

March 3, 2003

Col. William J. Bayles
Department of the Army
Rock Island District Corps of Engineers
Clock Tower Building- PO Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004

RE: Proposed lease of Camp Daybreak, Coralville Lake, North Liberty, IA

Dear Colonel Bayles,

I am sending this letter as a reminder of the safety issues which abound regarding the proposed MYCA Camp and Muslim Retreat Center. As noted in the enclosed article from the February 19, 2003 Iowa City Press Citizen and prior letter composed by the North Liberty Fire Department, it appears that other than pumping water from the Coralville Lake at the Jolly Roger Campground or running fire trucks to the nearest fire hydrant nearly 2 ½ miles south, there is no water available for putting out possible fires at the former Camp Daybreak site.

In addition to the obvious potential danger to the proposed development, it appears that our neighborhood could possibly be at risk as well. If a fire broke out at the proposed site there would be little or no chance to stop it with currently available equipment and existing water supplies. Nothing short of a fully functional fire hydrant will provide any modicum of safety in the immediate neighborhood.

As a consequence I wish to notify you, as representative of the US Army Corps of Engineers, that we will hold the Corps of Engineers liable for any damages to our property, including trees and improvements, which might occur as a result of a fire at the proposed MYCA Youth Camp and Muslim Retreat Center site. In our opinion, only extreme negligence on the part of the US Army Corps of Engineers would approve the construction of a project the size currently proposed by MYCA without also recognizing and accounting for the inherent dangers associated with the remote nature of the site.

We have seen nothing in the MYCA Proposal, in the Zambrana produced Environmental Assessment, or any documentation from the US Army Corps of Engineers that indicate the issue of fire safety in the immediate neighborhood has been realistically and adequately addressed or even considered.

Sincerely,


Alfred H. Carr
3564 Cumberland Ridge Road NE
North Liberty, IA 52317

Cc: Senator Charles Grassley
Cc: Congressman Jim Leach

Fire guts Jolly Rogers lodge

By Tammara Meester
Iowa City Press-Citizen

NORTH LIBERTY — Angel and Dave Harper watched helplessly Wednesday morning as fire destroyed the building they have been remodeling the past three months.

The Harpers own Jolly Rogers Campground north of North Liberty and live on the premises. Fire consumed most of the campground lodge — a metal pole building that housed an office, restaurant, bathrooms and a retail shop.

Angel Harper was at home when she was startled by a loud noise shortly after 8 a.m. Wednesday. Looking outside, she saw flames coming out of the bathroom window of the lodge, about 50 yards from her house.

The campground borders Coralville Lake at the northernmost end of Scales Bend Road.

Harper said she briefly considered not calling 911.

"I didn't think it was that bad because I just saw flames," she said later, watching smoke roll out of the charred lodge building.

North Liberty police officer Diane Vennenga was the first to arrive at the scene. By then, she said, "flames were coming out of the roof." North Liberty firefighters later were assisted by crews from Solon, Swisher, Coralville, Oxford and Tiffin.

"It was fully engulfed when we came on the scene," North Liberty Fire Chief Jon Harding said. "The roof had already collapsed."

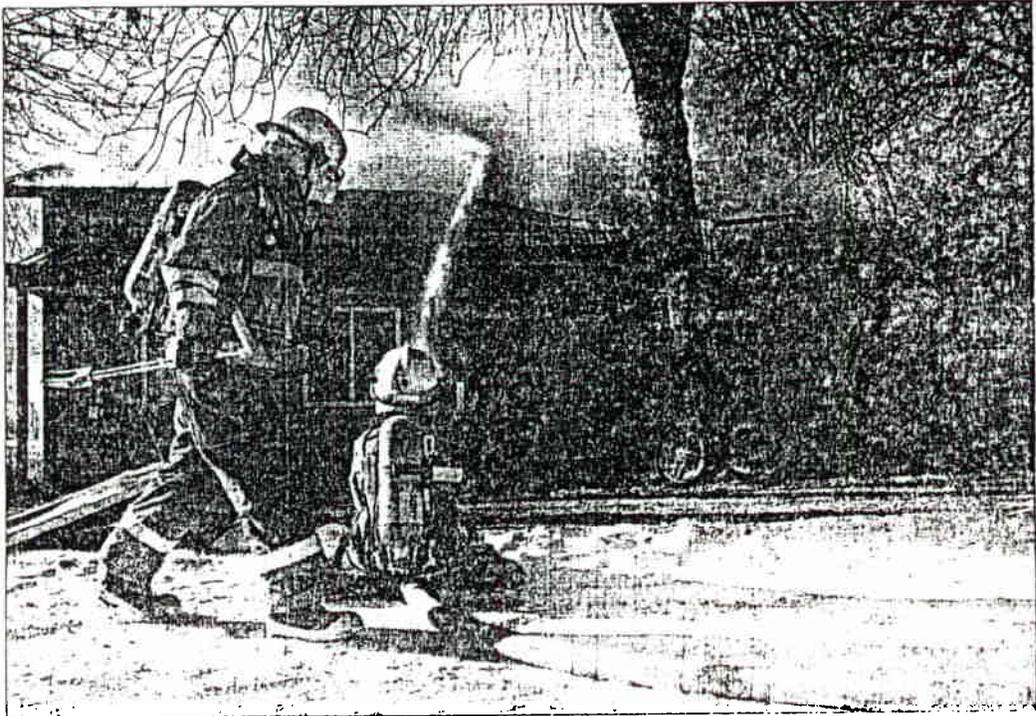
No one was injured. However, a propane tank explosion sent a jagged metal piece through a lodge window and narrowly missed onlookers outside.

