

August 9, 2009

Dear Mayor McCarthy,

We reside on Phillips Circle, one of the streets in the immediate vicinity of the Fernald Center. In fact, our backyard is adjacent to some of the woods on the perimeter of the Center.

On July 10th of this year we received a letter a letter from your office, dated July 7th, regarding the impending closure of the Fernald Center. In the letter, we were asked to submit ideas so that you can, in turn, submit them for consideration to the Fernald Reuse Committee. The date mentioned in the letter for the next committee meeting is September 10th. On July 23rd, the Boston Globe published an article on the subject of the proposals that had already been submitted, and that those who had submitted said proposals would have a chance to give a presentation at Waltham City Hall on August 5th before a subcommittee. We really appreciate receiving the letter, as well as the opportunity to communicate directly with you, but it came as a surprise to us that proposals for reuse of the center already existed, and that neighbors like us were just now being asked to voice their ideas and concerns.

We decided to attend the August 5th meeting to hear the presentations, and were pleased to hear the proposals presented by **Gloria Champion** and **George Darcy**, for they closely represent our views on the matter. To sum up, we support a reuse plan that first and foremost responds to the needs of the current Fernald residents and neighbors like us; utilizes existing buildings; minimizes commercial or new housing use (thereby preventing the worsening of already heavy traffic on Trapelo Rd. or Beaver St.); preserves open green spaces in the property; and offers farmers a possibility to manage and farm more land.

We do have two things to add to Ms. Champion's and Mr. Darcy's proposals. First of all, the welfare of wildlife was not mentioned in any of the proposals, and the fact is that numerous species have a home on the Fernald grounds. They include foxes, woodchucks, coyotes, rabbits, racoons, chipmunks, squirrels, hawks, northern bluebirds, common flickers, robins, cardinals, and herds of deer in the winter. If the green areas were to be occupied by new construction or were cut off or eliminated by other such uses, the survival of these animals would be at risk.

Second, we propose that an easement be maintained to prevent any development on the zone immediately surrounding our houses. Another possibility would be to allow us, the people who live adjacent to the woods, to purchase at least an acre of land of the Fernald property for annexation to our current property.

As you will see in the photographs included below, the Fernald woods have mature trees that provide refuge to animals, and peace and privacy to neighbors like us. Over the three years that we have lived in this house, we have photographed and filmed the animals that routinely come through our property. They are living testimony of the rich wildlife that surrounds us, something very rare and precious in a metropolitan area. We have more such photographs, if you'd like us to send them.

Madam Mayor, we thank you very much in advance for ensuring that it is the interest of the community, and not that of development companies and commercial investors, that prevails when final decisions are made about the Fernald Center reuse.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael C. Warner and
Mrs. Rocío Txabarriaga
50 Phillips Circle
Waltham MA 02452



Winter and Spring



One of the rabbits born in the woods this spring.



Sunlight through the woods at Fernald and our back yard. The tall tree in the back is on the Fernald property.



Deer passing through.