

As a resident of the Westchester section of Colchester I would like to express my concerns in regards to the future of the Sunrise resort property. I am unable to attend the hearings and ask that my concerns be noted for the record. This piece of land is vital to the community, the Salmon River Watershed and an environmental gem that should not be misused. My family has enjoyed hiking, birdwatching, dog walking and the overall peace and serenity of the neighboring Machamoodus State Park. While there, we have made the resort area part of our hike. It is not acceptable that the State has left this property to be destroyed and vandalized as it has been. How awful that my tax dollars were used to secure this property for the benefit of the residents of Connecticut and then left to rot with no viable future or plan to maintain it or develop it into a proper park or wildlife area. How wonderful it would be to see the Salmon River waterfront filled with picnic tables and families spending a day swimming, fishing, kayaking, and even have available, tennis courts, volleyball areas, and even camping. The current mess and the buildings need attention now before it becomes overrun with homeless squatters, drug activity, rodents or a safety hazard to those that visit and navigate thru the buildings, many of which are not safe. This area has so long needed a swimming pool to give residents the option for swimming lessons or family swimming. I can see the existing swimming pool area and building being enclosed and developed into an all season swimming complex. It would create jobs and revenue to sustain itself thru fees for swimming and swimming lessons. I am sure someone would entertain the business venture of a miniature golf course or go-cart complex, batting cages. I am certain that local Boy and Girl Scout troops would use it for inclusion in their outdoor programs. What about horseback, mountain biking and hiking trails, soccer or baseball fields to meet the demand for local teams or tournaments. A pavillion that can be rented out for events. I do not want to see this area turned over to some snappy business venture and turned into a mini Disneyland. It should be preserved with environmental integrity and for the benefit of Connecticut residents to use and enjoy without the intergration of too high a level of commercial involvement. How wonderful to have an area for a community garden for use by those who do not have space or land but love to garden and grow their own produce. Area Garden Clubs or Future Farmers Clubs from local schools could have an area for growing. Have a Farmers Market on site during the growing season. Get the UConn Master Gardner Program involved, have one of the buildings converted into a local meeting place for their programs and public events. Make partnerships with these type of groups to support their involvement. What a great place for a local nature center that can be visited by school groups. Or an animal rescue operation, DEEP check stations. The opportunities are endless. Create the correct mix of uses that maintains the environment while offering some needed recreational opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments

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