of Bates Wood would appear to be far more desirable. It is a less crowded neighborhood and it is more easily reached from both Hartford Turnpike and the Post Road. A properly constructed and supervised camp here could be made a means of attracting a considerable number of tourists to the city.

## LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUNDS

The main shortcoming of the park system of New London is its lack of local neighborhood playgrounds. Small playgrounds judiciously selected in various parts of the city would do much to take children off the streets. At the same time it would considerably improve the whole character of their play. It is practically impossible, of course, to organize the street play of children. Street play is

practically all individual play — each child plays as best he can between passing vehicles. If playgrounds, however, were developed in each of the several residential neighborhoods, children would be provided with much safer play places and their play could also be organized and directed in a manner to be far more beneficial to them. Such playgrounds could be equipped as they already have been equipped in Caulkins Park, Morgan Park and Mercer Field, areas which have been discussed under "Schools" - in Bates Wood, Pequot Beach and Riverside parks.

Every boy loves baseball, yet our public parks and playgrounds make very inadequate provision for this sport. Unless proper provision is made for baseball diamonds in the parks and playfields of the city, the larger boys will continue to play in the streets. Every park should be provided with one or more baseball diamonds. To provide for the requirements of different sports, the same grounds used for baseball diamonds may be used as football fields, soccer fields and running tracks

## GOLF

Although golf is provided for in New London on the Shennecosset links, no public facilities are provided for the average citizen. There is no place where he can play golf. A portion of Bates Wood could be developed in this manner. The city need not develop an eighteen-hole course all at once. It could develop a nine-hole course first and then gradually extend the course until it contained 18 holes. Such a golf course should do much to enhance the attractiveness of New London as a place of summer residence.

Today a community without proper facilities for golf is seriously handicapped in attracting summer vacationists. A public course, free of all membership requirements but probably subject to a green tee, would satisfy a real need of both citizens and visitors. Green fees could be made to defray, if not all, at least a large portion of the maintenance costs of the course.

## SUMMARY

When this program is carried out, 279 acres will be added to the park area of the city. The city will then have 12 parks, so distributed as to serve every neighborhood. The several parks would be as follows:



	Present area acres	Proposed area acres
Bates Wood	152.0	187.0
Riverside Park	35.0	35.0
Brandegee Park	---	38.0
Pequot Beach Park	---	70.0
Alewife Cove Park	---	120.0
Ocean Beach Park	6.0	6.0
Fort Trumbull	---	16.0
Caulkins Park	10.0	10.0
Morgan Park	8.0	8.0
Memorial Park	3.8	3.8
Williams Park	1.7	1.7
Mercer Park	3.5	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>220.0</b>	<b>499.0</b>

*The realization of this program* will care not only for the recreational facilities of every section of the city but for practically every kind of recreation — bathing, skating, baseball, tennis, golf, dancing. The attainment of the program will, of course, take quite a few years, yet if the city proceeds systematically to carry it out, it will be surprising how soon it may be realized. Public spirited citizens can, no doubt, be appealed to in New London as in other communities, to aid the city by gifts of land. Indeed, several of the present parks in New London have been donated to the city. Williams Park, Memorial Park and Riverside Park were all given to the city.

If the proper appeal is made to generous citizens, who knows but these additional parks will also be placed at the city's disposal. However these lands may be acquired, their acquisition will afford every citizen unexcelled means of recreation.

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, September 2, 2009**

B. Public Works – Dave DeNoia discussed the bond money and what he would like to see changed, ie. Riverside Park with rehabilitating the pavilions, and possibly install a playscape. He indicated that Riverside Park is under utilized. Caulkins soccer fields were reoriented, relocated goals, and the fields now run east and west instead of north and south. There was a brief discussion regarding who authorized Caulkins Park reorientation as the parks have all been prioritized and Caulkins Park was not next on the list. Dave DeNoia indicated that Steve Smith, President of the New London Soccer Youth League indicated that the league would pay for improvements. Dave used funds from Public Works Capital Operating budget to pay for the reorientation. Dave is not sure if the message was clear to Mr. Smith that he would need to reimburse Public Works. In good faith, he had 20 ton of loam delivered and Mr. Smith was shocked at the cost, but he stated he would pay for it. Dave is concerned. Tommie Major, Matt Greene, Steve Smith, Joe Johnson, Henry Ligroin and Dave made the changes. Matt Greene had sent a letter to the City Manager requesting the changes to the soccer field and what was to be done and that the City Manager authorized to do the job.



## MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW LONDON

8/7/06 - 2

### 5.0 a) **Public Comment**

Clark van der Lyke, Williams Street, addressed Council regarding Connecticut College and a publication they put out relative to taxes and the many ways the college gives to New London. He also reminded Council of the vendor's licensing process.

Tim Hanser, Rosemary Street, addressed Council regarding his opposition to selling Riverside Park. He does not see the wisdom in selling any park; park space is premium space. Parks, including Riverside Park, have value as a public asset.

Allyn deVars, Georgiana Street, currently running for the 39<sup>th</sup> House District for the Connecticut General Assembly, addressed Council regarding open space and his opposition to selling Riverside Park. Open space contributes to the community, it is a long-term asset that must be protected.

