

APPENDIX E:

Community Comments Received

DATE COMMENT

1/31/18	<p>How about a Town Sport's Complex. This could be utilized by the Town Leagues' and the High Schools. Right now the Basketball League is fighting for Gym Space. Some teams can only practice once a week. The High Schools could use their own Hockey Rink. Rink time is ridiculous, some parents have to get their kids their practically in the middle of the night if they play Hockey.</p> <p>Fees could be charged to offset some of the cost. What would really be nice they built an indoor pool for both High School's to use. I am sure it could be utilized in other ways as well.</p> <p>Our Town is growing and our Sport's Programs are exploding, it is a good investment in our youth.</p>
2/6/18	<p>I filled out the survey and thought there would be a write-in section for any ideas. Since that option wasn't available, I thought I would write to you. I think an offshoot of the Kripalu center in Massachusetts for yoga and health would be a great idea. It could be part of Kripalu, or a different company offering similar options for health and mindfulness. It could possibly be linked to one of the area colleges. I love living in West Hartford and would like to see it become more of a well-rounded community.</p>
2/7/18	<p>I filled out the survey but wanted to further explain my suggestion. I'm a lifelong West Hartford resident, and I've been volunteering for 4 years doing animal-assisted therapy and the Reading Education Assistance Dogs program, primarily at the Intensive Education Academy in West Hartford and also in public libraries, including Newington, W. Hartford, and Bloomfield. I have several colleagues from other animal-assisted therapy groups who also drive considerable distances to volunteer in West Hartford.</p> <p>I wanted to alert you to the fact that, other than the Hartford Obedience Club, which offers a narrow selection of obedience-focused dog training in a church in Elmwood, and some continuing education classes offered at Elmwood Community Center by a teacher who is not fully-committed to "positive-only training methods," there are no comprehensive for-profit or nonprofit canine training centers offering a wide range of classes in the local community.</p> <p>Those of us who take dog-training seriously because we want to have well-behaved dogs (and great relationships with our dogs) and because we may wish to work or volunteer with our animals must drive to Manchester for our training. Manchester is home to Tails-U-Win, a for-profit center with an excellent reputation and a huge array of socialization and training options, as well as advanced seminars. It's been there for many years. Manchester is also home to Our Companions' Program Center, the educational outreach arm of that wonderful nonprofit. Our Companions offers a much smaller array of much less costly basic dog training courses, with some occasional enrichment opportunities.</p> <p>You may be aware that West Hartford has a very high number of dogs per capita and that dog-friendly businesses have tended to thrive here. We also have a very high number of interactions among dogs in public spaces (on sidewalks, in parks, in the Center, at the reservoir, etc.). Many dog owners in</p>

West Hartford would like to have better-socialized animals and to be better-educated themselves. Making such an opportunity available to them in our town would lead to a reduction in the number of dog-aggression incidents and injuries, as well as for many wonderful positive interactions.

Lastly, you may be aware that the quest to establish an outdoor dog park has failed due to the lack of an appropriate location. While I have supported the project, it's also become very clear among dog experts that dog parks can be very dangerous places because of so many variables that simply cannot be controlled. However, there's simply no question that if we increase the number of dog owners in our town who HAVE taken their dog to basic "manners" classes and socialization opportunities for puppies, the safety of interactions at any future dog park in our town will increase measurably.

The reason that dog training centers have thrived in Manchester is that "former warehouse" type spaces have been available to rent there. I'd like to suggest that a new structure could be built on the existing UConn campus that could properly accommodate such a business. If it were a for-profit entity, I have no doubt that the classes would be fully enrolled, as many people currently driving to Manchester or to training classes at Petsmart (in Plainville, Manchester, etc.), for example, would instead enroll here. If a discount were offered to town residents, that would be an added incentive.

I advocate for this use of the space cause it truly would contribute a much-needed set of offerings to our town that does not exist anywhere else in our town. I happen to be physically challenged, and I cannot tell you the number of times that I have NOT been able to get myself to Manchester to take enrichment classes with my dog. If I'd been able to take these additional classes in my own town, I'd be contributing even more on a volunteer basis to my community. The driving is a real problem for me and also for many healthy residents, who cannot afford a 30-minute commute each way, given their busy lives. The traffic is also very severe at some times of day, so there are classes that are not accessible in Manchester because the commute can take much longer than 30 minutes.

I believe this use of a part of the campus would be a fabulous, forward-thinking choice and one that would generate significant tax revenue if done on a for-profit basis. It makes the town safer, gives residents a chance to get to know each other better, and may even foster volunteerism in our town.

