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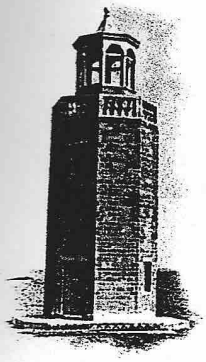
MAY 14 2002

Connecticut Historical Commission



Avery Point Lighthouse Society {APLS}

P.O. Box 1522
Groton, CT 06340
Web Site: http://apls.tripod.com
E-mail: APLS1941@aol.com
860-445-5417

May 12, 2002

John Shannahan
Director
Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Support Information for Nomination of Avery Point Lighthouse to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Mr. Shannahan:

I am forwarding to you copies of two supportive documents, which our organization believes should be included in the written/public comments for consideration by the State Historic Preservation Board in their review of the National Register nomination of the Avery Point Lighthouse. I understand the Board will be reviewing this nomination at its June 2002 meeting.

The first document is a copy of a statement of John Robbins, a representative of the Department of the Interior, who testified before the United States House of Representatives Committee on Resources on July 17, 2001 concerning a bill requiring the Secretary of the Interior to include the Avery Point Lighthouse on the National Register of Historic Place and to provide funding for the restoration of the Avery Point Lighthouse.

In his statement before the committee Mr. Robbins stated ***"We stand ready to help the owners of this lighthouse to recognize this historic structure by nominating it for listing on the National Register of Historic Places."***

In January of this year Governor John G. Rowland approved a "grant-in-aid" of $150,000 for the restoration of the Avery Point Lighthouse. In a press release, dated January 22, 2002, announcing his approval for this grant, Governor Rowland stated, ***"This picturesque lighthouse is one of Connecticut's treasures"*** and ***"This grant will help restore one of our historic landmarks to its original glory."***

It would be greatly appreciated if you could provide the Board with this press release prior to their June meeting.

Thank you for your assistance and if you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 860-445-5417.

Sincerely,

James L. Streeter
Co-Chairman

cc: Bruce Clouette

Committee on Resources,
Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, & Public Lands
http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/parks - - Rep. Joel Hefley, Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515-6207 - - (202) 226-7736

Witness Statement

STATEMENT OF JOHN ROBBINS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CULTURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC LANDS, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 1518, TO REQUIRE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO INCLUDE ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES THE AVERY POINT LIGHTHOUSE IN GROTON, CONNECTICUT, AND PROVIDE $200,000 FOR THE RESTORATION OF THAT LIGHTHOUSE.

July 17, 2001

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 1518, to require the Secretary of the Interior to include on the National Register of Historic Places the Avery Point Lighthouse in Groton, Connecticut, and provide $200,000 for the restoration of that lighthouse.

The Department appreciates the efforts to protect this historic lighthouse. This site could be an excellent candidate for funding through the Save America's Treasures program, for which the President's FY 2002 Budget proposed $30 million and the House and Senate have both supported. We would be happy to provide the local sponsors with more information on how to apply for these grants to protect the historic buildings, sites, artifacts, and collections that represent significant achievements in American culture.

The Department, however, has concerns with the concept of earmarking limited National Park Service funds for specific non-park facilities. Although the amount in this bill is small, it nevertheless diverts funds away from the President's initiatives to take care of current responsibilities by addressing deferred maintenance backlogs. The Department supports the principle that States – not the Federal Government – are best suited to determine the highest priorities for using grant funding, including Historic Preservation Fund funds, which would be allocated in this bill for a specific project. We are concerned that legislative earmarks could effectively take funding away from grants to States and Indian tribes nationwide and dictate how those funds should be spent.

We support efforts to preserve significant historic lighthouses, which are important national historic treasures worthy of our care and attention. We note that this Committee took the lead in passing legislation to facilitate the transfer of historic lighthouses to non-government organizations willing to help preserve them. We stand ready to help the owners of this lighthouse to recognize this historic structure by nominating it for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Long-standing procedures, however, require that the owners work through the State's Historic Preservation Officer, and we understand that such coordination on an application has not been completed. If needed, we can help the owners, working with the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer, on the documentation necessary to evaluate the property's eligibility for listing.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks and I will be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members might have.

