



Members of the City Council:

As many of you know, the Burlington School District has been negotiating a series of real estate transactions that involve selling our property at 150 Colchester Avenue (Ira Allen) to UVM, leasing the Taft School to UVM and purchasing the property on Allen Street that formerly housed St. Joseph's School.

On July 1, the School District presented information on these transactions to the City's Board of Finance which agreed to send the proposed transactions to the full Council for possible approval. At that time, the School District and the Board of Finance anticipated that this item would be on the July 15 Board agenda.

At this point, though, the School District does not want to ask for the City Council's approval for these transactions on July 15 because of the status of the negotiations surrounding one of the transactions, the proposed lease of Taft School to UVM. As many of you know, Taft School was granted to the City/School District with covenants requiring that it be used for educational purposes, and subsequent court decisions have provided further interpretation to these covenants. While we believe we remain headed toward an agreement with UVM regarding the proposed lease of Taft, there are still aspects of the proposed lease being advanced by UVM that we feel do not either honor the covenants on the property and their interpretations and/or put the School District and the City in a position of possible economic risk that we should not be willing to take on.

These transactions, from the standpoint of the School District, work as a package. They allow the School District to consolidate facilities, increase usable square footage and do so without taking on additional debt or additional annual costs. Thus, with a delay on one of the transactions, we believe that it's in the better interest of the City and the School District to resolve these issues prior to asking for the approval of the City Council. We are working diligently on this, and hope to be able to present a complete package of agreements at the August Council meeting.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Matson'.

Alan Matson
Chairman, Burlington Board of School Commissioners

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