

Woodridge must make market value offer

On Aug. 15, I attended the monthly meeting of the Board of Education of Community High School District 99. The School District took public comment concerning the disposition of a parcel of land owned by the School District and located in Woodridge. Though I did not intend to say anything, some of the things offered at that meeting drove me to speak that evening and to write this letter.

Certain speakers supporting efforts by the village of Woodridge to obtain the land for a reduced price echoed a line I have seen on signs around town -- "Negotiate, Don't Litigate." From this, you might believe that District 99 commenced litigation, which it alone could end.

However, the only litigation in this matter is an eminent domain suit by the village of Woodridge brought against District 99. Those opposed to litigation and its costs to both parties should urge the village of Woodridge to take its own advice to negotiate, not litigate, and to withdraw its suit.

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Other speakers discussed the value of this parcel as open space to the citizens of Woodridge. Unfortunately, it appears that Woodridge does not value this property enough to pay market value for it.

I expect that the citizens of Woodridge would sell their own houses for top dollar, rather than accepting some lower "fair" price. Yet somehow District 99, instead of getting the best price for the parcel, is asked to accept a below-market "fair" price.

If Woodridge wants a park, they should pay the full price for that park, rather than asking all of the taxpayers of District 99 for a subsidy in the form of a reduced price. Rather than padding the parks budget of Woodridge, any sale of the parcel should raise the largest amount possible for education through District 99.

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