I strongly encourage you and others who may be interested to call Leslie Nelson, owner of Tails-U-Win in Manchester, and to take a tour of their facility and grounds. Ask her what has made her business so successful for so many years. That would give you a great idea of what might be needed to make such a facility work in West Hartford. You will also note that they have a small store on campus, so there is a modest retail component to their business as well. They employ many full-time and part-time trainers and staff, including some young people and a surprising number of senior citizens (who have such a wealth of skills to share), so it's a wonderful potential employment opportunity for West Hartford residents as well. They also offer affordable, carefully-planned playgroups--supervised by the participating pet owners and staff (dogs do NOT run around unsupervised)--and this could be one option for those residents who have been so frustrated by the lack of an outdoor dog park. I know many residents who "break the rules" and use school baseball fields and other fields to run their dogs. We need to give them another viable option, and preferably one that can be open year-round, regardless of weather.

2/8/18

Thank you for the opportunity to email you regarding the use of the UConn Campus property now vacant.

My husband and I are seniors, and we find it most difficult to sustain ourselves with all the increases in town taxes over the many years we are in West Hartford. Our daughter too lives in town, and is struggling to keep afloat with extra costs of living. Governor Malloy is certainly not helping matters with his budget which affects all of us.

We would want to see something built that would bring in much revenue for the Town without burdening the residence both young and old who live here. It frightens me to have recently read of the \$4.6M the school board has been approved for a multitude of school improvements. Malloy has taken away monies to the towns, then West Hartford passes it down to us seniors and others. Are we residents to pay for the school improvements along with other taxes you will be raising?

Some time ago, a Chinese school wished to go into the UConn campus but the town nixed that. We do NOT NEED ANOTHER PARK...we do not need another community center, we do not need a dog park, but we DO NEED SOMETHING THAT WILL BRING IN MONEY TO THE TOWN so that our taxes can be lowered and many families will be relieved of a terrible burden.

At the current rate of increases, a continuous exodus of seniors and others to move out of town will further cause people to consider leaving the town and the state.

Please consider how hard it is for seniors and others to afford to live here. A good use for the land in question would be anything sensible that would bring in money to the town and allow the land to be well maintained if it be housing or whatever. It would be nice if St. Joseph College would purchase the property which would allow for many young people to get a college education without leaving the state to do so.

2/11/18

My family and I have been West Hartford residents for 15 years now — wanted to share some ideas for the UConn WeHa campus: Would the town consider a study of moving local town government services to the UConn campus and then transforming the current town hall into a cultural, arts, and retail attraction like Faneuil Hall Boston?

I also believe the town would benefit from a dog park, because the town's dog owners (including my family) are currently traveling to neighboring towns to use their dog parks and, on those trips, we're doing business and spending money in neighboring towns. I believe establishing a dog park promises to bring an economic benefit to the town through support of retail establishments, and positive impact on property values.

Lastly, my family and I love outdoor recreation and love our town for all its parks and playgrounds including school playgrounds. I am one of the many town residents who jog around town three-four times a week year-round. I believe all our parks and playgrounds could be improved with better restroom facilities that are available more months of the year, so for instance, parents can use the playgrounds more and won't have to leave the playgrounds when their children have to find a bathroom. I believe our parks and playgrounds would also be improved with better water fountains including year-round water fountains like they have in Rock Creek Park, Washington DC

4/5/2018



2/13/18

Though not a resident of West Hartford, I served on the Children's Museum Board for two separate terms of five years each from 1991 to 2006. During the second term, I was Chair for three years. I believe that this experience qualifies me to comment on the value of the institution to the town of West Hartford. These years were very rocky for the Museum for many reasons, too numerous to outline in this note, but I can say that the Town officials were always supportive of our efforts to survive. All of my contacts with various residents and officials proved to me that the Museum was playing an important role in the education of the town's children as well as the children in surrounding communities. (Mass. included)

2/18/18

Apologies for not completing the UConn property survey before it closed, so just sending a quick note on an idea to be part of the record. In terms of principles to the development, mixed use is the way to go as the site can grow the tax base, add housing while also (hopefully) create a space for the larger community to enjoy. A couple brief ideas:

1. Design. There is a development in Boca Raton called Mizner Park, that while probably too grand (e.g., the Palm trees) for the 58-acre lot, the design is worth considering as it is a rectangle with residential and retail space (buildings) along the perimeter but features an open space in the middle for benches, gardens and a lawn area for live music. So, practically, noise and people are "contained" within the middle of the structure, with parking on the outside (the UConn property already has the lot off Trout Brook away from the development) though it's off a main street where additional retail and housing exist.

2. Lawn area. The featured space is a central lawn area for outdoor concerts, picnicking, pick-up frisbee/soccer/whatever, etc is something that town lacks (ironically, the site of the Delamar development use to be a similar space). Imagine, sitting at a coffee shop, or getting lunch and a beer and being able to watch a live pick-up soccer game, or jazz concert. Where else in town could you do that? Or, take Chatham, MA that does their annual "Sharks in the Park" art display in Kate Gould Park near their bandstand. The lawn could be reserved for artists, the school system competitions weather permitting, etc. A design like this could really bring people together.

