

January 5, 2003

US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District
Attention: Karen Hagerty, Project Manager
Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204

Dear Ms. Hagerty,

I am a thirty-two year old Muslim woman and U.S. citizen who has lived in the United States for more than twenty years. I attended elementary, junior-high, and high schools, as well as college and graduate school in the U.S. I have lived practically all of my life here and the one thing that I never had the chance to participate in was a youth camp for Muslim children. I missed out on summer camps and adventures, and I almost envy those other Americans who enjoyed such pleasures and coming of age experiences.

Upon hearing of the proposed Muslim Youth Camp near North Liberty, I was simply thrilled at the prospect that my two year old niece would one day have the opportunity to be part of mainstream America, that she would have the chance to go to her very own Muslim Youth Camp.

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I am aware that many in the surrounding community are not pleased with this proposal. As someone living in Orange County, California, and who is nauseated by over-development, I can seriously appreciate the concerns that residents have concerning traffic, waste management, and issues such as the effect on the wildlife. I do hope that you consider these issues seriously and if possible, try to resolve the negative impacts that may occur from the development of a youth camp.

However, I am also aware that there are bigots in the neighborhood whose only objection to this important youth camp is the fact that it will be established and managed by the Muslim community. I do hope, Ms. Hagerty, that you do not allow such bigoted perspectives to dictate who can and can't live, work, and recreate in the North Liberty area. I do hope that you will weigh the needs of the community with the advantages that this youth camp will provide, and I do sincerely hope that all issues can and will be resolved so as to satisfy both sides of this development question. Please, do not allow the hate-mongers to run members of the Muslim community out of town.

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Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter. I wish you and yours a peaceful and happy new year.

With Kind Regards,

Shereen Sabet, PhD
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