Louise Fabrykiewicz, State Street, addressed Council regarding open spaces, namely, Riverside Park, watershed property and Ocean Beach Park. All over the United States, people are fighting to protect open space because development is gobbling up their beloved parks and spaces at alarming rates. She urged Council not to sell what little open space that remains in New London.

Bud McAllister, Chappell Street, urged Council not to sell Riverside Park.

Douglas Wray, Yantic Lane, a member of the Earth Day Committee, thanked Council for their support of Earth Day celebrations. He distributed information from the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and Urban Environmental Accords supporting open space.

Dorothy Mansfield, Ocean Avenue, stated she was pleased to see in the paper and applauded NLDC for organizing the non-profits to form House New London. She had questions regarding NLDC, namely, membership of NLDC Board of Directors and breakdown of the two applications filed with State DECD.

Dr. David Hayes, Ocean Avenue, voiced his opposition to selling Riverside Park; supports the selling of Hunts Brooks; supports Peter Levine's proposal relative to Edgerton School; and questioned why the Finance Director needs to be a resident of the City.



## MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW LONDON

8/7/06 - 3

### 5.0 a) Public Comment (Continued)

Clarissa Beyah-Tayler, State Street, coordinator of non-profit organization called the *Writer's Block*, her group is quite disturbed and found it ironic that Riverside Park is up for possible sale. The students will give a performance at New London High School called the *Elements of Hope's Inferno*. Hope is a town that could be synonymous with New London, the elements of the inferno are fires that were mentioned by previous speakers as far as blight within a community and what a park is said to encourage.

The following students, all members of the *Writer's Block*, voiced their opposition to selling Riverside Park: Kevin Horton, Megan Penn, Adrian Jefferson, and Monica Lasenberry.

Ronna Stuller, Evergreen Avenue, voiced her support for Riverside Park and the value of open space.

Anne Belt, Rosemary Street, voiced her support for Riverside Park. Riverside Park is an undiscovered jewel; it gives to the community. Parks bring people to a community. She urged Council to keep Riverside Park -- a little oasis.

## MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW LONDON

8/7/06 - 20

### 8.5 **Matters Brought to the Attention of Council by Members of Council**

#### A) **Proposed Legislation Regarding Sale of Open Space/Park Land (Councilor Cornish)**

A motion made by Councilor Cornish, seconded by Councilor Curtin, Council awards resolution number 080706-1 requesting that the State Legislature amend §7-131n which requires that if a municipality takes any land that had been dedicated for park or open space, the municipality must provide comparable replacement land at least equal in value and size to the value and size of land taken, be amended such that distressed municipalities of this State, such as New London, be exempt from the provisions of said statute.

An amendment made by Councilor Cornish, seconded by Councilor Curtin, to refer the matter to the Parks & Recreation Committee of Council. The motion passed 6-1. Those voting in favor: Cavanagh, Cornish, Curtin, Sabilia, Glover, Pero. Those voting against: Frink.



## Doing It Wrong To Get It Right

Categories: [Downtowns](#), [Parks](#), [Urban Parks Institute](#)

by Roberta Brandes Gratz

Fundamentally I am an urbanist, and one of my bottom lines is that the best experts about a place are its users.

Many cities have so destroyed their heritage, that it is a problem now to build a legacy. Heritage is not just in parks, it's in the cityscape, on the streets, in its fabric. Very seldom do I find a city in this country that isn't at least 50% parking lots. You can't build a city from parking lots. But many of you have articulated a path that leads again and again to success — an organic approach, with the strength of the small step. Even if you have a master plan, it still must proceed one step at a time, rebuilding as you go along.



We have built a form that does not function. And we have done it by design, not by chance. We have allowed the car and highway engineers to design and shape our lives... The myth prevails that Americans are freer and more independent. Free, that is, to sit in traffic and depend upon the automobile for every essential function and trivial errand. The car, highways and parking lots built since the 1950s have so separated, segregated and isolated the American people that we have become pockets of hostile aliens. The garage door has replaced the front door, the parking lot the public steps leading to City Hall, and the underground garage the

office building lobby.

We do not communicate, relate or connect as a people. And we have few public places left to do that even when we choose to do so. We have eliminated public places from the physical and mental geography of the country. Without the variety of common grounds on which a diverse people mix and mingle in an unplanned manner, the health of the commonweal is undermined.

The national landscape no longer differentiates between places. The look of anywhere prevails. And if people don't know and feel where they are, they don't know who they are... We despair but we accept these physical changes as inevitable; allow those who benefit financially and professionally to rationalize its continuance...

Even many of what are supposed to be public spaces or parks don't work as genuine public spaces or parks. Years ago when I was researching *The Living City*, I took a sightseeing bus tour around downtown Houston. We drove past an inviting, lush park, as devoid of people as the streets. I asked the driver "Where is everybody? Doesn't anybody use this park?" "Oh, you should see it at lunchtime," he replied. I had seen this phenomenon in other cities and suddenly it hit me. The new definition of urban park was 'lunchroom.'

Too many parks, waterfronts and open spaces serve worker populations well at lunchtime, serve leisure time crowds well with organized entertainment, and serve sports audiences well for competitive events. Between planned events, these public places sit



empty because a diverse mixture of people do not live, work, visit and spend leisure time in the vicinity, keeping the place populated throughout the day.

