

City of Warson Woods

10015 MANCHESTER ROAD
WARSON WOODS, MISSOURI 63122-1825
(314) 965-3100

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
LAURANCE M. HOWE

August 1, 2014

Rohan Woods School
Ms. Sam Templin-Page
Head of School
1515 Bennett Avenue
Warson Woods MO 63122

HAND DELIVERED

Dear Sam,

I have read your letter dated July 28th to the residents of Warson Woods. I did receive an email copy from a resident since I did not receive a copy at my home. On behalf of the residents, I respectfully request you immediately retract or clarify certain statements in your letter for the following reasons.

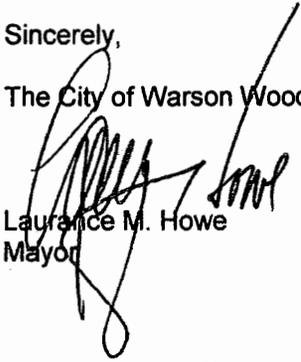
1. The letter inaccurately states the proposition would "*place the burden of financing a purchase of the church property on the residents of Warson Woods*". This is false. First, passage of the sales tax does not guarantee the City will be successful in purchasing the property. Second, the sales tax of ½ cent and would be paid by shoppers who support our local merchants who have chosen to locate their business in our City and in no way places any more of a "*burden...on the residents of Warson Woods,*" as the letter alleges, than any other individual who chooses to shop in our commercial district. The letter uses the phrase "*tax levy,*" this appears to be expressly for the purpose of presenting the proposed ballot issue to our residents as a levy of a tax much like a property tax. Nothing could be further from the truth. While purchasing land such as St. Matt's is an option, it is by no means the sole purpose of any parks sales tax proceeds. Funds derived from the park sales tax would be used to maintain and improve existing parks in the City as well as address storm water issues not able to be considered by MSD.
2. The letter inaccurately states the income would be used for "*city improvements*". The fact is, any income derived from the ½ cent sales tax would be dedicated to parks and storm water control, by law.
3. The letter states an offer to purchase the property was submitted on June 24, 2014. The letter fails to mention whether or not the offer was accepted. It's as if the fact an offer was made is intended to leave the impression there is an agreed to sales contract in place.
4. The assertion "*it is our belief that now is the appropriate time to notify the residents of our efforts to purchase the property as the August 5th 2014 referendum approaches*" is nothing more than an attempt to influence the outcome of the vote, with the desired outcome being the defeat of the proposition. This outcome would effectively remove the City from any realistic opportunity to purchase the property while at the same time, giving Rohan Woods a perceived inside track to purchasing the property.

5. In the letter, it states "*In supporting our plan, the City of Warson Woods residents can now separate and decide individually on the specific issues the city faces*". The only issue facing our residents is whether or not to support the proposition. The proposition has no connection to any plans Rohan Woods may have for St. Matt's. As of today no plan has been formally submitted to the City for any intended use of the property on behalf of Rohan Woods School or which would indicate Rohan Woods has any property interests (see #4 above) in the church property which would allow them to submit such an application for development. Attached to my letter is a copy of your letter, which includes a schematic clearly showing the parcel to the west of St. Matt's which is owned by the City as being part of the proposed track and field complex. This is another example of the letter's tendency to confuse our residents and obfuscate the true motive of the letter.

It is my belief the letter's singular intent was to undermine and defeat the referendum on August 5th. If Rohan Woods School truly had the best interests of the residents of Warson Woods in mind, then the letter would have clearly and accurately stated the facts.

Sincerely,

The City of Warson Woods



Laurance M. Howe
Mayor

Cc: Residents of Warson Woods



July 28, 2014 Established 1937

Dear Warson Woods Residents,

Since 1984, Rohan Woods School has been a part of the Warson Woods community, and we have enjoyed building relationships and partnerships within our neighborhood during our long tenure in the community. Rohan Woods looks forward to many more years of furthering those relationships and maintaining a strong presence in the community.

As many of you know, and as a direct result of resident reaction to initial plans for condominium development on the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church site, the City of Warson Woods announced in May they would introduce a half-cent sales tax to address park improvements and storm water enhancements on the August 5th ballot.

If approved, the tax levy would generate income for city improvements and the purchase of a two-acre tract from Grace Episcopal Church, the current owner of the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church property located on Bennett Avenue. This referendum essentially would place the burden of financing a purchase of the church property on the residents of Warson Woods.

As an alternative to increasing taxes to fund the City of Warson Woods' efforts to purchase the church property and in the interest of the future of our school, Rohan Woods submitted an offer to purchase the church property on June 24, 2014. It is our belief that now is the appropriate time to notify the residents of our efforts to purchase the property as the August 5, 2014 referendum vote approaches.

While it is too early to predict the outcome of this process, Rohan Woods' leadership is focused on a vision for the property that is consistent with the community of Warson Woods. Our present plan would maintain the property as green space in our community with a potential soccer field and running track. Local residents would have a setting for relaxation and exercise, circumventing the need to walk on the streets of the city without increasing population density or traffic flow in Ward 2. We are providing a collaborative solution to our need for growth and the residents' desire for green space. In supporting our plan, the City of Warson Woods residents can now separate and decide individually on the specific issues the city faces.

We appreciate your continued support as we further our mission to educate children in the Warson Woods community and as we continue our efforts to purchase the church property for our families and for the families of Warson Woods. We encourage you to learn more about our school through our website: rohanwoods.org. Thank you for your time and attention, and best wishes on a continued safe and happy summer.

Sincerely,

Sam Templin-Page

Sam Templin-Page
Head of School
Rohan Woods School

