

29SEP2024

To; Ledyard Planning and Zoning Commission  
From : Ledyard Cemetery Committee  
Subject: Concerns for the Allyn's Point Cemetery

The Ledyard Cemetery Committee under Town Ordinance #100-009 is responsible for the care of about twenty-five abandoned historic cemeteries and placing about 700 flags on all veterans graves every Memorial Day. The work is performed by Committee members and an army of volunteers.

While attention and concern has thus far been rightly focused on the historic remains of Fort Decatur, there is another significant historic site at the base of Mt. Decatur for which the Cemetery Committee has serious concerns, i.e. the Allyn's Point Cemetery. This cemetery has 53 grave markers with inscriptions and 101 fieldstone markers. The first burial was in 1752. Many of the interred include Allyn's and Avery's who were among the first settlers of Gale Ferry with many descendants still residing in town. What makes this cemetery of special historic interest is that it is the final resting place of five Revolutionary war veterans. They are Belton Allyn, Benadam Allyn, Issic Allyn, Robert Allyn, and Capt. Simeon Allyn. Belton, Benadam and Simeon all died in the battle of Fort Griswold in 1781. The inscription on Capt. Simeon Allyn's stone reads "In Memory of Capt. SIMEON ALLYN who died Sept. 6, 1781 in Fort Griswold with his Lieu ENS and 13 soldiers by Traitor Arnold's murdering corps in ye 37<sup>th</sup> year of his age". Similar inscriptions are on Belton's and Benadam's stones.

Of primary concern to the Committee is possible damage to the gravestones resulting from seismic motion induced by blasting on nearby Mt. Decatur over a 5 to 10 year period. Many of the head stones in our old now abandoned Cemeteries are made from red sand stone. It was a preferred material during that time because it was relatively soft and easy to carve. Unfortunately, many of these stones develop lateral cracks or fissures after centuries of freezing and thawing. These stones that are already so weakened and fragile are likely to experience a much increased rate of deterioration or even failure due to the constant vibrations caused from the blasting. The type of failures that will result are unrepairable.

We were also made aware the Applicant has introduced a payment to the town for the yards of material being removed as a result of the proposed blasting. The Cemetery Committee does not have a full grasp as to the total value as a result of the blasting but believes it will not be worth the potential loss of a large piece of the Town of Ledyard's history.

The Allen Point Cemetery is an important monument of historic significance providing valuable information and stands as a memorial for their descendants who still reside nearby. It is the committee's recommendation that unless the Applicant can provide analysis supported by scientific data and testing to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that the repeated blasting of Mt. Decatur over a 5 to 10 year period will not degrade, damage or cause failure of any stones in the historic Allyn's Point Cemetery, a permit to allow blasting of Decatur mountain should be denied.

Respectfully,



Ledyard Cemetery Committee Chairperson