A true public space should not need to be programmed to draw people. There must be user population to bring on foot the variety of humanity.

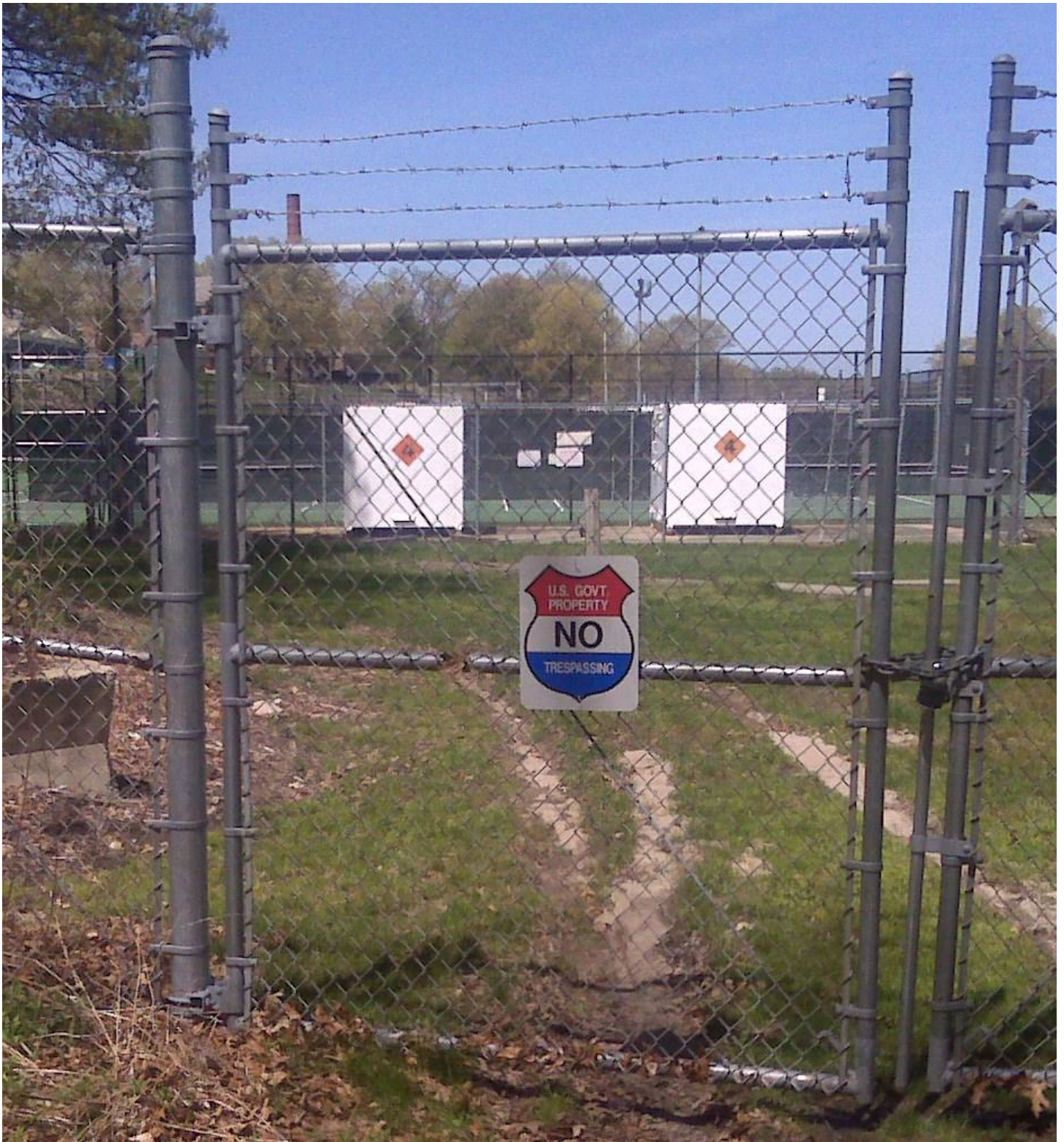
Public discourse daily focuses on strengthening family values, rebuilding community, integrating people, building secure communities, eliminating crime. The importance of 'place', of downtown, of the 'somewhere' that marks a community is not factored in. Yet, across the country, efforts abound to recreate destroyed public places, rebuild undermined downtowns, and repopulate the stores on Main Street and the upstairs apartments. The groups leading the efforts are actually repairing democracy itself.

A true center can come in many forms. It is the activity, not the architecture or physical form that defines it... True civic centers, genuine public squares cannot be automobile destinations. They must be the natural crossroads of civic life. Much the same can be said about parks. Vitality of place will always be a struggle anyplace where the majority of users get there by car. Unless of course it is a large natural resource at the edge of the community or out of town.

The historic values lost in this country, human connections broken, and personal networks severed, did not happen naturally. Their destruction was planned, designed and fully engineered... The process of renewal from the ground up must shape itself according to the foundation that was destroyed. Public places, neighborhood or downtown parks, open spaces, waterfronts and greenways are all good places for the rebuilding process to begin. Connections existed once, and must again.

