

From: Harry Welty [mailto:harry.welty@isd709.org]
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2015 10:48 AM
To: Council
Cc: School Board; Kerry Leider; William Gronseth; william hanson
Subject: Denfeld High School

Councilors,

Although the Duluth Schools are not your turf I have no doubt you have followed the difficulties the school district has faced trying to provide equity across the district. Furthermore, you must be aware of the terrible imbalances in school enrollment between our eastern and western schools. I am concerned because, at a time when we need to get our act together to help Denfeld High School, the City and Community Action Duluth seem determined to place a wonderful, but problematical, project on Denfeld's doorstep regardless of the impact.

Our property management team has been waiting for several years to make an offer on a small parcel of land adjacent to Denfeld which would give us a chance to enhance access to the school. To our surprise the City of Duluth offered the same small amount for this acreage and then pointed Community Action Duluth to it when other land options were readily available elsewhere.

Our staff suggested a win/win proposal which would have allowed our students and Community Action's clientele to work jointly in a greenhouse program. We were told that this would not be possible because there was no way to assure that Community Action's clientele could be trusted to mix with our students.

I do not believe that it is anyone's interest to proceed with this project under these constraints.

I understand that Community Action is concerned that a potential donor might withdraw a donation should this site not prove acceptable. I find this hard to believe. Surely the prospective donor is not interested in a particular location for greenhouse was so long as it is situated in an appropriate and accessible space.

This project as conceived could drive more students and families away from Duluth Denfeld at a time when we are attempting to bring some parity between our two high schools.

I may bring a resolution to our school board requesting that the City find alternative locations for this project.

Sincerely,

Harry Welty