Not that it's a fair comparison but the outdoor space at Simsbury Meadows along Iron Horse Blvd could be re-created on a smaller scale but still have a connection to the larger site that Simsbury lacks since it's retail does not face the space AND would eventually connect with the 3+ mile Trout Brook Trail (though I don't know when the phase connecting Fern to UConn Property is slated to be completed).

3. Residential and retail properties. Just like in the Center, if the zoning changes could be made, having some retail (restaurants and shops) on the first level, with condos above, which the residents would support. Certainly how many establishments would be built would have to be considered for the residents peace and quiet, but lessons have probably been learned in Blue Back that could be applied to this space.

4. Ends of property. There should be a walking, running, biking trail around the perimeter of the property that connects to sidewalks off Trout Brook and Asylum. This was highlighted in the Gledhill development. It would also be great if those trails could lead to an on-site softball field(s) (like Sterling Field, only have the fields on the outer edge of the property). We are always struggling to get field time after rain outs (I play in the Friday Evening Summer Men's League). Maybe one Softball field, and another community garden like the one off Flagg Road...or the infamous dog park...

Those are just a few ideas, but really hope the property ends up being a mixed use development everyone can enjoy while still adding to the tax base.

2/23/18

Valuation of property was done by whom ? How serious was the pcb contamination in terms of remediation. The property must have been examined routinely given the fact that the property has been in use for years, with thousands of students occupying it's spaces. Are the pcbs friable or contained , lets say for example, in window caulking? Green spaces, a important part of the desirability of West Hartford for both business and home ownership, are rapidly disappearing in town. What portion of the town is zoned as green spaces or wetlands? How many acres of UConn property are buildable? Has consideration been given to the fact that the property is/was in a flood area. (Addressed by the Army corp of engineers some number of years ago? Has the town been approached by developers for multiunit housing? How many developers at this point and do plans involve rezoning? Sent from Mail for Windows 10 . How many single family houses can be placed on that property given the current zoning and the MINIMUM acreage allowed? Have any studies been done to determine impact to wildlife (given the area is a wetland) Who determined the town was not going to purchase the property and why was the determination not put to vote by townspeople? How would rezoning take place? Who will determine that? What conceivably would be the tax base increase be as opposed to the additional expenditure to the town ? How much time is going to be allotted to each speaker during Wendsday, 2/28 meetings? How many people are slated to attend each meeting? How much input is actually going to be considered prior to determination of what will happen to that property?

2/26/18

We have lived on Lawler Road since April 1975 and here is a list of our questions and concerns regarding the future sale and development of the UConn property.....

We would like the Town of West Hartford to purchase the UConn property and keep most of it as open space. Open spaces in West Hartford have been rapidly disappearing:

- >lots of low income housing - Elmwood (Newington Rd), New Park (Fast Track), St. Mary's assisted living, Multi-family McAuley retirement community, several complexes at Bishops Corner, etc.
- >apartments and single family housing - Steel Road, former Gledhill Nursery property, and others.

The Town of West Hartford has assessed the property for \$24,318,880. I know the town is looking to increase the tax rolls and this need could be met with building some single family houses along Asylum but preserving the remainder of the parcel as open space and possibly relocating the West Hartford Children's Museum on part of the parcel. Won't the sale of these homes increase the tax rolls and offset the \$1 million dollar purchase price and the PCB clean-up? Where exactly are the PCBs - in the soil? in the building/s? From whom did the Town receive an estimate for the removal of the PCBs and what was the estimate? The Town of West Hartford signed the contract with UConn to purchase the property in June 2016. It is now February 2018, certainly the Town has had time to perform "due diligence".

The State owns the UConn property. So why is the State not responsible for the cleanup of the PCBs on the property? Companies were responsible to do so in other states (IBM, GE, etc.)