Everywhere communities want their community restored, the center revived, parks restored, new open spaces created, waterfronts reclaimed. They want places where walking is more than a planned health routine, and driving is optional; where sidewalks are valued more than roadbeds, and where trees are not removed by traffic engineers who declare them safety hazards.

The rules of the day got us to this dysfunctional form in the first place. They are the rules that keep us here. They must be broken.



## **IMPACT OF OPEN SPACE ON PROPERTY VALUES**

By: Paul Frisman, Principal Analyst

You asked if any studies have been conducted on the effect government spending on open space preservation has on neighboring property values. We could find no report specifically addressing the impact of government spending on open space, but did find a number of studies on the effect of open space preservation generally on nearby property values. We link to three reports that summarize such studies and briefly discuss their findings.

### **SUMMARY**

There have been a number of studies on the impact of open space preservation on the value of nearby property. Most studies have found that preserving open space land generally, but not always, increases the property value of nearby homes. The studies use a variety of methods to determine this, and consider such variables as the type, location, and use of the open space, (large rural areas or **city parks**; passive vs. active recreational use) and the distance between the open space property and the residential property in question.

We provide links to three reports that summarize the methodology and results of these studies: [The Impact of Parks and Open Space on Property Values and the Property Tax Base](#), commissioned by the National Recreation and Park Association; [The Value of Open Space: Evidence from Studies of Nonmarket Benefits](#), by Resources for the Future, a national nonprofit organization; and [Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails and Greenway Corridors](#), prepared for the National Park Service.

### **IMPACT OF PRESERVING OPEN SPACE ON PROPERTY VALUES**

According to the Impact report, the economic contributions of public park land and open space are twofold: first, they often increase nearby property values (resulting in more property tax revenue to the town), and, second, the town avoids costs associated with providing municipal services to a residential development that might otherwise be located on the site.

The Impact report notes that homebuyers are generally willing to pay more for property located close to parks and open space. The Rivers, Trails and Greenways study states that the real estate industry found that 77. 7% of home buyers and shoppers rated natural open space as either “essential” or “very important” in planned communities. However, this is not always the case, especially where parks are poorly maintained, noisy, or congested. The Rivers, Trails and Greenways study also notes that increases in property values depend upon the ability of developers and planners to minimize potential homeowner-park use conflicts and provide access to the open space and the views it offers.

The Impact report notes that is hard to quantify the impact of open space on property values because of the many different types and uses of open space, the various uses of the



land surrounding them, and other factors. But it states that a 20% increase in value for property adjoining or fronting a passive-use park is “a reasonable starting point.” The increase is higher if the park is large, well maintained and primarily used for passive purposes, such as hiking. The increase is lower for property that abuts smaller open space tracts or open space used for active recreation, such as ball fields. Distance from the open space also plays a role. Property owners living closer to open space enjoy a greater benefit than those whose homes are further away.

### ***Specific Property Values Findings***

Among the specific studies the three reports cite are the following:

- Boulder, Colorado. This 1978 study found the average value of properties adjacent to a 1,382-acre greenbelt was 32% higher than those located 3,200 feet away. On average, there was a \$ 4. 20 decrease in the price of a home for every foot further away from the greenbelt. In one neighborhood that took more advantage of the open space in its planning, this price decreased by \$ 10. 20 for every foot further away.
- Worcester, Mass. This early 1980s study found that, on average, a house located 20 feet from a park sold for \$ 2,675 more than a house 2,000 feet away.
- In New York, the price of land adjacent to the Adirondack Forest Preserve was about \$ 20 per acre more than non-adjacent land in 1978, a 17. 5% increase in value.
- A 1993 Maryland study found preservation of a significant tract of forest land accounted for at least 10% of the value of a house within one mile of the tract in Baltimore County and at least 15% of the value of a house within one-quarter mile.
- A study conducted in Amherst and Concord, Massachusetts, found that clustered housing with open space appreciated at a higher rate than conventionally-designed subdivisions. Clustered homes in Amherst appreciated at an average annual rate of 22%, compared to 19. 5% for more conventional subdivision, a difference in average selling price of \$ 17,100 between the two developments in 1989.
- Another study noted a correlation between the value of property in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and its proximity to that city's 1,300-acre Pennypack Park. In 1974, the park accounted for 33% of the value of a plot of land located 40 feet away; nine percent for property located 1,000 feet away, and 4. 2% for property at a distance of 2,500 feet. The study estimated a net increase in real estate value of \$ 3. 3 million directly attributable to the park.

PF: tjo

## Riverside Park

by Laurie Deredita

Located on a wooded hillside sloping down to a sandy beach on the Thames River, 18-acre Riverside Park in East New London is surrounded by the Coast Guard Academy, a residential neighborhood, industrial buildings, and the railroad tracks of the Vermont Central running parallel to the shore. The constant hum of traffic from the nearby Gold Star and railroad bridges provides a competing background to the tranquility of a woodland landscape otherwise disturbed only by birdsong. Broad paved paths wind past picnic tables, barbecue grills, handsome stone walls, a playground and a basketball court. With all the amenities, there are very few people. In its better days Riverside was one of the city's most popular parks and for many years it was the place to watch the Yale-Harvard regatta because of its great vantage point overlooking the river. Unfortunately, in recent decades, the park developed a bad reputation and fell into disuse. The maintenance of the once lovely grounds and rustic buildings was neglected, and the park's landmark stone fountain was removed.