# # #

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

JOHN G. ROWLAND
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 22, 2002

Contact: Dean Pagani
860-524-7313 or dean.pagani@po.state.ct.us

GOVERNOR ROWLAND APPROVES $150,000 FOR AVERY POINT LIGHTHOUSE RESTORATION

Governor John G. Rowland announced today a grant-in-aid of $150,000 for the restoration of the Avery Point Lighthouse in Groton. Formal approval of the grant will take place at the State Bond Commission meeting on January 25th.

The 55-foot tall lighthouse was the last lighthouse to be built in the State of Connecticut. Located on the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus, the lighthouse was constructed by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1943 when Avery Point was the site of the U.S. Coast Guard Training Station. In 1967, the Coast Guard relocated to New York and the site became the property of the State of Connecticut. Very little maintenance and upkeep has taken place in the last 25 years.

The Department of Environmental Protection will pass the funds on to the University of Connecticut to coordinate the project. Additional support is being provided through donations from local governments, private and public organizations and fundraising efforts by the Avery Point Lighthouse Society.

"This picturesque lighthouse is one of Connecticut's treasures," Governor Rowland said. "This grant will help restore one of our historic landmarks to its original glory."

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GOVERNOR'S EASTERN CONNECTICUT OFFICE
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
NORWICH, CONNECTICUT 06360

TELEPHONE (860) 886-0555 FAX NO: 860-892-9038

TODAY'S DATE: Jan 24, 2002

SEND TO: Vin Sturdevant

TO FAX NUMBER: 203-639-6458

NUMBER OF PAGES: 2 (INCLUDING THIS PAGE)

FROM: **MICHAEL F. DOYLE, DIRECTOR**
860-886-0555

REMARKS:

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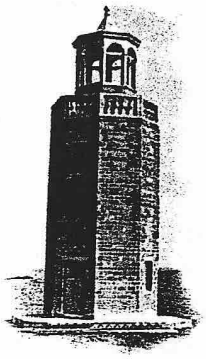

Avery Point Lighthouse Society {APLS}

P.O. Box 1522
Groton, CT 06340
Web Site: http://apls.tripod.com
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860-445-5417

May 16, 2002

John Shannahan
Director
Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Nomination to National Register of the Avery Point Lighthouse

Dear Mr. Shannahan:

As co-chairmen of the Avery Point Lighthouse Society we strongly request your support for approving listing the Avery Point Lighthouse on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Avery Point Lighthouse Society (APLS) is a group of local citizens who organized in February of year 2000 with the common goal of saving, restoring and relighting the Avery Point Lighthouse in Groton. We are working very closely with representatives of the University of Connecticut at Avery Point and staff members of the American Lighthouse Foundation of Wells, Maine toward our common goal.

As you have been made aware, the United States Coast Guard built the Avery Point Lighthouse in 1943 to fulfill a stipulation in a property deed requiring construction of aids to navigation on the Avery Point property in Groton. The lighthouse, which was an official aid to navigation during the period of May 1944 through September 1967, has historical significance as being part of the Coast Guard's Training Station at Avery Point during the period of 1942 through 1967. During that period of time, thousands of members of the Coast Guard were trained in various military trades.

Some of the materials, specifically the pink marble balusters, used to construct the lighthouse came from the gardens of the previous owner of the property, Morton Plant, and were imported from Italy. Mr. Plant is embedded in the history of Groton and other communities in southeastern Connecticut.

The University of Connecticut, who assumed ownership of the Avery Point property after the departure of the Coast Guard in 1967, has razed many of the building and structures that were built and used by the Coast Guard during their tenure there. According to current University of Connecticut plans, it is very feasible that the only structure which will remain as a reminder of the Coast Guard's presence at Avery Point will be the lighthouse.

Thanks to the efforts of all involved, the lighthouse has been saved from the wrecking ball and restoration of the structure has been initiated. It is estimated that the restoration of the structure will be completed in last 2003 or early 2004. Plans are being made to have the structure open to the public so future generations can savor the historical and educational significance of this lighthouse.

Our organization believes the Avery Point Lighthouse qualifies for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and solicits your support and assistance in approving the nomination of the structure to the National Register.

If you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance in this matter please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Robert Tellier
Co-chairman

James L. Streeter
Co-chairman

Dale N. Treadway
Co-Chairman

cc: Bruce Clouette