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Response to Burlington School District's FAQs for Real Estate Proposal

More False and Misleading Information

1. The truth is there is no net gain in the square footage of classroom space in this land transaction. The gain in footage is because of a gym and a cafeteria at St. Joseph's. And, there is a loss of 117 parking spaces.

If the school district is at a tipping point with increased enrollment, why are they attempting to sell a school building? They should be trying to use all the buildings they have to educate the children.

2. Taft School is being sold under the current terms. If it was truly being leased the future tenant would be paying the current rental rate of \$6 per sq foot. This deal is letting them have it at .82 cents a square foot. That price constitutes a sale.

3. UVM does not own half of the Ira Allen Building. There is one building at 148-150 Colchester Avenue: The Early Essential Education Building, built in 1974. There is another building at 34-38 Fletcher Place called the Ira Allen Building built in 1954 which UVM owns. These are two separate and distinct buildings.

Under the terms of this transaction fifty office workers will have no place to work. Finding them at least 12,000 sq ft of office space is a huge cost that has not been added into this transaction. Wouldn't it be a smart idea to know where they are going to be located and how much of an additional expense it will be before spending more than \$3.5M for St. Joseph's? Fifty-nine Murray Street is an example of the poor planning and costly mistakes made by the Burlington School District in a real estate transaction.

4. During business hours the 68 parking spaces at 150 Colchester Avenue are seldom empty. The only way the 31 spaces at St. Joseph's will be adequate is if the employees do what is done at Edmunds Middle School: There are 55 parking spaces at Edmunds but at least 100 cars are parked there.

5. Has there been an adjustment for the difference for higher utility use for office space versus lower utilities for classroom space? If not, why not? Has any consideration been given that 150 Colchester Avenue is used evenings and twelve months of the year and it has air conditioning? How many square feet was the Burlington School District renting at St. Joseph's? Is this one reason the utility bills are lower for that building?

6. Currently the anticipated deficit for the Burlington School District is about \$800,000. Should that number be of concern to the Burlington tax payers?

7. For the three years previous to Miro Weinberger being mayor there were no executive sessions on real estate transactions during a school board meeting. About four weeks after Miro Weinberger became mayor the school board started to meet in executive session about a real estate transaction. For the next fourteen months there were at least seven executive sessions during school board meetings on a real estate transaction.

8. It would be a very good idea to take a careful look at the Allen and Brooks appraisal for 148-150 Colchester Avenue. Otherwise, someone is going to look very foolish.

There is only one sheet of paper available on the appraisal for St. Joseph School. The diocesan of Burlington has a complete copy which is not public information. Why would anyone be willing to approve the purchase of \$2M of real estate and \$1.6M - \$2.4M in renovations based on one sheet of paper? And, there is no back up data for renovations that have gone from \$1.6M to \$2.4M. If St. Joseph's School appraisal has mistakes similar to the 148-150 Colchester Avenue appraisal it could be a disaster.

It is not legal for the city of Burlington to sell its real estate below fair market value. This deal is not reasonable nor will it benefit the Burlington Schools or the citizens of Burlington. Does UVM have the first right of refusal? Has the school board considered other potential buyers? If not, why not? If so, who are they?

9. St. Joseph's School is not in excellent condition. According to the Burlington Assessor's Office, it is only in good condition. And, few if any major renovations have been in the last twenty years. The school board's estimated costs for renovations at St. Joseph's School have gone from \$1.5M to \$2.4M. Why?