The good news is that the Department of Public Works recently began a project to restore the natural beauty of the overgrown park by clearing out brush and diseased trees, recreating the original vistas. Division manager Dave DeNoia is excited that the department has been able to make this project a priority although lack of staffing means that the grounds crews can work on the restoration only between busy seasons. But they have already made visible progress. At present, for security reasons and to discourage illegal dumping, drive-in access is allowed only occasionally but it is possible to park cars outside and walk in if the gates are closed.

The plan to create a park in the northern part of New London began in 1893 when the city purchased 18 acres on Winthrop's Neck from the Post Hill Improvement Company, at about the same time that planning began for Ocean Beach in the southern part of town. In 1908, Frank Brandegee and Sebastian Duffy Lawrence purchased 11 acres of adjacent waterfront property, known as Lewis Woods Grove, and gave it to the city in order to expand Riverside Park. In 1924, camping grounds with a camphouse and other facilities, charging 50 cents for a 24-hour period, were established in the lower portion of the park. In 1940, a footbridge was built over the tracks to provide access to the public beach. The decline of the park began in the early 1950s when the city used the northern section as a dump and landfill; and in 1963, 12.52 acres were sold to the adjacent Coast Guard Academy for \$35,000.

In recent years there have been several proposals that would have removed Riverside Park from the list of city parks. In 2001, the Children's Museum of Southeastern Connecticut negotiated to build a new museum on the site. In 2005, there was a contentious proposal to take 7 acres to build a Maritime Magnet School. There was considerable public opposition to the 2006 proposal to give or sell the land to the Coast Guard Academy to become the site of a possible homeland security academy. Much of the opposition to these proposals has been generated by the strong feeling that the city should not eliminate public open space. On the other hand, open space that is underutilized, neglected or considered unsafe is not very valuable to the public. It now looks like Riverside Park may be experiencing a renaissance.

# Connecticut--State Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program

The Trust for Public Land

## \$24 Million Legislative General Obligation Bond Measure

Solid research and media heat fuel new legislation.

"Turning the public's general support for open space preservation into concrete support from the public and government leaders to increase funding for land protection required a well-coordinated grassroots education and outreach effort, an effective media strategy, and good political instincts. The Trust for Public Land worked non-stop--along with the Environment Committee, the governor's office, the Land Conservation Coalition of Connecticut, and the Department of Environmental Protection--to pull it all together and win the day." -- Jessie Stratton, Co-Chair Environment Committee, Connecticut House of Representatives

In May 1998 the Connecticut Legislature overwhelmingly passed Public Act 157, "An Act Concerning Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition," which created a new open space matching grant program for municipalities, nonprofit conservation groups, and water companies. The legislature also approved new bonding authority amounting to \$10 million for the new program, \$11.5 million for the state's Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust, and \$2.5 million for the state's agricultural preservation program. Prior bond authorizations brought the total dollars available for land protection in fiscal year 1998 to \$33 million.

Three years prior to the passage of this legislation, TPL's Connecticut project office began receiving requests for assistance from residents and local officials opposed to the sale of large water company-owned properties in their communities. As TPL began to investigate, it found that recent policy changes at the state and federal levels were providing incentives for Connecticut's water utilities to increase sales of land and smaller reservoirs. At that time the state was bonding no more than \$2 million annually for open space protection, because of both relatively low authorizations and cutbacks in bonding approvals.

Message development -- Because community opposition to water company land and reservoir sales was almost universal, and because public opinion polls consistently ranked drinking water quality high among issues of widespread public concern, TPL began working with other members of the Land Conservation Coalition of Connecticut (LCCC), including the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, the Farmington River Watershed Association, and the Connecticut Audubon Society, to pursue watershed protection as a tangible and compelling rallying point to help generate public support for land protection.

- Research -- With grants from the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust, the Vervane Foundation, and General Reinsurance Corporation, and with assistance from the Connecticut Fund for the Environment and the Farmington River Watershed Association, TPL researched and published a report, *An Ounce of Prevention: Land Conservation and the Future of Connecticut's Drinking Water*. The report investigated the threats posed to drinking water quality in the state by the increased sales of water company land holdings and the loss of critical privately owned watershed lands to development.



- Education and outreach -- With support from the Henry P. Kendall Foundation and the G. C. Hughes Foundation, TPL, LCCC, and the Connecticut Fund for the Environment jointly hired an experienced community organizer, who used the issue of water quality to reinvigorate and expand the coalition's grassroots network.
- Media strategy -- An Ounce of Prevention was released at a news conference on January 21, 1998. Speakers included TPL's president, Connecticut Representative Jessie Stratton, and actor Paul Newman--who announced a personal pledge of \$500,000 to help protect one of the threatened water company holdings. As a result, the conference was covered by more than 20 TV stations, the local National Public Radio affiliate, the Associated Press, and dozens of newspapers.
- Political strategy -- Prior to the press conference, TPL and its consultants met with high-level officials in Governor Rowland's office as well as his Open Space Task Force to present findings from the report. Eight days after An Ounce of Prevention appeared; the governor released the recommendations of his Open Space Task Force and announced his proposal to spend \$166 million for land protection over the next five years, including \$59 million in matching grants for land protection projects. Over the next several months TPL met repeatedly with water company representatives, legislative leaders, public officials, and other interest groups to build support for new legislation and significantly increased funding for land protection.
- Measure development -- Capitalizing on public support, TPL worked with a number of key legislators to draft the bill that became Public Act 157. In addition to setting up a state matching grants program, the bill created a new procedure for the allocation of legislatively approved bond funds to the state's Department of Environmental Protection. Whereas expenditures for individual land acquisition projects previously needed approval from the bond commission, the new streamlined process allowed for the transfer of lump sums to the agency twice a year.



