

Utilize the 'Woods' as environment lab

The Friends of Remington Woods have not stunted on suggesting that the General Electric property off Boston Avenue and Remington Woods be utilized for scientific and environmental affairs. But, unless Bridgeport partners with Hartford, the "science" concept is now probably water under the bridge.

Adriaen's Landing has just received a \$4 million grant to create a promenade called "Science Way" The promenade will connect Hartford's "Center for Science and Exploration" to the Connecticut River, a setting within which, to quote Channel 8 News, "the next generation of scientists and engineers for the state will be trained." Bridgeport still has a chance at becoming a city of significant interest as the "Connecticut Center for Environmental Studies":

1. Bridgeport has the ideal property to do so — the old, historic 500-acre Remington property, now GE and Remington Woods), and,
2. That ideal property is situated at the three-point juncture of accessibility to New York, Boston and the Long Island Ferry

The problem: Prosaic thinking cannot bring such results.

A university — or a university department — devoted exclusively to the study of environmental matters (possibly inclusive of breeding programs), utilizing the unique urban, potentially idyllic riverside and lakeside settings of GE and the Remington Woods habitat next *door*, *ivould not have to compete with any other university*. The best and the brightest would no doubt commute to a university specializing in the world's hottest topic.

Since the congeniality of such a body would provide professional stimulation and camaraderie *fen** its practitioners, should the air, currently maintained by Remington Woods verdancy, remain undisturbed, some of the environmentalists might even choose to live in the countless condominiums planned for Bridgeport — i.e. Bridgeport would be "where the environmental action

is."

And, of course, GE has plenty of room in its old industrial buildings for the retail shops and indoor/outdoor restaurants that such an enterprise would attract, bringing in jobs and taxes.

The contiguous properties of GE and Remington Woods— together the old Remington manufacturing/testing stretch which provided American small arms for World War II— are a potential magnet, resource and showplace of *proportions beyond anything else in Fairfield County*.

Yet, only in Bridgeport would their indigenous galaxial impact live in danger of annihilation. If they were in New York City's South Street Seaport, much of New York's population would be down there every day.

The idea of destroying Remington Woods and castrating GE with a "heavy metal" road (the Seaview Avenue Corridor project) severing the building (historic, as it was once the largest factory in the world) from Yellow Mill River and Stillman Pond is the brainchild of otherwise intelligent people bogged down in the tundra of tedium inevitably accruing to the attempt to force together the pieces of a wrong idea.

Dredged and landscaped, the Yellow Mill River and Stillman Pond waterway flowing from Remington Woods' Lake Success to Long Island Sound could provide scholars, artists, shoppers and tourists with a Monet-style ambience of dining, studying, canoeing and more, all amongst timely exhibitions arising from an endeavor of interest to everyone.

The Friends of Remington Woods are persistently trying to inspire the people in charge of this situation to do something with more global appeal than the classified ad section of the newspaper.

Today, the 419 acres of Remington Woods is, as letter writer Shirley Backus has pointed out, the 24/7 non-profit lung of upper Fairfield County.

Tomorrow, the total 500 acres (Remington Woods plus the GE property) can, as well, become the heart and mind of the Greater Bridgeport region —or, on the contrary, it may become the area's intestines.

As heart and mind, parking for GE and Remington Woods could likely be located at the contiguous tips of the two properties, access up Bond Street and routed through the end of the GE land.

And without a need for huge delivery trucks in the Woods at all hours of the night, a mini-rail could complement the roads already in the Woods, enhancing the environment rather than destroying the territory

An obstacle: If a mere \$5 million in regular revenue were DuPont's sole, expected benefit from their current plan for the Woods, I trust that the corporation would not sell short a more fitting future than yet *another* office park for a potentially interesting port town like Bridgeport

No. In this age of judicial Robin Hoodism, eternal liability appears to be the bete noir for a corporation with deep pockets and environmental contamination.

It seems that once DuPont finishes its TLC industrial remediation of Remington Woods, were the corporation legally liberated from further liability, it might be willing to donate the Woods to a worthy cause, receiving tax benefits in exchange.

But, at this time, there is no comprehensive law protecting a corporation from future liability once EPA-signed remediation is complete—a major obstacle to revamping cities.

However, special protective legislation for a *given* corporation can be written, where politicians so desire. Perhaps for a vision of the end result, this desire could emerge.

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