

Vietnam memorial site list down to two

By **DAVID HINCHEY**
Chronicle Staff Writer

COVENTRY — The local woman seeking to put a Vietnam Veterans Memorial in town similar to the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C., has narrowed the site down to two choices.

Jean Risley said she is looking to put the memorial either in front of Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School or in front of Coventry Town Hall. Risley met with Donna Bernard, superintendent for Coventry schools Oct. 13, and Risley said Bernard advised her she would need to approach the board of education for approval on a school site.

Risley said, for the most part, people in town have been supportive of her idea, but she has met some resistance from people in town in regards to where the monument should go.

"Whatever choice I make, it's going to be the

right one," Risley said. "I don't want to upset some people."

Risley said in July the memorial is for her brother Robert Tillquist, who fought and died in the Vietnam War.

She had approached the town council in July with the idea as well as preliminary designs showing two, 5-foot-by-4-foot wide panels.

The design on the backside of the memorial on one panel will have an etching of the famous "Three Soldiers" sculpture.

That sculpture, done by Frederick Hart, is in Washington near the national memorial and features three soldiers standing next to each other.

She said on the other panel, there would be an etching of the Vietnam Nurses Memorial, which depicts three nurses with a wounded soldier — a sculpture also located in Washington and designed by Glenna Goodacre.

Town Manager John Elsesser said plans to spruce up the town hall have been put on the back burner, but he said he is confident that if Risley chose the town hall for the memorial, they could accommodate her request.

"I'm sure there's a location that'll work," he said, adding the council would have to approve the location if she decided she wanted it there.

Risley said fund-raising has gone well and she recently registered as a 501 (c)3 organization, so donations might be tax deductible, pending a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service.

She said, in two months, she has raised \$6,000 — nearly a quarter of the \$28,000 price tag.

To make a donation, send a letter to C.V.V.M.C. (Connecticut Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee) care of Paul Jatkowski, treasurer, 91 Upton Drive, Coventry 06238.