18 October 1987

PUBLIC FORUM on the DETERIORATION of Hearthstone Castle

29 October 1987  Old Library Main Street  7:30 P.M.

PROPOSED AGENDA:

1. Description, Brief History and Aesthetic considerations about Hearthstone Castle

[we need to be able to describe the interior floor plan more precisely than I can...SOURCES: Carol Smith, Judy Durkin will have to provide me with information re number of bedrooms on each floor and number of baths...details such as 2 (?) master bedrooms in the D-Shaped tower with circular walls are very impressive, need to be exposed in the process of evaluating possible uses and/or directions to pursue in restoration process...for instance, if the Trust were to begin to promote the concept of the castle being used as an Inn with a public restaurant offering spectacular views etcetera....]

capsule history from Bill Devlin's article in News Times 1985 and my research insisting its architectural features are distinctively academic and not merely victorian extravagant...it's a castle...reference at this point may be made to a letter Jane Keane has in her possession from the CT. Historic Presrvation commissioner which details for us possible directions we might/shoud pursue in uses and restoration... a fascinating study with many good suggestions...Paulette, you need a copy...

2. VISUAL presentation via slides taken by the Parks Property Purchase Committee in 1984-85 pre-referendum period, of the condition of many rooms in the castle when it was occupied by Dick and Connie Jennings and their family, and with which, if Ryerson permits Jane (Mon. 19 Oct.), we'll be able to contrast present room conditions thanks to Dyer neglect.... Slides or pictures currently available from Dave Coelho include exterior shots of open doors and hatches this summer. Kent Smith and John Keane are supposed to take pictures of interior if permitted this week..will also shoot various sites around farm (such as the thousands of tons of fill being deposited in the wetlands off Old Farm Road by city trucks... Dave C. will provide interior shots he took in Sept. or Oct. of the destroyed farmhouse... If Ryerson rejects our request to get inside castle I will call upon eyewitnesses in the audience who have been in the castle.. These may include Lorraine (Herger), John Durkin, Lynne Meeker, Carol Smith,,,we'll have to line the speakers up and "rehearse" their testimony minimally...can be done over phone by me as all this unfolds....

same type of neglect @ Firehouse - fine in 1972 Betty Manning came along

3. An Account of the role of the Danbury Preservation Trust in the recent history of the castle... I need to call upon Bill Devlin, or you Paulette, at this point to describe his two-fold efforts to

a ) render the castle a state and national historic landmark

and

b) to seek and attain a grant from ...where... what source,the National Endowment for Historic Presrvation???? Who??? for sum $5,000. to SECURE by proper and generally accepted architectural means the structure from any further deterioration... If Bill was piqued and as I heard it, charged, with responsibility for finding out about his squired grant we'll need to know what he's uncovered as soon as possible.... At this point I, or Bill, may assert that the Trust has not been uninvolved, in fact, was deluded into thinking that the city was in fact, proceeding, however slowly, with our assistance, in a positive direction and that we were shocked to hear of the neglect that must be documented in the next part of the program.

INSV

b) city applied for grant
Common Council matching grant
Sept 4th - National Register - process "being placed" on

4. Documentation. The record of governmental neglect. I have an OPAQUE PROJECTOR and my own slide projector at school which I will bring to this affair... Via the Opaque Projector I can quickly flash up every document that Jane Keane, as Task Force member, has in her possession to substantiate the claims made in the letter signed by myself and the "17", Irrefutable evidence of the current administrations aversion to protecting the people's treasures up at Tarrywile....

5. The Candidates at this point should be permitted their REVIEWS or REBUTTALS of what has been presented... Sauer has been/ or will be briefed by Bob Steinberg, Bob making available to him the very same evidence that is summarized in my letter... It's up to him what he wants to say and or make of our evening, I made it clear Friday night I'm in this for Tarrywile and for Danbury and for the people developing a positive community spirit, not for Jimmy or Joe or any election... I will make that clear in prefatory or introductory remarks that I make, rest assured...If Jimmy shows up and rebuts with a vague record of "his" accomplishments at the mansion and the grounds around, so be it... at that point the public (US...and that means some of us need to be prepared "plants" as it were) may be invited to COMMENT /QUESTION both candidates

#3 see Paulette ans a) - b) -

6. PUBLIC COMMENT....a bunch of us should meet and be prepared to address the candidates in a question and answer session, even if it means addressing Sauer only and getting him on record ... He told me over the phone he'd support the idea of a Tarrywile Park Authority, of a Director, of an office etcewtera... let's get that out and in the papers and radio... Jimmy, even if reelected is going to have to contend with the force of it! If Jimmy shows he's got to be confronted by someone who reiterates the message of the whole program we're trying to put together, several people have to stand and harp on the points addressed or else the press, if he does show, will lend an emphasis to his defensive speech that will make it seem like our argument wasn't altogether that successful or well researched... a few words from him and the paper /radio can make it look like we're just a bunch op opinionated disaffected muckrakers, and, of course, we're not... but we all know how our political life in this city reads in the paper and sounds on the radio in the terrible "digests" we're subjected to that bear so little resemblance to the truth..... I think we do need to have a meeting of known kindred DPT and PPPC veterans to plan this public dialogue even to solicit views and presence of such people as Bill Parks, the Jennings etcetera...no?

7. Where do we go from here? At this concluding note the TRUST gets its chance to define itself before the general membership, the Tarrywilers, and the assembled Republican and Democratic interested parties...
That's your agenda Paulette, with Tim and Lou etc.... but at the MINIMUM we need to propose the formation perhaps of a "Friends of Tarrywile" committee and we need to gather, before the exodus of people attending, NAMES, PHONE NUMBERS and areas in which individuals would be interested in working with us in the near or long term future to attain the preservation, community character, and quality of life goals we all can hold in common... IT's important, and I pray that I can maintain this tone throughout the proceedings, whatever else my role may be that evening, that we remain POSITIVE... and keep to that vision of a properly functioning, maturing, unifying, harmoninzing democratic community evolving out of all our DESPERATE EFFORTS!