

October 5, 1987

Mr. Larry Smith
637 Watson
Memphis, Tn 38111

Dear Larry:

I am a doctoral student in ecology at the University of New Mexico that grew up in Bartlett. Recently, Mrs. Corinne Fuller of Bartlett, my mother, contacted you concerning development plans for "Bartlett Park". Presently, this 348 acre piece of land is an island of undeveloped climax and second growth woodlands in the middle of subdivisions on almost all sides. Until the mid-1970's, it was owned by Mrs. Robert Nesbit and her late husband. At that time she sold the property to Shelby County with the intention of having it preserved as a wildlife refuge/nature study area.

Unfortunately, due to an apparent lack of proper legal counselling during the sale, her interests have been subverted by the Shelby County Conservation Board. That agency is apparently planning to develop much of the property as golf courses, lakes, ballparks and other types of recreational areas. Only 160 acres would be left in its natural state. Clearly this is contrary to her intentions.

Mrs. Nesbit's cousin, Dr. Richard Estes (a wildlife biologist presently working as a Research Associate at Smithsonian Institution) has been working for several years to save this beautiful piece of property from development. I have recently joined him in that effort. Like him, I spent some time on the Nesbit property as a child, and my experiences there helped shape my present ecological awareness. We both feel that Memphis has enough golf courses and ball parks, and a dearth of natural areas.

I have written to the SCCB for information on their specific development plans and time frame. After that, I plan to contact interested individuals (including some of my previous biology professors at MSU) and clubs in Memphis by letters and/or fliers to put together a meeting about this project in December or January when I am home for Christmas. Obviously, if the property is to be saved from development, there must be a group in Memphis to help with the ground work.

My mother tells me that you have been doing preservation work at Shelby farms and are interested in hearing more about Bartlett Park. If so, please allow me to keep you posted on developments. Dick and I would value an associate in Memphis with organizing skills and experience in preservation work.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Dick to the SCCB of several years back. It will give you a bit more information. Let me know if you have any suggestions or if you know of other interested individuals that I could put on my mailing list. Thanks very much for your interest. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Ollar

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