A frozen Coralville Lake initially hampered firefighting efforts, forcing crews to truck in more than 2,750 gallons of water.

"There's not a fire hydrant for three miles," Harding said. Firefighters later broke through the ice.

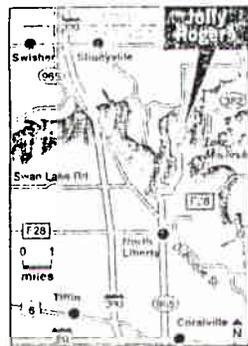
Harding said the cause of the blaze has not been determined. Harper speculated it might be the furnace because of the noise she heard and the fact the furnace is located above the lodge bathroom.

The fire points out con-



Press-Citizen / Matthew Holst

North Liberty firefighters work to put down the fire at the Jolly Rogers Campground Lodge early Wednesday morning. The cause has yet to be determined for the fire, which caused an estimated \$400,000 in damages.



cerns about water supply and emergency equipment accessibility at a proposed Muslim youth camp, said North Liberty volunteer firefighter Dave Hubler, formerly the city's fire chief. The proposed campsite sits along Scales Bend Road on the way to the campground.

"If anybody has some sort of camp or living quarters set up out here, we're going to have issues with the water supply," Harding said.

The Harpers plan to rebuild by the campground's planned April 1 opening. They recently stocked the retail shop and had nearly completed the remodeling,

consisting primarily of cosmetic changes. Firefighters said the building appears to be a complete loss.

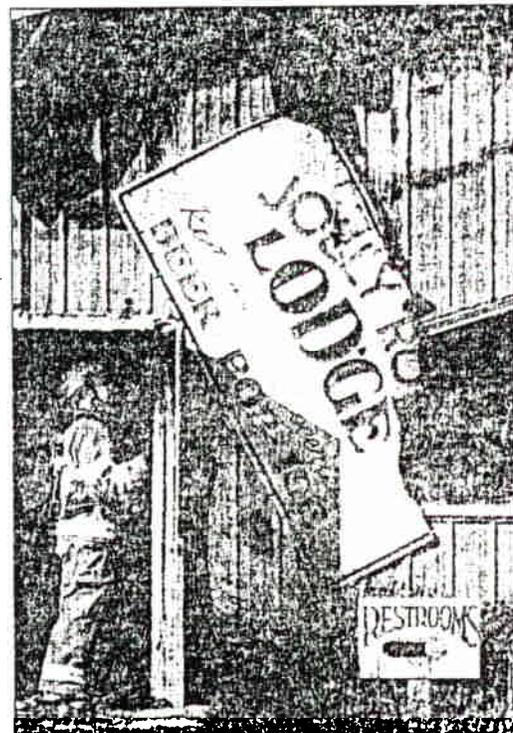
Although the Harpers had not talked with their insurance agent, Angel Harper estimated their loss, including contents, in the \$400,000 range. Fortunately, she took the computer out of the office a few days ago.

"All of my reservations for the year are on it," she said.

This is the second time the Harpers, who also own Harper's Marina nearby, have suffered a major loss since buying the campground 11 years ago. They didn't have flood insurance during the 1993 flood and remodeled the house as well as the lodge with their own funds and Small Business Administration loans.

As firefighters soaked the lodge Wednesday, Dave Harper periodically crossed the lawn, peered inside and returned with damage reports. The counter was gone. Retail items were mounds of ash, except for plastic buckets, shovels and other children's toys.

