



Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Ledyard, Connecticut
741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339

September 9th, 2024

Greetings Commission,

My name is Stefon Danczuk, and I am an Archaeological Circuit Rider with the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation DBA Preservation Connecticut. We are a state-wide nonprofit who works to preserve, protect, and promote the buildings, sites, and landscapes that contribute to the heritage and vitality of Connecticut communities.

I am writing to you because of the proposed special permit for blasting application submitted by Gales Ferry Intermodal, LLC for their property that includes the historic site of Fort Decatur which sits atop Mount Decatur, the subject of this blasting special permit. Fort Decatur, and the mountain it was built on, are nationally significant historic and archaeological resources that can tell us much about life during the War of 1812 when the fortification was built and used. This site is so significant that it is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for all four elements of significance, something no other site in Connecticut can boast.

The fort's unique construction style, its connection to legendary U.S. Navy Commodore Stephen Decatur, Jr., and the broader history of the War of 1812, along with the potential information we can learn from the archaeological deposits that are scattered about the mountain side, are just some of the elements that make this site extremely unique and special. The current plans for the mountain save a small portion of the fort and one of the sentry posts, however, the activities of the people who used the site would have been much wider spread. The integrity of the site is also lost with the current proposed plan. Fortifications lose much of their context if the landscape they were built around is no longer there. As the plans stand, they would do irreparable harm to this site which we can never get back.

We at Preservation Connecticut understand the need for development and by no means wish to halt all work on site, however, until a proper plan for preservation of the site is in place we encourage the Planning and Zoning Commission to deny the application for blasting. We think the best method of proper preservation for the site is a land donation to a steward of archaeological sites that will work to protect the site in perpetuity. Without a signed document, the site of Fort Decatur remains under threat of destruction. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stefon Danczuk
Archaeological Circuit Rider
Preservation Connecticut
940 Whitney Avenue
Hamden, CT 06517