	<p>Is the town buying the ball fields and playground? Will the 99 year lease become null and void if the Town doesn't purchase the property? What is the potential impact on the pond and wetland areas?</p> <p>There is a REALLY OLD OAK TREE on the UConn property that needs to be preserved - probably one of the oldest in CT and New England. It is near the parking lot close to the walk bridge going to the playground and ball fields.</p> <p>What senerios not allowed under the present zoning have Malone and MacBroom proposed? Is using the \$875,000 Community Development Block Grant from US Dept. of Housing and Urban Dev. for this property one of the scenarios?</p> <p>Looking forward to hearing how the Town will address our concerns. We will be attending the 4:00pm UConn forum at Town Hall on 2/28.</p> <p>Sincerely, from concerned residents, homeowners, taxpayers, and long time citizens of West Hartford</p>
2/28/18	<p>I suggest that the Town appoint a committee to look into and price the following suggestion. The Town buy the UConn site and move all town offices to it. Thus move the town hall, the libraries, the senior centers, the Albany Avenue firehouse, to one common site, and sell the properties in which they are currently located. There would be a initial cost to the Town, which could be mitigated by selling the parcel on the east side of Trout Brook, but long term the space would be preserved for the Town and secured as open space for the whole community.</p>
3/1/18	<p>I hope all the public meetings went well for you last night. I wanted to attend/participate but family plans came up and kept me away. As a resident and also the town naturalist, my opinion regarding the future use of that property would lean strongly toward retaining as much of it as possible as open space. With its location being at the north end of the Trout brook Greenway, it would be perfect for a jumping on or jumping off site for everyone who uses the greenway and goes back and forth from Elmwood Community Center/New Park Ave and Bishop's Corner.</p> <p>It's hard to put dollars and cents to the value of park lands, but there is a correlation between property values and their location to a park or open space/nature area. You can prove it by looking at home sale prices right here in town. I just saw this article from Dallas in a Parks and Recreation list serve that speaks to my point. https://dallas.towers.net/2018/02/27/developers-plant-their-flags-on-trinity-parks-future/</p> <p>One thing that West Hartford is short on is public open space/land. If the MDC ever decides to close their property to public visitation, and they almost did, there would be almost nowhere else to go close by of any size. If developed into a park area and not covered over with buildings/ parking lots/ ball fields/ offices/ etc.... the properties around the old UConn site would be ripe for future development and reinvestment. Thank you for listening and considering my opinion.</p>
3/1/18	<p>The UConn site has a longstanding legacy as a public space, both as an educational and recreational resource; converting it now to private use will be quickly regretted by residents.</p>

The site has also become a major north/south artery, connecting Bishops Corner, Blue Back, and Elmwood, and allowing users to bypass the crowded Main Street and Park Road alternatives. As such, it provides an excellent venue to showcase the Town's rich assets.

Several of these assets come immediately to mind, notably The Children's Museum and the Park Road Playhouse.

The Children's Museum is particularly in need of new space. If we do not find a home for its growing programs and 50,000 annual visitors, we may well lose this educational gem.

As alternatives, any private developer is going to try to squeeze every possible inch of land and sky to maximize its return.

I, for one, do not feel that the general population will benefit from a collection of high-end homes, condominiums, or apartments. Nor do we need another joint replacement or urgent care facility.

And now the request: Since the Town has zoning authority, clearly it has an upper hand in this situation. I would encourage the Council to use this leverage to maintain active, creative negotiations with UConn.

I'm optimistic that this Council can come up with remediation cost-sharing or cost cap plans that would benefit both parties – and especially our residents.

In summary, on this Council's watch, the legacy of UConn site can be put to good future use, or lost to development that will obliterate that heritage.

I am recommending, if the town does have any say, that a community for people over 55 years old be built. We have none in town . This population would not impact the schools or the traffic. They could be individual homes of 1800-2000 sq ft with first floor bedrooms. The residents would pay taxes to the town and an association would care for the grass, snow, etc. The population is getting older and there is no place in town to live. In Farmington there is O'Meara Farms and O'Meara Ridge. In Bloomfield there is South Pond Village. West Hartford has nothing.

I have been a West Hartford realtor for 29 years and a very close resident for 30 years to UCONN. I live at the corner of Lincoln and Sunny Slope. This type of development would provide taxes, not burden the schools or already excessive traffic. It would not negatively effect surrounding home prices and would provide a very desirable, attractive place to live for people who want to continue to live in their town.

I wanted to write as someone whose property borders the UCONN campus-- (25 LINCOLN AVE)
I am really IN FAVOR and SUPPORTIVE of the proposals that I have seen from the visioning program that would create an indoor athletic facility-- complete with an ice rink, bordering the baseball fields (on the west side).

3/2/18

3/3/18

The town needs another revenue generating and taxable property. I think this is key to a successful future. And while I am not against a church, I would prefer a plan that would add revenue, rather than a plan that adds more non-taxable property.

If managed well, an athletic facility could generate revenue-- even host hockey tournaments for the entire region. Hockey families pay big bucks for these tournaments! They would stay at our local hotels (Delamar and Hartford), eat in our restaurants and perhaps we could partner with local health care systems for more elite training.

This is a solid plan-- and one of the best that I have seen for the property. Thank you for listening

3/5/18

I would like to see moderately priced single floor housing that would be appropriate for all ages. Two bedrooms, generous closet space, two full baths with an office/den and living room, kitchen and dining room. So many of us seniors who would like to downsize to one floor living cannot find suitable housing. Many of the ranches in town are not near bus routes, and often have garages underneath and thus are not appropriate. Others do not offer the den or lack adequate storage space. So many of us would like to continue to live in town. It is frustrating to see the constant construction of two story single family homes or multi level town houses throughout town. Thank you.

3/6/18

Could you build a dog park on the campus? Even temporarily. I live in West Hartford but drive all the way to the dog park in Rocky Hill. It's fenced in, grassy, has trees and benches!! Please!!

Thank you.

