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Dist. 99 officials must

'do the right thing'

On June 20, citizens watched as the District 99 School Board used what was supposed to be a chance for them to talk with citizens, to stifle

www.keepgreenspacegreen.com and the citizens of District 99 complete with gavel smashing, ordering little girls to the back of the line and saying the Woodridge mayor walked away from the negotiating table when District 99 actually did.

We found what happened was District 99 and the village of Woodridge met again. District 99 offered to "suspend" the Newcastle process, but wouldn't tell anyone it was stopped, nor would they stop talking to potential bidders. In exchange, the village would have to give up all of its rights. The village said no to that process, but suggested that they create a mutually agreeable alternative process. District 99 rejected the village's offer to meet on May 12 or May 17, or any other day, to discuss alternatives.

At the June 20 meeting, District 99 Controller Mark Staehlin told the community what the School Board's rights were, instead of responding to requests made June 10 and 16 by citizens.

Mr. Staehlin was caught telling the people of the district, "What we have not done is decided to sell any of the land," when you could go home that night and click on www.csd99.org/district/news/woodridge-2005-05-04-fact-sheet.asp and be told the School Board already knew about eminent domain before Woodridge declined District 99's tainted offer to suspend the bid process, and click on www.csd99.org/district/news/woodridge-2005-04-12-brochure.pdf to see the four-color, glossy brochure in which the board's chosen marketers indicated the bid process will be ending on June 10 by selecting the purchaser.

We teach our kids that this is lying. I know Mr. Staehlin is trying to keep his job when \$1.9 million in salaries are being cut around him (including a coach who won an unprecedented number of championships; he knows how to make champions in life). But come on, Mark. You represent a district with a state champion football team. Take some advice from Lou Holtz, famous Notre Dame coach:

- 1) Do the right thing!
- 2) Do your best!
- 3) Show people you care!

Talk to us. Even if they fire you, we can get you back in after we weed out the bad apples!

P.S. I was notified by our "Downers Grove Fourth of July March" initiative leaders, the Goreckis, that the village of Downers Grove had called June 29 to say our application to be in the parade has "been declined." Earlier this month they told our volunteers we would have "no problem" when our volunteers pointed out that they were submitting the application after the May 27 deadline.

Phil Labak

Woodridge