

Dist. 99 Board, listen to residents regarding land

I have spent three nights this week up until 3 a.m. worrying about what will happen to the land owned by District 99, next to the Woodridge Village Hall, and I am sure that many people in Woodridge are very worried about something they hold so dear, too. I see that many of them have taken action on their feelings. My son expressed it this way, "Mom, this is where my friends and I have always gone to the Jubilee, and where we like to play. It is where we have our parades." His voice expressed a plea to keep it the same. I am expressing a plea to District 99 to give Woodridge an opportunity to buy the land.

In 1970, Herb Nadelhoffer, a farmer whose grandparents came to Woodridge in the 1860s, convinced Viola Faulhaber to put her land in with his in a plan to make the area around Center Drive the center of Woodridge. He turned the field that he plowed which always "seemed flooded" into Lake Harriet, named after his mother. When efforts to save his old homestead failed, he turned the land next to it into Lake Carlton, named after his father. He put together a design and plan, and went out to the village, the Park District and District 99 to talk about his idea. After much talking and convincing, the dream began to come true. He even envisioned an outdoor education center. When he heard nearby land was slated for condominiums a few years later, he sprung into action to get Bill Greene to purchase land until he could purchase it himself. Then he sold this land to the Woodridge Park District 10 acres at a time (making buying it a little easier), thereby keeping it "green space" too. He was a man with a wonderful vision for Woodridge. I think he deserves a plaque somewhere. Now it is the dream of many.

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Some board members of District 99 have said that they are unhappy with people coming to their neighborhood to obtain petitions requesting the District 99 board to talk to the village of Woodridge officials, and to ask if people would like to put up signs requesting the same. Many people in Downers Grove have signed petitions, because they feel that while the District 99 Board must get a good price for the land, they also feel that how it is done is important. Selling land to condominium builders and taking away the essential character of the center of a town may not be the "best way." So residents in both towns want to express their opinion to the School Board. And many residents in both towns feel the SAME way. So, when your neighbors have signs up, they are not taunting you, THEY feel it is important to save Woodridge's open space.

Many people in Woodridge want to talk to you and have an open forum where information and opinions are expressed. I hope that the District 99 School Board can have the opportunity to find out how open forum meetings are conducted in Woodridge. They bring the people together, help them understand and give both sides a chance to express themselves. Please listen. We are not trying to attack you, we want to talk. Please listen to us, so that you can do a good job of representing us.

Joan Mimnaugh