3/19/18

As a follow up to prior conversations and emails, I am herein submitting, for possible inclusion in your final report on the UConn property deliberations, the results of a petition The Children's Museum conducted in 2016 and 17. We solicited individuals' support for our proposal to the Town of West Hartford to have room set aside on that site for our new facilities.

Of those 677 individuals that participated in the online petition, 324 were West Hartford residents ,316 were from 78 other CT towns and 37 were from 17 other states. We even had a participant from New Zealand.

Of the 201 unsolicited comments from the CT participants (all favorable to the proposal), 94 were from West Hartford residents.

Additionally, we have over 490 signatures (247 West Hartford residents and 243 non-residents) on our paper solicitations that we ran at the same time as the online survey. We will be happy to provide you copies of those should you care to see them.

As you may be aware the Museum must soon move from its current location and this will likely be the last opportunity for it to remain in West Hartford. A move to elsewhere will put it in a fragile posture and would jeopardize continuation of its 91 year legacy.

Please let me know of any questions you might have concerning this issue.

Best regards

	<p><i>Michael J Werle, PhD</i> <i>Executive Director</i> <i>The Children's Museum Group</i></p>
3/19/18	I have looked at the pictures of the proposed use of the UConn property by the Children's Museum and I feel that would be a wonderful use of the property. I loved the Children's Museum for my children and now go there with my grandchildren. I would hate to lose it in West Hartford.
3/19/18	We urge inclusion of The Children's Museum's proposed new facility for inclusion on the former UCONN Campus property. It would truly be a shame if West Hartford were to lose this unique facility!
3/19/18	<p>I am writing to urge you to keep the Children's Museum in mind as you consider the future of the UConn property.</p> <p>I understand that there are numerous challenging factors that you are weighing, but I hope that we can be creative and forward thinking in identifying ways to keep the Children's Museum in West Hartford. If the UConn property is not feasible, I hope that town officials can help work with the museum and its supporters on viable alternatives before we lose this wonderful resource for West Hartford families.</p> <p>If I can help in any way, please let me know. I may be out of the loop on things that are already taking place, but has the Town considered putting together a task force on the Museum with town officials, museum representatives, engaged residents and representatives from the state delegation? I wholeheartedly support use of the UConn property for the museum, but if that is not going to be a viable solution, I hope that the town can help work with the museum and its supporters to identify alternative strategies to keep them here long term. Perhaps a task force could help facilitate those discussions (or help build necessary support to move ahead with the UConn site).</p>
3/19/18	<p>As a tax paying West Hartford resident and business owner, I am writing to you to ask you to "save Connie the Whale".</p> <p>My children are all grown up, but I think we would be doing a huge disservice to our town should we lose the Children's Museum to any surrounding area. I would LOVE to see it relocated to the old West Hartford UCONN campus - an appropriate site where, through the years, I have spotted foxes and turkeys roaming.</p> <p>We need the Children's Museum, and we also need to preserve our open spaces - not build another multi housing facility that would increase our school costs while increasing our tax base.</p>
3/19/18	I have lived in West Hartford for the last 15 years. I am writing to you to express my opinion concerning the development of the UCONN campus on trout brook drive. I have two young children, three and five, who have thoroughly enjoyed visiting the children's museum over the last few years. We have spent many hours there, learning about various animals, dinosaurs, space, colors, and a whole lot more. I think the new children's museum would be an outstanding asset to the new development. Please keep this resource for future generations to enjoy.
3/19/18	I have lived in West Hartford for thirty six years and have taught in this town for twenty. The Children's Museum is an integral part of our community and I hope that it will be able to remain in West Hartford for many years. Please consider it as you plan for the usage and development of the U Conn West Hartford Campus site
3/19/18	<p>Please keep the museum in West Hartford. The UCONN property is the perfect place.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p>

