

Law Center Director Presents Plans to Board

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The Director of Department of the Treasury's Consolidated Federal Law Enforcement Training Center whose expansion is planned on former Agricultural Research Farm property addressed members of Calverton Citizens Association Board of Directors at the May board meeting.

William B. Butler opened his presentation with the remark that his purpose was not to persuade anyone to change his point of view (the Board had voted to intervene in the suit against Treasury and GSA at its previous meeting).

He stated that despite the pending litigation, Treasury is still committed to the use of the site and that no alternative had been chosen; therefore, he said, he wished to acquaint representatives of surrounding communities with the plans for the Center and provide background concerning evolution of the concept of the consolidated center.

Butler added that the projected center will be about as "good a neighbor as possible to attain the zoning objectives sought by local groups." (The clear implication was that other uses of the Federal land might result in denser use and less care for preservation of green spaces.)

The total 500-acre site, including the 60-acre portion along the Parkway presently in use by Secret Service, is a roughly triangular area bounded by The Baltimore-Washington Parkway on the west, Powder Mill Road on the east, and the proposed Outer Beltway on the north.

A rifle and pistol training range constructed of sand-filled concrete block in use for some time can be seen through the trees along the Parkway; also in existence there is a facade simulating a row of buildings for teaching trainees entrance and search techniques.

Proposed additional construction is the "central structure," which would be the education and administration buildings and the dormitories to house the 745 students and 50 temporary instructors who would live on the base.

A permanent staff of about 540 people--average pay range \$13,793 plus 5% with January, 1972 increase--would probably live in the surrounding communities. Those in the GS 7-11 range will be "regular government employees" and would probably be renters rather than buyers, according to Butler.

Permanent administrative and instructional staff members, GS 12-14, are seen as becoming the home buyers who would probably be attracted from outside the area.

The service jobs--cafeteria, maintenance, etc.--will "hopefully" be hired from the community rather than attracted from elsewhere, thus, in Butlers estimation, providing jobs for more unskilled or semi-skilled area residents.

Also to be constructed is a driving range to teach high-speed car handling techniques to trainees. It will have a circumference of approximately 5600 feet and will necessitate clearing about 70 acres of what is now wooded land.

The noise from the range is not expected to be a "major factor" since only two or three cars would use the range at one time. 100 feet of treed space would be left as buffer surrounding the range, supplemented by broad-leaved evergreens which are better sound absorbers.

Concerning WSSC denial of sewer hookup, Butler states that the center can build its own plant and treat effluent "to conform to legal standards." (The area now operating will be serviced soon by Department of Agriculture via a line now under construction which will handle 20,000 gallons a day.)

It would be late in 1974 before needs would be more substantial; fully operating, the center would need a capacity of 82,000 gallons a day.

Water, Butler said, can be furnished by two wells. An engineering report advises that sufficient water can be found to provide the requisite 125 gallons per day per person.

Also part of the site plan is an artificially-created 20-acre lake both for aesthetic reasons and for training in aquatic-related activities such as underwater search and rescue.

Butler emphasized that aesthetic considerations are of great importance to the planning staff of the Center. He says that the area is designed to have a psychological impact on the trainees. The basic principal of the Center is the "protection of society," thus it will not have a "Marine boot camp atmosphere."

Butler terms the artists' conceptions as beautiful buildings, which will be no more than 70 feet tall and located on the lowest part of the site, as requested by Park and Planning so that they can be hidden by trees.

The planting of additional trees has been authorized between the Parkway and the facility and will start pending Parkway widening plans.

Butler stated that concept of need for a law enforcement training center came about after the assassination of President John Kennedy. Thus the site presently in use along the B-W Parkway was taken over by Secret Service. (The FBI had built a training facility at Quantico but said that there was not room for the training carried on by other agencies.)

Other federal agencies with "pistol packin'" officers (Butler is from Texas) were also interested in improved training facilities; and as a result of a cost-effectiveness study by Bureau of the Budget, it was concluded that a consolidated facility was the most economically feasible.

The present site was chosen, Butler stated, because it was deemed necessary that the Center be near the "seat-of-government" for convenience purposes and the property was already federally owned. The recruit program and the AIRS (Advanced, In-Service, Refresher, and Special) programs require a central location to draw on highly skilled personnel for instruction.

(When questioned as to the reasons for ruling out Fort Meade and some federally-owned land near Gaithersburg and in Southern Maryland, Butler stated that he did not know the specific objections. Linda Fohs asked him to furnish CCA with copies of the reports on those sites; to date he has not done so.)

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