



TO: Members of the City Council Finance Committee
FROM: Terry Bailey, Director of Operations, Burlington Schools
SUBJECT: Request from the Board of School Commissioners for Real Estate Transactions
DATE: June 12, 2013

At the regular Board of School Commissioners meeting held June 11, 2013 the Board voted to request City Council to authorize the purchase of St. Joseph's School, sell 150 Colchester Avenue property and to lease the Taft School, 14 South Williams Street. The University of Vermont has made the offer for the purchase of 150 Colchester Avenue and the lease. The Board would use these proceeds to purchase and perform renovations at St. Joseph in preparation as a public school facility.

The St. Joseph Co-Cathedral Parish has been approached with the offer to purchase St. Joseph for \$2 million. The City Council will need to approve the offer before the Parish will receive the offer formally and make a response.

The University's offer is \$2 million for 150 Colchester Avenue and an 80 year lease with an upfront, one time payment of \$1.6 million. Under the lease terms, the University would be responsible for total maintenance, upkeep and any renovations. All work would be in keeping with permitting and zoning requirements with the facility used exclusively for academic purposes with students. A partnership with the Burlington Public Schools with direct student participation will be developed as planning for the Taft facility is considered by the appropriate academic department(s). The University is in the process of determining how best to utilize the Colchester Avenue Building.

UVM would take possession of the buildings in the summer of 2014, which gives the Burlington Schools a year to relocate the personnel and programs currently housed at Taft and the School Administration Building. The Taft building houses two programs, OnTop is a special needs program which serves 27 students from grades five through twelve and Horizons, a tenth through twelfth grade alternative high school program currently with 40 students. The 150 Colchester Avenue building houses the district's school administration and the Early Essential Education Program with 36 preschool students. The total square footage of the Taft and School Administration buildings is 43,000 square feet while St. Joseph is 53,700 square feet. The current annual operating costs for the Taft building is in excess of \$68,000. The District has leased a major portion of St Joseph to house students from the Sustainability Academy and Flynn Elementary while the respective schools were being renovated. The operating costs for St Joseph is about half of the cost of operating Taft and Ira Allen.

The Board of School Commissioners respectively request authorization to proceed.

c. Alan Matson, Chair – Board of School Commissioners
Jeanne Collins, Superintendent of Schools

JEANNÉ COLLINS ~ SUPERINTENDENT
150 COLCHESTER AVE.. ~ BURLINGTON VT 05401
PHONE: 802-865-5332 ~ FAX: 802-864-8501 ~ WEBSITE: WWW.BSDVT.ORG

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AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE
ST. JOSEPH’S SCHOOL FROM THE
ST. JOSEPH’S CO-CATHEDRAL,
SELL 150 COLCHESTER AVENUE TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND
LEASE THE ELIHU B. TAFT SCHOOL
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

In the year Two Thousand Thirteen.....
Resolved by the Burlington City Council, as follows:

WHEREAS, the Burlington School District (“BSD”) has been in preliminary negotiations for the purchase St. Joseph’s School located at 20 Allen Street, Burlington, Vermont from the St. Joseph’s Co-Cathedral; and

WHEREAS, the University of Vermont (“UVM”) has expressed interest in the purchase of BSD’s “Ira Allen” property, so called, located at 150 Colchester Avenue, Burlington, Vermont; and

WHEREAS, UVM has also expressed interest in leasing, on a long-term basis, the Elihu B. Taft School, located at 14 South Williams Street, Burlington, Vermont; and

WHEREAS, all real property designated to the care and custody of the Burlington Board of School Commissioners (“Board”) is owned by the City of Burlington (“City”); and

WHEREAS, at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 11, 2013, the Burlington Board of School Commissioners authorized, by public vote, to request authorization from the City for the purchase of St. Joseph’s School, the sale of 150 Colchester Avenue, and the long-term lease of the Elihu B. Taft School, all subject to the approval of the Burlington City Council; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Burlington City Charter, Article 22, Section 55, the Burlington City Council “shall have the exclusive power to authorize sale or lease of any real or personal estate belonging to said city, and all conveyances, grants or leases of any such real estate shall be signed by the mayor and sealed with the city seal”; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Burlington City Charter, Article 60, Section 177, the Burlington Board of School Commissioners “shall not purchase any real estate ... until such action has been approved ... by the city council.”

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NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Burlington City Council hereby authorizes the purchase of St. Joseph’s School from the St. Joseph’s Co-Cathedral, the sale of 150 Colchester Avenue to the University of Vermont, and the long-term lease of the Elihu B. Taft School to the University of Vermont; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Burlington Board of School Commissioners, or their designee, is hereby authorized to negotiate the terms of the purchase of St. Josephs School, the sale of 150 Colchester Avenue, and the long-term lease of the Elihu B. Taft School, all subject to review and approval of the Burlington City Attorney and Chief Operating Officer, as appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Mayor of the City of Burlington, Miro Weinberger, is hereby authorized, on behalf of the City of Burlington, to execute any and all documents necessary to effect the sale 150 Colchester Avenue and the long-term lease of the Elihu B. Taft School, subject to prior review and approval by the City Attorney and Chief Operating Officer, as appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the Burlington Board of School Commissioners, or his designee, on behalf of the City of Burlington, is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents necessary for the purchase of St. Joseph’s School, subject to prior review and approval by the City Attorney and Chief Operating Officer, as appropriate.