3/19/18	Our family and friends have been supporting the West Hartford's Children Museum for over fifty years. We feel it is most important to keep this wonder little museum in West Hartford. It is one of the many wonderful venues for children that our town has to offer. We sincerely hope the Museum will be included in the new plans for The UConn campus.
3/19/18	Please consider the Children's Museum plan carefully. Parents of children who grew up in neighborhood Grandparents of children who now live on Foxcroft and attended the Pre-school and love the Children's Museum
3/19/18	I know that town planning is a complicated job and many things must be taken into account. I truly hope that keeping the children's museum in West Hartford is a priority. We have been members of the museum for years and my children would be devastated to lose this valuable resource.
3/19/18	As resident in the Town of West Hartford I recommend that the New Children Museum be included in your report regarding the UCONN property. Historically this museum is an icon in town making us a destination of families outside our town. Not only its good for our economy but also a good Science facilities for our children. Thanks for your consideration
3/19/18	I hope there can and will be a place for the Children's Museum in the plan for the UConn property. The Museum is an asset to the community, to the region. It has been a good citizen. I know that as a non-profit, it will not add to the property tax base as would luxury homes. But it has been one of those things that like our schools and parks that have helped to make West Hartford the special community it is - worth what some may think are high taxes. The Museum is a place I have taken my children, now my grandchildren. I would like it to stay in our community. At least give it the opportunity to stay here in West Hartford.
3/19/18	The Building of 'CONNY' -- Life-Size Sperm Whale Model : Robbins Ba... In 1975, Connecticut made the sperm whale its official state animal, as a symbol of conservation. The following ... CONNY was built with over 5,000 volunteer hours. The CT Cetacean Society also lobbied to make the sperm whale the Connecticut state animal. He is one of a kind on the planet - a unique and undeniable symbol of the Save the Whales and Environmental movements of the 1970s. Contrary to common belief, whales are not saved yet, and the health of our global ocean is in severe jeopardy. Children who grew up with CONNY have brought their children to see CONNY, and their children have done the same. CONNY is a part of West Hartford and Connecticut history. We have seen plans for the Children's Museum new building which features CONNY adorning the entrance. There is an understanding that wherever the Children's Museum goes, CONNY will accompany- and this is possible because CONNY was designed and engineered to withstand a move to another location. I write to you to request that you include our state animal and one-of-a kind icon, CONNY in your considerations for relocation of the also-iconic The Children's Museum; both CONNY and the museum are bedrocks of history and culture in Connecticut and should remain in West Hartford.

In a time of opportunity as you consider development of the West Hartford UCONN campus property, you will be remembered in history as the person who saved CONNY the whale once again, honored our past and ensured that we forever remember what makes us great: collaboration, enduring vision and leadership in an ever-changing landscape.

3//19/18

After receiving an email update from Mike Werle from The Children’s Museum, I am writing to support, encourage, and yes, plead, that the Town of West Hartford include The Children’s Museum in any plans for the development of the UCONN property. I am a lifelong resident of West Hartford and my backyard overlooks the UCONN property. I have a deeply invested interest in how the Town chooses to utilize this land for many reasons. In reviewing the proposed plan that Mr Werle attached in his email, it looks to me to be the perfect combination of ideas that I heard voiced at the public meetings that were held at Town Hall earlier this month: park, open space, walking trails, existing ball fields, education, culture, and museum, as well as the inclusion of office space. Ideally, the office space could be leased to groups and businesses that would support an overall theme of recreation and education. Regardless of the companies that might utilize the office space, the general welcoming layout of the plan would, I imagine, have the potential to draw clients to the area. It feels like the Bishops Corner area is often a forgotten section of town and developing the UCONN property as outlined by Mr Werle could be a significant draw for the businesses at the Corner as well as the town in general.

I also emphatically believe it would be a huge loss for the town to have The Children’s Museum be forced to relocate or close after 90 years. Thousands of children (including myself and my own children) and families have benefitted from all that the Museum has offered for decades. It would be an absolute shame to lose the Museum to yet more houses, offices, shopping areas, and parking lots – West Hartford has enough of those. However, we have only one Children’s Museum and definitely only one Conny the Whale. Envisioning a parade down Trout Brook Drive to move Conny to her new home would draw hundreds of supporters and significant positive attention to the town.

Please consider Mr Werle’s proposed plan as you move forward with the final development guidelines for the UCONN property. West Hartford desperately needs an inviting, open space that will encourage and provide for a wide range of events, activities, recreation, and educational opportunities.

3/19/18

I am writing in support of relocation of the Children’s Museum to a part of the former UConn campus in West Hartford.

The Children’s Museum occupies a special niche in the cultural and educational makeup of the greater West Hartford area. Throughout my youth (I am now 64) the Children’s Museum was a unique treasure offering science and nature exhibits and programs that were age appropriate and conducive to enduring learning. My young children, ages 13 and 10, grew up with the Children’s Museum as their default go-to location on a Saturday afternoon.

No other museum offers the same experience or one that is as intimate, calm and conducive to a genuine learning experience.

Please find a home for the Children’s Museum in your plans for the former UConn campus so this treasure can continue for another 91 years.