## **OLR**

January 29, 1996 96-R-0003

TO:

TITLE: **THE CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT**

You asked if Connecticut General Statute § 22a-16 has been used frequently and if its use has placed a burden on towns and businesses.

### **SUMMARY**

CGS § 22a-16 allows any citizen to bring a suit against unreasonable pollution, impairment, or destruction. The plaintiff does not have to show a personal or unique injury separate from that suffered by the public to have a cause of action. The law has been used infrequently against towns and businesses although one case resulted in a large fine. The law is most frequently cited in cases where the standing of a plaintiff to sue is in question. Although actual suit is brought infrequently, the law is useful to citizens groups in that the threat of a suit can at times convince polluters to stop their activity.

### **CITIZEN SUITS**

CGS § 22a-16 states that:

The attorney general, any political subdivision of the state, any instrumentality or agency of the state or of a political subdivision thereof, any person, partnership, corporation, association, organization or other legal entity may maintain an action in the superior court for the judicial district wherein the defendant is located, resides, or conducts business, except where the state is the defendant, such action shall be brought in the judicial district of Hartford-New Britain, for declaratory and equitable relief against the state, any political subdivision thereof, any instrumentality or agency of the state or of a political subdivision thereof, any person, partnership, corporation, association, organization, or other legal entity, acting alone, or in combination with others, for the protection of the public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state from unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction provided no such action shall be maintained against the state for pollution of real property acquired by the state under subsection (e) of § 22a-133m, where the spill or discharge which caused the pollution occurred prior to the acquisition of the property by the state.

Only a few cases have been brought against towns and businesses under this law. We searched the published opinions of the Supreme, Appellate, and Superior courts for cases where CGS § 22a-16 played a dominant role. Although the law was cited frequently it was cited most often in the context of discussing whether a plaintiff had standing before the court, a question not directly relevant to your request. We found only one case where a substantial civil penalty was imposed. In this case the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) commissioner sought an injunction prohibiting L & S Construction from illegally disposing of solid waste at five different locations. The court ruled in favor of the commissioner issuing a permanent injunction and a civil penalty. The defendants appealed. The Supreme Court found that the defendant's deposit of the waste in close proximity to water resources



violated CGS § 22a-16 prohibiting unreasonable pollution and upheld the injunction and the penalty (*Keeney v. L & S Construction*, 226 Conn. 205 (1993)).

Another case, *Manchester Environmental Coalition v. Stockton* (184 Conn. 51 (1981)) is often cited with regard to CGS § 22a-16. The plaintiffs, alleging a violation of the Environmental Protection Act, sought to stop pollution of the air which they claimed would result from the traffic generated by a proposed industrial park in Manchester. The trial court had ruled that the plaintiffs' standing to bring suit and their burden of proof to show pollution at the trial comprised one and the same thing. The Supreme Court found that individuals had standing to bring an action under this law regardless of whether they could prove any pollution, impairment, or destruction of the environment.

There are various other cases that discuss the standing of a plaintiff to sue under CGS § 22a-16. For example, in *Belford v. New Haven*, 170 Conn. 46 (1975) the plaintiffs sought to stop an agreement between the city and a nonprofit organization to permit a rowing course and other facilities on public parkland. The Court ruled that the law gives standing to bring actions only to protect the natural resources of the state from pollution or destruction, and not, as the plaintiffs requested to challenge legislative decisions of a town which do not directly threaten the environment. In *Blackburn v. Miller-Stephenson Chemical Company*, No. 314089 (Jan. 12, 1995) the plaintiff filed a nine count complaint seeking damages for contamination of her well water supply. Her ninth count alleges liability under CGS § 22a-16. The defendant argued the plaintiff could not sue under this section since (1) it was not intended to provide a remedy to an individual property owner who already has an ownership interest in the land in question but only to concerned citizen or public interest groups and officials and (2) the plaintiff has other means by which she could seek relief. The plaintiff argued that the law allows any person to bring suit and that nothing in the law prohibits a party with a private interest from also bringing suit in the public interest. The court found for the plaintiff in ruling that the law does allow any party to bring an action for relief under this statute.

We spoke with Michael Stern of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment about how often the fund has used the law. To his knowledge the fund has not filed suit under CGS § 22a-16 in the last five years. But he believes that the law has been useful to the organization because of the threat of intervention that it allows. In other words a polluter may agree to settle just because of the threat of a possible suit.

SG: lc



## A Great Place to Live

### *New London*

New London was founded in 1646 by John Winthrop and settlers from Massachusetts Bay Colony. (Yes, New London is named after London, England.)

