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March 09, 2009

Co-Chairmen and Members
Planning and Development Committee
Room 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: S.B. 1044. AAC Mediation in Land Use Disputes.

Dear Co-Chairmen and Committee Members:

Although the Connecticut General Statutes § 8-8a contains provisions for mediation of land-use disputes, the Judicial Branch operates to exclude certified mediators like myself, who are not attorneys even though I have 30 years of experience in such matters. I have tried through the former Chief Administrative Judges Pellegrino, Langenbach and Lavery to establish a registry of approved mediation certifier organizations and priority system for appointment of mediators without success. Promoting mediation in the land use area can save valuable court resources, time and effort to settle cases.

The stated purpose of the bill is to establish qualifications for land-use dispute mediators, who are attorneys or other non-attorney professionals. The bill would authorize individuals to serve as mediators in land-use disputes after the individual successfully completes a course of study and is certified or accredited as a mediator by an accredited organization approved by the Judicial Branch.

Although nothing in Section 8-8a limits mediation to attorneys, the Judicial Branch has operated to exclude non-attorney professionals from participating in land-use mediation. Such exclusion unreasonably prevents educated, trained, experienced and qualified professionals from acting as mediators. Attached is a letter from the former Chief Court Administrator, Judge Joseph H. Pellegrino confirming the restriction of mediation to attorneys.

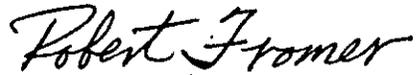
I received the letter from Pellegrino after submitting my letter of request along with my resume and a copy of the Lincoln Institute's (Institute) certificate as a land use mediator after training. Cambridge, Massachusetts provides the location for the Institute. Interestingly enough, the class included a New Jersey trial judge.

I then submitted the information to Judge Langenbach as suggested by Judge Pellegrino but never received the courtesy of a reply. Similarly in September 2006, I sent a similar letter to the current Court Administrator, Judge Lavery, but never received the courtesy of a reply, either. I sent the information to Appellate Court Judge DiPentima without benefit of a reply/

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Thank you for consideration of this matter.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Fromer".

Robert Fromer
Environmental Consultant
And Certified Land-Use Mediator