3/19/18	It is my hope that in any planning that takes place in connection with the UCONN land that accommodations can be made for relocation of The Childrens' Museum AND, with it, Conny the whale. The loss of either of these iconic institutions would be not just a loss for the town but to current and future generations for which they stand not just as powerful symbols but as well as powerful instruments of learning
3/19/18	I am writing to urge you to include the New Children's' Museum in the development of the UConn property. I would not like to see this important asset for the families of West Hartford to be moved to another town and lose it's 91 year legacy.
3/19/18	My wife and I have lived in West Hartford since Sept 1983, almost 35 years. When our children were small we took them several times a year to The Children's Museum. Now we have 4 granddaughters that live here in CT, and they have thoroughly enjoyed their visits to the Museum when us or their parents take them there. I know that the Museum is "living on borrowed time" as they must vacate their present location in the near future. My wife and I would like you to know that moving the Museum to the old UConn campus would be a very significant vision for West Hartford, and wholeheartedly support such a move. If this does not happen, the Museum would be forced to move out of West Hartford which would be a big loss as the Museum is a destination point because of it's prominence. Some places are a "diamond in the rough," but the museum is a diamond in and of itself. Please allow the Museum to move to the old UConn campus
3/19/18	<p>My niece's family, including three children under ten, live in West Hartford. Please keep the Children's Museum in West Hartford for them and for their classmates. This facility is a great local resource, with a long history, and should have every opportunity and all help possible to remain part of the West Hartford community. The former UConn site seems a perfect location, especially as it will be near a nature area, sports fields, and walking trails. What a wonderful place for recreation and learning!</p> <p>I babysit weekly for these young West Hartford residents and knowing that the Children's Museum is available as a "field trip" destination would help our babysitting days. The children are the future of West Hartford and they will benefit from the learning situations the Museum can offer.</p> <p>So please help to make sure that the Children's Museum can be located at the former UConn site so it can continue to be a wonderful part of all that West Hartford has to offer</p>
3/19/18	It started out as a one room natural history museum in The Pong House at Elizabeth Park in Hartford and is now a huge facility that provides the teaching and learning of nature and science to children and adults alike. For 91 years, The Children's Museum has existed and since 1958 has been an establishment located on Trout Brook Drive in our beloved town of West Hartford that draws families from far outside West Hartford. I have visited The Wildlife Sanctuary at The Children's Museum many times and, by way of donations, have "adopted" many of the Sanctuary animals for my two daughters, both of whom have either volunteered or have worked at The Wildlife Sanctuary. My youngest daughter was afforded an opportunity to work full time last summer at The Sanctuary where she learned a great deal about the care and well-being of the animals. She was taught by truly passionate people who live and breath the world of the animals. She shared her knowledge with children and all other visitors by providing demonstrations and sharing her knowledge and love of the animals. The enriching programs they provide within The Museum and the outreach programs to schools and the community cannot be lost and should remain in West Hartford. That is why, Mr. Dumais, we should include The Children's Museum into the plans for the abandoned UCONN property in West Hartford. Lets continue to keep The Museum in West Hartford and on Trout Brook

	Drive - in a new facility integrated into a pedestrian friendly, environmentally sensitive area, and let it continue to be a cornerstone of education and opportunity. And lets not forget Conny, who has been a favorite “mascot” of The Museum. Lets keep him in town!
3/19/18	I'm excited to hear about the prospect of the Children's Museum moving to the UConn campus.
	My son had the fortune of attending their school, and my husband and I could not be happier with the education he received. We've also love visiting the museum with our son, and hope this wonderful institution remains in West Hartford.
3/20/18	Just a quick note to express my opinion about the future location of The Children’s Museum. After talking with Mike Werle and getting a better understanding of the current dilemma and long term goals of that organization, I am of the belief that it would be wonderful for the town to try to retain it as an asset and consider it’s desire to relocate to a parcel on the former UConn campus
3/20/18	I am writing as a resident of West Hartford and a mother of four children that you please include space for the children’s museum on the former UConn property. The Children’s museum is a wonderful asset to our town that should not be lost.
3/20/18	I am writing to share my support for The Children’s Museum proposal to be moved to the former UCONN campus. The Children’s Museum and its preschool are treasured institutions in West Hartford and must be kept in town.
3/20/18	<p>I am writing to make a few comments concerning the future of the UConn Property.</p> <p>First, as a West Hartford taxpayer and an immediate neighbor of the property, I have great concerns about its future use. Admittedly, there are never guarantees about the future of any property, but it would have been unimaginable to think, 41 years ago when my husband and I purchased our house, that UConn would one day walk away from that campus.</p> <p>Second, while UConn can sell the property to any purchaser it wants, the town of West Hartford has ultimate say over the use of the property through its zoning laws. Never forget that. West Hartford has done a wonderful job maintaining the character of the town through the use of zoning, and I would sincerely hope that the desire for additional tax revenue would not lead the town to amend the zoning map with respect to the permitted uses of the UConn property in a way that would be detrimental to the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.</p> <p>Third, I want to put forth an idea concerning possible use of the property that recently occurred to me. I wondered whether the town authorities, before rejecting the idea of purchasing the property (although I know that door has ostensibly closed) considered the idea of renovating it and moving all town offices there: the town hall, board of education, police station, and library. If those offices were relocated to the UConn property, I am certain that there would be buyers very interested in purchasing the town buildings in the Center, including the town hall, police station and library building. There is mixed use zoning in the center, and the popularity of that location for residential, retail and professional office space cannot be overstated, nor can the potential tax revenue from those properties if turned over to private ownership. If the main library were relocated, the Bishop's Corner library could be closed, saving the expense of operating that branch, and the senior center could probably also be relocated to the UConn site, to allow sale of the property at Bishop's Corner. There should be sufficient remaining space to allow for adequate staff, police and public parking, as well as walking trails and perhaps community gardens.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read this. While my husband and I did take the survey, we both want to emphasize that, other than town offices, our preference for the property would be to see a cluster of high end homes with open space for walking trails, like what is happening at the old Gledhill</p>

nursery property. Remember that there is a 300 year old champion oak tree on the south side of the large UConn parking lot and vernal pools on the north side, not to mention the wetlands on the west side of Trout Brook Drive.

