

Statement of Alderman James N. Witkowiak

July 1, 2009

I became involved in the land use issue at 1443 and 1445-47 S. Muskego Ave. with the best of intentions for the 12th District and the city, but it is now time to close this matter from the perspective of “eminent domain.” I have recommended to the appropriate city agencies that the matter no longer be pursued.

The owners of the property and those seeking to develop upon it have had recent business discussions. It is now clear that there will be no night club or cabaret built upon the property. That was a major concern of mine and a concern of the neighborhood.

It is my sincere hope that any discussion among the principal parties will lead to a solution that will benefit all concerned.

It is also clear that the use of eminent domain in a property issue such as this is very controversial.

Many have openly expressed a serious concern with the use of it in this case, and their concerns are legitimate and have been seriously considered by me. Citizens have the right, and the duty, to speak out and challenge the government when they feel it necessary.

In fact, I strongly believe more citizens should make their voices heard on the numerous public issues affecting their lives.

Such input and resulting public debate – I believe – leads to better decision-making and better public policy.

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