"The toys are just melted plastic piles on the floor," he said.



Press-Citizen / Matthew Holst

A firefighter looks on as others look for hot spots inside the Jolly Rogers lodge as they work to contain the fire that destroyed the building.

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TO: RJ MOORE
BRIAN JAMES
SARAH HELT

SUBJECT: MYCA PROJECT

Penn Township Trustee Sarah Helt, first contacted me on Wednesday November 20, 2002 in the evening, asking about the article in the Iowa City Gazette. She wanted to know my feeling on this camp. She had talked with past Fire Chief Brian Greer in 1999 or 2000 when this issue first came up. We discussed the article. I pointed out some of my feeling to her at that time.

On Friday November 22, 2002 I had a short discussion with City Administrator Brain James about MYCA. After I was able to get the rest of my work done at the fire station. I went to the location of campsite off Scales Bend road to 200 St. I have never been on this property before, and wanted to check out distances. From the North Liberty Fire Station it is approximately 3.6 miles to the gate of the campgrounds. I parked my pickup outside of the gate, walked down the old roadbed to check the grounds out. The old walk bridges to the cabins the cabins are still there. The old cabins have the poles and floors are still there. The sidewalls and roof have collapsed onto the floor. There is a lot of under growth of vegetation through out. I was able to see the orange tape that marks the different locations and a blue tape. I found the old toilet and shower area and went over to the existing picnic shelter. The existing well is a 6" well casing which can probably pump a maximum of 30 gallons a minute. From the old lodge foundation I walked back to the southeast where the planned parking lot is to be located. I then returned back up the roadbed, which has undergrowth and a tree canopy. From here I drove down Cumberland Ridge Road, which runs parallel with the camp lane. It is approximately .3 miles from the gate to where the convention center will be located. From the gate to the Jolly Roger camp ground boat ramp is approximately 1.8 miles, this is one location where a pumper could be set in order to draft out of the lake for water to shuttle. The number of campers and boaters can affect this at the time. There is also a steep grade as you come out of the camp grounds on scales bend road to return to the proposed site and you will be coming through residential areas. From the gate, back to North Liberty's nearest hydrant at Pheasant Hill is approximately 2.5 miles.

I received an email on November 25th that was dated November 22nd from RJ Moore. I then went that day and talked with the North Liberty building inspector Tom Palmer. We discussed square footage needed for the convention center depending on its use. If only standing space is figured in you will need 7 square feet per person, however if the space is to be used for seating with tables you need 15 square feet per person. Using the maximum capacity stated by the Iowa City Gazette of 384 people, the total square footage needed will be 5,760 square feet. This calculation was done using North Liberty City standards. These numbers are important in figuring the water flow needed to this site in case of a fire.

On December 2nd I talked to John Castle, the head of Corps. Of Engineering. John provided a copy of the layout of the campgrounds and showed me a picture of the proposed Convention Center. It appeared to be a heavy timber construction, however did not provide the height dimensions needed to figure in water flow needed.

December 3rd I met with RJ Moore, Rick Dvorak, and Ruben Arsate. I brought several questions concerning what Johnson County had for building codes on property regulations. Johnson

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County uses United Building Codes. According to Ruben this will be classified as an A-3 structure under the UBC. This is for an occupant load of less than 300 with an assembly room for educational purposes but without a legitimate stage, and not classed as group B or E occupancies. A-3 structures must be of Type I construction. Type I construction must consist of steel, iron, concrete, or masonry. Walls and permanent partitions shall be of noncombustible fire-resistant construction. Permanent nonbearing partitions of one-hour or two-hour fire-resistive construction and not part of a shaft enclosure may have fire-retardant treated wood. This type of structure with a floor area that exceeds 1500 square foot will require an automatic sprinkler system.

My feelings are that Scales Bend Road is one of the worst roads we have in our fire district. It is narrow and winding, which makes it difficult to drive even in good road conditions. As this area is to be used year round the threat of wet, icy, or snowy driving conditions it is a concern. The lane leading into the camp is to be the existing road of gravel measuring 18 feet across which is not wide enough for tanker shuttle, which will have to be established. Some of the trucks will carry up to 3000 gallons of water plus the additional truck weight of approximately 48,000 pounds. In the case of an emergency these trucks will be meeting and passing each other on this road with a soft shoulder creating a larger hazard for rescue personnel. I feel that we need a road width of at least 22-24 feet. Due to the length of this lane there is a need for a turn around area as set by the county supervisor's a few years back. We will also need a cul-de-sac area at each end of the convention center due to pumper and portatank placement needs. In the case of a fire this is very important to staging. We will be sending tanker trucks in dropping their water load into the porta-tanks and then turning the trucks around in order to send them back out for more water. Another concern is the ground elevation, as based on the map. There is a drop of 50 feet from the gate to the convention center and depending on weather conditions this could also cause problems.

