

Westport News 03.26.08

Letter to the Editor

Representatives or Dictators?

I am awed by my colleagues on the RTM. Recently a number of them brought up the issue of the "Y" building on the Baron's South property.

My colleagues and I have sat through numerous meetings and heard the explanation that municipal property will be used for municipal purposes. I do believe they all know the "Y" is not a municipal purpose.

It was explained to us that Baron's South is the proposed site for future development of affordable/workforce/senior housing. A marvelous short video has shown what it possibly could look like. We are aware of the need for this housing in our town. Many of our first responders (Police/Fire/EMT personnel) live outside of Westport. Having them in town would afford a more cohesive safe program for all.

My "joy thought" lies in the fact that our first responders would add another layer of protection to the town. To see them, as ordinary citizens, in our library, at school meetings, on line in stores, etc., should be a "perk comfort" to us. They have other life saving/bravery skills besides what their particular uniform would indicate.

It would not be fare to deny them residence in the town that they protect. Efforts should be extended to have them as our neighbors.

Many seniors have donated both time and money to Westport. They have been board members/commissioners, volunteers and active builders of our community. Many still volunteer hours to the successful maintenance of Westport. Due consideration should be given and action taken to keep these treasures here.

I hope the recent outburst of the RTMers wasn't meant to usurp the town plan on Baron's South development. We are elected members to the RTM but not elected dictators.

Let the "Y" build their edifice on their Mahackeno property. The new building will only be 15,000

square feet larger than their present downtown property. That is not a significant square footage enlargement when you think in terms of new McMansions being built. It will house all the latest technical equipment, with their advantages, in many fields. The plan for their building is outstanding as is the town's plan for affordable/workforce/senior housing.

The "Y" has been custodians for Westport since 1919 concerning health exercise, childcare, senior programs, competitive athletic programs, enrichment classes and other numerous activities. Their programs extend to all ages ... from the cradle to the grave. Due diligence goes into their thoughts and activities. They have a heartfelt interest in their programs and members. Their scholarships have made membership accessible by all. Many interesting, heartwarming stories about their years in Westport are real. They do build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

Let's all join in producing a win-win situation for this town that we value and love by supporting affordable/workforce/senior housing at Baron's South and a new home for the "Y" at Mahackeno.

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Editor's Note: Flynn represents District 6 on Westport's RTM.