Our home city is connected to the sea - literally. The Thames River empties into Long Island Sound, and the region has a long relationship with the water through fisheries, commercial shipping, and recreation. There are also deep roots in the military including a historic shipbuilding industry, the Navy Submarine Base and, of course, the Coast Guard Academy.

Key attractions in New London include parks, historic sites, museums, and the waterfront. The recently completed downtown waterfront park hosts a variety of public festivals and celebrations.

New London is midway between New York and Boston, and served by excellent air, rail, and highway systems. First class cadets in good standing may have cars on campus. Cadets and their families often enjoy visiting historic Mystic, just minutes away.

<http://www.cga.edu/display.aspx?id=329>

# **CITY OF NEW LONDON CONNECTICUT**

## **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

### **REORGANIZATION REPORT JULY 2008**

KEITH H. CHAPMAN INTERIM DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

## **PARKS AND PUBLIC GROUNDS RENOVATION PLAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The City of New London created what is identified as the "Park and Recreation Master Plan of 1999" which continues to serve as an excellent basis for all current and future maintenance and improvements of 31 of the 70 areas under the Park and Public Grounds Maintenance Divisions responsibility. As recently as October 25, 2007, the Mayor's Sports Complex Task Force and Park & Recreation Commission re-emphasized the importance of the Master Plan, with the inclusion of Priority List of Parks and Properties identifying 12 specific areas to be enhanced over the next two-year period.

In addition to the areas that were studied in the 1999 Master Plan, the Division also oversees and maintains all school, City and public grounds throughout the City, and is heavily involved in such activities as City Special Events as well as providing occasional manpower support to the Solid Waste Division.

The intent of this 2008 report is to create a comprehensive overview of the current status of each Park area within the City, with a summary of their condition and create a needs assessment. This report dovetails with the 1999 Master Plan and the 2007 Park & Recreation Committee Priority List, as those documents provide in general, accurate reflections of the existing conditions of the

City's Park infrastructure with some modifications. City staff members have reviewed the 1999 Master Plan and provide the following updates for year 2008:

1. BATES WOODS PARK: Rebuilt Little League Field, added field lighting, renovated irrigation system, installed new score board, restored walking trails, created Bates Woods Education Outdoor Learning Centers, rebuilt batting cages, and restored pitcher bull pens.
2. BARTLETT PLAYFIELD: Replaced basketball backstops, renewed playing court surface, removed brush and vegetation along fence lines.
3. BLACKHALL/GARFIELD TOT LOT: Installed new plays cape, installed retaining wall, installed playing tot lot surface, installed drainage, and installed decorative chain link fence.
4. CAULKINS PARK: Restored walking pathways, installed Cricket field, installed chain link fence.
5. CONNECTICUT AVENUE/McDONALD PARK: No improvements.
6. EDGERTON SCHOOL PLAYGROUND: Installed plays cape, resurfaced play areas, removed vegetation along chain link fencing.
7. GREEN HARBOR BEACH and PARK: Installed new cooking grills, refurbished and painted picnic tables, planted trees.
8. HARBOR SCHOOL PLAYGROUND: Re-mulched plays cape area, removed vegetation along fencing.
9. JENNINGS SCHOOL PLAYGROUND: No improvements.
10. LITTLE RED SCHOOL HOUSE: Repaired and replaced chain link fencing
11. MAHAN PARK: Installed new plays cape, and replaced sidewalks
12. RICHARD MARTIN CENTER PARK: Removed brush and vegetation.
13. MERCER FIELD: Renovated baseball field, concession, renewed bathrooms, refurbished bleachers, replaced Scoreboard,
14. MITCHELL WOODS PARK: Created new infield for ball field.
15. NATHAN HALE SCHOOL: Removed unsafe playground equipment.
16. NEW LONDON HIGH SCHOOL: Installed new track and field facility, installed new tennis courts, installed retaining wall, installed new chain link fence.
17. OLDE TOWN MILL: Installed bridge walkway, removed brush and vegetation, building currently under reconstruction.
18. RIVERSIDE PARK: Removed bathhouse, abandoned walkover bridge, removed brush and vegetation, painted outer buildings, replaced basketball backstops, replaced picnic tables.
19. TOBY MAY FIELD: Rebuilt two softball fields, installed separation chain link fence installed new dugouts, installed new bleachers, installed new plays cape, installed new landscaping, installed new storage containers, planted trees, built new disabled parking lot
20. VETRANS FIELD: Out of service.
21. WILLIAMS MEMORIAL PARK: Trees and shrubs planted dead ones removed. \_22. WILLIAMS PARK: No improvements
23. WINTHROP COVE PARK: Removed plays cape, renewed basketball court surface removed vegetation and brush.
24. WINTHROP PLAYGROUND: Removed brash and vegetation.



## 25. YE ANCIENTEST BURIAL GROUND: Restored monuments.

While the accomplishments of the Park Division, various volunteer groups, and organization provided numerous improvements to numerous locations, the goals and objectives outlined in the 1999 Master Plan failed to materialize to their fullest, leaving much work yet to be done. In addition numerous improvements that were in fact implemented, have, over time, fallen back into disrepair, and in many situations things are worse than in 1999. This situation has persisted primarily due to lack of resources and poor planning.