To figure the water flow that will be needed in the case of a fire you need to factor in the total dimensions of the building. These exact numbers have not been provided for me so I have done the best I could with approximate calculations. From the drawing I have factored 107 x 70 or 7490 square feet. From the drawing shown to me by John Castle I have approximated the overall height of the structure to be 30 feet. These numbers calculated together give you an area of 224,700 cubic feet. In order to best determine the water needs in case of a fire divide this number by 100 equaling 2,247 gallons of water per minute needed for a time span of 4 hours. In order to achieve this amount we will need at least three (3) pumpers or a pumper and a Quint (ladder truck) to provide that much water flow. Keep in mind that if the convention center or any of the cabins were to catch fire the risk of it spreading to the surrounding wooded areas is great; this unfortunately would stretch our resources even further. We carry 1000 gallon on 112 and 113, which are pumpers; the Quint holds 400 gallons, the tanker carries 1750. There would be a need to call mutual aid, which will also provide us with water as well as manpower. Available would be Swisher tanker at 2000 gallons, Oxford at 2000 gallons, Solon at 1800 gallons, West Branch at 3000 gallons, Hills 2000 gallons, Lone Tree at 2000 gallons, and Riverside at 1500 gallons. Tiffin will have a new truck available by August 2003. This would be using every tank in Johnson County to maintain water flow. Drive time back to the hydrant will be about 5 minutes. Depending on hydrant pressure it will take 4-4.5 minutes to fill these tankers, West Branch's truck will take approximately 6 minutes. Driving time back to scene, varying on each tanker and road conditions, will take approximately 6 minutes with a dumping time of 1.5-2 minutes. This needs to be a consideration, as we cannot put in a dry hydrant due to elevation factors. The lowest point on the campgrounds is 710 feet and the lake is 673-680 feet. A dry hydrant can only pull water

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up 25 feet and at 20 feet the effectiveness is decreased. We would also have trouble laying a Nofy hose line. From the road to the cabins you are about 200 feet. One possible solution would be to widen the trails overall. Widening the trail that runs from north to south by the toilet would also be helpful in placement of a pumper or for staging of ambulances in the case of a medical emergency.

This all said I do have several questions and concerns. In the case of safety, who is going to be the regulating party over the camp site, such a sprinkler function, total capacity, and campfires during dry years when the burn ban is in effect. Is this the responsibility of the Fire Department, Johnson County Sheriff, Johnson County Building Inspectors, or the Corps.? What fines are to be set for violations? Who is responsible to get the people out of the area if they don't have their own vehicles, and if they are using busses how will this affect our ability to get our equipment in and set up? Also what type of storm shelter is going to be in place for these people and will it meet Maximum capacity needs?

The camp in itself is not a main concern to me but the convention center is. This is a commercial property that is being placed Corps. ground. Because of this there is no tax reimbursements to the City of North Liberty or Penn and Madison Townships. This I feel is unfair to the residents of the area who will be paying in tax money to help support the protection of the center. You have to look at the possible and most likely increase in traffic accidents, fire and medical coverage, water rescue and or recovery, which is not being financially supported by the center but instead our own residents. As for the Fire Department we have seen a significant increase in the number of calls over the last ten years. These numbers have increased as the population has increased but the number of calls to Corps. property has also doubled in the same time frame.

If you have any questions for me please feel free to contact me and I will be willing to help answer them the best that I can.

Summary

1. Scales Bend Road had load embargos and is bad to drive in good weather conditions.
2. Roads into the campgrounds are not wide enough and needs to have the tree canopy trimmed to at least 13 feet above ground.
3. Roads into the campground are to long without the proper turn around areas. These need to be in place with strict rules concerning No Parking at anytime.
4. Convention Center will have to have sprinkler system in place.
5. Water needs are approximately 2,247 gallons of water per minute over a time span of four hours.
6. To effectively fight a fire we would need full mutual aid from the county and hope that no other major structure catches fire in the county at the same time.
7. Weather conditions could add to delays
8. No dry hydrant will work on the camp site
9. Tent and cabin accessiblity are difficult to obtain with hose lines
10. Who will have jurisdiction over building code enforcements
11. Fire Department should be compensated for coverage of commercial property
12. Storm shelter needs to be addressed for the safety of the people