3/20/18

I'm writing to you about the Uconn Property. As a West Hartford resident, I think it is important that we keep this property as much of a green space as possible. For example, an outdoor concert venue. Or perhaps, a property to which the Children's Museum could move to.

3/20/18

I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion as a West Hartford resident regarding the UCONN West Hartford campus. I am aware that you are preparing a final report on recommendations for future use of the property.

Let me first disclose that I am a former member of The Children's Museum Board of Directors, serving a total of 6 years. Moreover, as a 50-year resident of West Hartford, I first came to the Museum as a parent of 3 daughters, products of West Hartford school system, and beneficiaries of several informal learning experiences provided by the Museum. Its Animal Sanctuary, one of its kind Planetarium, and the associated Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton were experiences my children as well as thousands of other children enjoyed that supplemented their elementary and middle school formal education. No where but West Hartford could parents find these unique informal educational experiences. The hands-on Sanctuary provided learning of the animal world through sight, touch and smell. The Planetarium, sponsored some years ago in large part by the Gengras family, provided girls and boys with a glimpse into space. Where else but in West Hartford was that available? And of course, Conny the Whale, an icon of West Hartford, was the first experience children had at the Museum.

I am a strong supporter of a multiple use solution for the UCONN campus property...and having an invaluable attraction as the museum as part of the new campus is a win for the town and a win for best use of the property. I believe the museum board has provided an impressive concept of how it would fit into a private-public solution use of the property. Having the museum continue to be part of the West Hartford Experience as part of the West Hartford is my strong recommendation.

3/20/18

I am the president of Cetacean Society International. I write in support of the relocation of the Children's Museum and the great whale, Conny, to the UCONN property and in so doing, staying in West Hartford.

That amazing statue of a sperm whale, the State Animal, was the creation of my organization. In conjunction with the Children's Science Museum, a small miracle took place in West Hartford in 1976, We built the largest cement statue of a whale, anywhere in the world. We may still hold the record. It was all volunteer. A full year of work, of all donated material, of all donated plans and design. And then dozens of volunteers working around the clock to create 'Conny'.

'Conny' is the symbol of the movement to Save Whales. It was built in that spirit forty years ago. It was part of the movement to make the Sperm whale the State Animal. It was a reminder that Connecticut was once a leader in the killing of whales. It is a reminder that whales are still hunted and endangered. It is the symbol of the Museum to this very day. It is a teaching tool, a rallying point, a landmark and a treasure not to be lost.

I urge you, and the Town of West Hartford, to fully appreciate how important it is that the Museum remain in West Hartford. I urge you and the Town to understand the depth of the value of Conny as a landmark, one that is among the most recognized and memorialized landmarks in the State. My group, CSI, will help in any way that we can to assure that this treasure will entertain and teach and inspire children and families well into the future. But not for a minute can we take this situation for granted....or we lose.

3/20/18 I hope the Children's Museum will remain in West Hartford and urge its inclusion in the plans for the UConn property. The museum is an important asset for our community.

3/21/18 As fifty-four year residents of West Hartford and having spent many enjoyable and educational hours at the Children's Museum with our children and grandchildren, we are writing to ask that you strongly consider the inclusion of The Children's Museum's proposed new facility and Connie the Whale in any recommendations for the future of the UCONN property. Our son, a local resident, was a junior volunteer and teenage employee at the museum aquarium in the early 80's and his thirteen year-old son is currently a member of the Junior Keepers program. Our granddaughter, age seven, always requests a trip to the museum when she is in town with her mother. It is always first on her list of places to go. To have this institution leave our town for lack of a West Hartford location would be a tremendous loss to the West Hartford Community and to the Children's Museum.

3/28/18 I am writing this letter in support of keeping The Children's Museum in West Hartford, and in support of the proposal for it's relocation to the old UConn Campus at Trout Brook / Asylum Ave.

The Museum has and continues to bring so much to so many in CT and we are blessed to have such a facility in our own back yard.

I grew up in West Hartford and have returned as an adult many years later to learn what is under consideration on behalf of The Children's Museum and The Town of West Hartford. This is as they say, 'A No Brainer'.

As a community, we should do everything possible to keep The Children's Museum in West Hartford. The ones who benefit the most are the children, their education, and the future of our communities. Anyone who has experienced or connected with the Museum during their lifetime, knows this to be true.

Please do whatever possible to follow the path of supporting The Children's Museum rightful residence in West Hartford. Thank you in advance.