The citizenry of New London obviously seek improvements in the leisure and recreational activities and the 1999 Plan should be fully implemented with a full commitment by the City to fulfill the objectives of the Plan.

The 1999 Master Plan is an excellent resource and planning document that serves as a logical approach to bring all Parks and Public Grounds up to a level the City can be proud of.

Beyond the 25 locations outlined in the 1999 Master Plan and those updated above, the Division also maintains 45 City and Board of Education properties.

The 70 public property areas maintained by the Park Maintenance Division total over 370 acres in size and contain scores of amenities as outlined in the 1999 Master Plan. The City must undertake an aggressive improvement implementation plan to update and bring into conformance all of its parks, Recreation, and Public Grounds properties to avoid injuries, and escalating cost as this work will not diminish over time.

The Priority List for the City action as developed in 2007 by the Mayor's Sports Complex Task Force and the Park and Recreation Committee identifies the areas that are most sensitive and considered

to be the focal points that the City needs to address. In addition the City must bring all safety-oriented issues into conformance with today's regulations and standards throughout all City Parks and Playground areas.

The City should consider for the current year a \$2,000,000 allocation to address the Priority List and safety issues citywide. This action should be followed by an annual allocation into a Park and Public Grounds Reserve Fund of \$500,000. The most logical approach in addressing the remaining needs on a annual basis, would be to plan improvements to coincide with the Streets/Sidewalk/Curbing program that identifies sections of the City on a 10, 15, or 20 year cycle. This approach would provide a systematic process that would work with other Public Works activities to insure all City Parks and Public Grounds are address in a timely and efficient manner.

The Park Commission and Mayors Sport Complex Task Force recommends that an Ad Hoc Committee be created to assist the City Council and City Administration in implementing the recommendations of 1999 and 2007. Contained within the Executive Report their suggestions are addressed with some refinements.

NEW LONDON, Conn. – U.S. Coast Guard Academy officials and New London city leaders are moving ahead in discussions of a possible purchase of Riverside Park by the Coast Guard. As part of this process a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review is underway which will include solicitation of public comments and provide an evaluation of the environmental effects of the initiative.

A draft environmental assessment, along with a comment form and submittal information has been posted on the Academy's website at:  
[www.uscga.edu/riversideparkNEPA](http://www.uscga.edu/riversideparkNEPA) .

"The Academy has long recognized the need to secure additional space for future growth," said Academy Superintendent Rear Admiral Scott Burhoe. "We are committed to working closely with city officials and the community as we explore the purchase of this land and continue the long-standing partnership with the city, our home."

The Academy is now operating close to peak capacity, and additional land is needed to keep pace with the rapidly evolving missions of the facility and to remain competitive as a highly selective educational institution. The park, which abuts the campus to the South, is the only sizeable, undeveloped area that would allow for future expansion of the institution.

-uscga-

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## *Optimize Existing Resource Use and Address Resource Shortfalls*

### **Strategic Direction**

The Academy must obtain and effectively apply resources (funds, time, and personnel) to upgrade, improve, and maintain the highest quality programs and facilities. This will allow us to accomplish our mission, attract the highest quality students, compete with peer colleges and universities, and achieve recognition as a premier institution of higher learning. The entire Academy community must foster a culture of sustainability and stewardship that our future leaders use to positively shape the future of the Coast Guard.

### **Action Items**

- ★ ***Monitor Resource Sufficiency and Close Any Existing Gaps. Ensure the Academy is financially stable.***  
Demonstrate this financial stability through a sufficient operating budget that is capable of sustaining the achievement of its educational and training objectives. Reprogram resources internally as necessary and pursue recurring and non-recurring operating funds to close the existing sufficiency gap and address unfunded CGHQ mandates. Ensure the Academy has the ability to respond to financial challenges and unforeseen circumstances.
- ★ ***Document, plan, and execute long-term Stewardship, of the Academy through maximizing AFC-43 and AC&I funds.*** Achieve recapitalization projects including renovation of Chase Hall, new EAGLE pier, indoor small arms range, new Engineering building (McAllister Hall replacement), and Aquatic Center.
- ★ ***Optimize Personnel and Time resources.***  
Review the Personnel Allowance List to ensure proper staffing and alignment with strategic goals. Address shortfalls through resource proposals and the re-programming processes.
- ★ ***Update and Execute the Academy Facilities Master Plan.***  
Implement the Facilities Master Plan, using sustainable construction and maintenance principles, to benefit the Academy recruiting efforts, to ensure access for those with disabilities, and to provide a safe and healthy work/living environment.
- ★ ***Communicate Margin of Excellence Needs Effectively and Maintain Strong Partnerships with the Alumni Association and Foundation.***  
Effectively apply non-appropriated, Margin of Excellence resources to provide the greatest results consistent with the Academy's mission.
- ★ ***Implement a Culture of Sustainability.***  
Lessen the Academy's impact on the Earth's resources by reducing energy and water consumption. Incorporate sustainable design concepts in facility renovations and new construction. Continue a robust recycling program to reduce the amount of refuse generated at the Academy. Purchase "green" products and reduce the amount of hazardous materials purchased.