



A Wildlife Refuge

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY

August 30, 1989

Mr. Robert L. Bendick, Jr.
Director
Department of Environmental Management
9 Hayes Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

Dear Mr. Bendick,

This letter serves as a formal request by the Norman Bird Sanctuary, for consideration of a \$200,000 grant from the Champlin Foundation land conservancy monies, towards our Gray Craig Project.

As you are aware, the Sanctuary has embarked upon a project to limit development on the Gray Craig estate and preserve the land as open space for the community. We are pleased to inform you that the Bird Sanctuary and the developer have come to an agreement in principle and are currently finalizing details.

The Gray Craig estate totals 81.3 acres. Through fee ownership, conservation easements and development restrictions, the Bird Sanctuary open space project will protect over 51 acres, in perpetuity, for the citizens of Aquidneck Island and the State of Rhode Island.

Protection of the Gray Craig property is critical so that more open space can be created on Aquidneck island. Formerly a rural area with vast farmlands, the Island is fast becoming an urban environment. Newport, only 5 minutes away, is highly urbanized; Middletown and Portsmouth are rapidly developing. While the island is known for its beaches and scenic views, it faces a shortage of woodland acres and, in actuality has less protected open space than the island of Manhattan.

The location and configuration of Gray Craig make it an important environmental buffer zone. First, the property is a major part of the watershed of Nelson Pond, an active drinking water reservoir for Newport and Middletown. Second, the property serves as a buffer to the wildlife habitat of the Norman Bird Sanctuary. Gray Craig is also part of a contiguous open space area which includes the Norman Bird Sanctuary (450 acres), Sachuest Point Wildlife Refuge (250 acres), 2 town beaches and 2 municipal water reservoirs.

Originally, the Gray Craig property was to be developed into 56 condominium units, placed along the ridge tops and along Paradise Brook. The placement of units would harm scenic views and the density would negatively impact the woodlands and watershed. The acquisition agreement negotiated by the Norman Bird Sanctuary significantly alters this development. The agreement between the Sanctuary and the developer provides for:

- Fee ownership of 14.5 acres in the northeast corner, adjacent to the Norman Bird Sanctuary and Paradise Brook;
- Conservation easements on 36.6 acres including the ridges, a field and a 200 foot buffer zone surrounding Nelson Pond;
- Development restrictions to include 12 units within the existing structures (manor house, engineer's cottage, kennel cottage, stable, greenhouse and gate house);
- Development restrictions and site approval limiting new construction to 11 dwellings.

A project of this scope requires the assistance of attorneys, land-use planners, and fundraisers. Fortunately, legal and planning costs as well as fund raising expenses have been funded through two grants from the Prince Charitable Trusts, totaling \$52,000. Now that an agreement has been reached to acquire the land, the Bird Sanctuary will embark upon a capital campaign. Initial application and overtures have been made to secure government funds in support of the project. With the assistance of fund raising counsel, we are currently outlining the strategies for a formal campaign which will secure contributions from foundations, corporations

and individuals.

While the land agreement for this project will cost \$1.15 million, the Bird Sanctuary is committed to raising dollars beyond the purchase price. Internally, we have established a preliminary goal of \$1.55 million for the capital campaign. It is our intent to raise dollars beyond the land acquisition for two reasons. First, experience shows that comparable land acquisition projects require additional support dollars to ensure legal protection over the long-term. Second, with additional funds, we will approach the developer to negotiate easements and limitations on additional portions of the Gray Craig estate.

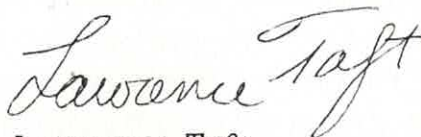
In the preliminary analysis of our goal of \$1.55 million, we are budgeting community support as follows:

Government Sources (state and local)	\$800,000
Foundations	\$400,000
Corporations	\$50,000
Individuals	\$300,000

The current fund-raising climate is highly competitive. At this time, there are a number of capital campaigns vying for community support here on Aquidneck Island. In addition, our local governments are faced with multiple projects seeking limited conservation funds. A grant from the Champlin Foundation conservancy monies would provide leadership support to help ensure the success of the Norman Bird Sanctuary project.

Thank you for this consideration. Please let me know if there is further information required.

Sincerely,



Lawrence Taft
Director
Norman Bird Sanctuary