



TOWN OF STRATFORD

Michael E. Feeney
Town Manager

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203-385-4001

May 9, 2003

Mr. Joseph Whitaker
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (I&H)
110 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0110

Dear Mr. Whitaker:

I am writing this letter in response to your letter of April 18, 2003 to Representative Rosa L. DeLauro. That letter was not what I had expected from the Army, based on the questions Representative DeLauro asked your staff during our April 10, 2003 meeting. I was anticipating a list and level of interest of those parties that had responded to the GSA advertisement for lease and sale of the Stratford Army Engine Plant (SAEP) that was promised to the Congresswoman on April 16, 2003. I was also dismayed to find numerous other misrepresentations in your letter, which I enumerate in the following paragraphs.

While the Town had no objection to the Army advertising the SAEP property for lease, I in no way agreed for that advertisement to infer ownership as stated in Enclosure 1. Now, more than a month after the advertisement period was reported closed to Representative DeLauro the Town has just received the results. The listing provides no information and would be akin to the Town listing all of the parties that have called expressing interest in the plant. The question is, what does the Army intend to do with this information? When we discussed leasing in the early stages of the process we were told that the Army could not lease directly to private entities without either going through the Town or the Army competing each lease. We were also told that in any event the property could not be leased without completing a Finding of Suitability to Lease and a Report of Availability. If the rules have changed the Army should explain them to us.

Further, your letter infers that the property is ready for lease today. To our knowledge that is simply untrue. Your staff told the Town that the FOSL would be completed by the end of March, but we have not yet been provided with the document or a revised completion date. Your staff continually avoided the issue that the Army could not or would not provide additional property for leasing by completing a FOSL. I have included, as Enclosure 2, a 1999 letter in which the Town requested a Master Lease, which was never answered by the Army and a FOSL never prepared to support.

The Army does not mention that this is actually the third Remedial Investigation (RI). A Phase II RI was completed in April 1996 and a second in September of 2000 after which the Army determined that the document was unsatisfactory and the contractor fired. The most recent RI was presented to the regulators for review in January, but is not yet complete. A required ground water



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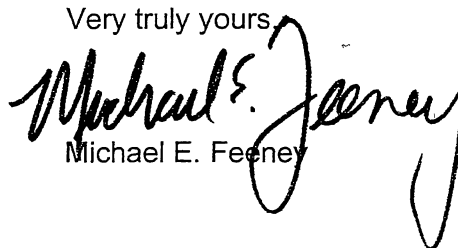
model is due in late May and a bedrock analysis has not yet started. Scheduling a 30-day review cycle for the RI is unrealistic, based on previous review times and an incomplete document. Our discussions with DEP indicate that at best a cursory review of a perfect document could be completed in this time frame, not including review of the ecological risk assessment and required health department review. This is essentially a new document and will require detailed review by DEP. The Town anticipated the change in the RI completion date since early this year.

The Town is also determined to complete negotiations leading to the signing of an MOA, but for the Army to say all action required to complete the MOA is the Town's is simply incorrect. Your negotiating team prepared a matrix of Reserved Issues and actions required to complete them in March of 2002. Our analysis of that document shows that the Army still has many action items with regard to Reserved Issues to complete. Additionally the exhibits proposed as attachments to the MOA were either not provided or incomplete. At a minimum those that were provided require updating.

Although there are still some basic issues with the MOA, particularly what structures, if any, that would remain on the site upon completion of environmental remediation, the Town is eager to recommence discussions on the MOA. We have reorganized the existing MOA, completed those action items that we could, and added language that the Town feels is necessary. We will transmit the revised MOA to you within the next thirty (30) days for the Army's review and follow-on discussion.

As stated on numerous occasions, the Town of Stratford is committed to taking the SAEP and redeveloping it into a vital project that will once again produce much needed jobs and tax revenues. The BRAC process has been costly to the Town and its citizens, as well as the Army. We look forward to a successful timely resolution of these issues. Should you have any questions or require additional information please contact, the LRA Project Coordinator, Rick Norris, at (203) 381-2045.

Very truly yours,


Michael E. Feeney

Enclosures

cc: Representative Rosa L. DeLauro
Senator Christopher Dodd
Senator Joseph Lieberman
LTC Stanley Thomas, OEA
Frederic Hyatt, BTC SAEP
Diane Toolan, Director Community/Economic Development
✓ Rick Norris, Project Coordinator SAEP LRA
Richard Buturla, Assistant Town Attorney