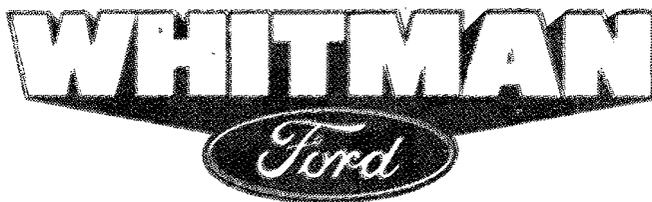


PAID ADVERTISEMENT



An open letter to Bedford Township:

I want you to know our attorney has filed a lawsuit against the township concerning our land. The major issue this new trial will settle is this question: Are sworn statements made in the Monroe Courthouse by township representatives reliable and true?

Bedford has insurance that paid the legal fees in our previous trial and the Albring farm trial and appeal. The nature of our new suit is such that the township's policy does not cover this type of claim. The township will pay the legal costs of this suit directly out of their budget. An estimated cost to defend this suit will be about \$200,000.

The estimated legal costs paid by the township's insurance company in the last few years could be at least \$500,000 with a premium of only \$25,000. Most insurance companies do not care for this type of imbalance. When the township gets the premium for the new policy in August, the real costs to taxpayers for all these suits will be evident.

Some of the strongest support for our zoning comes from the trial testimony of Bedford Township's own advisors. They testified that a major retail development on our land, with transitioning, would increase the value of the surrounding properties. The township's current advisor wrote that our rezoning request would be "an improvement to the vicinity and the township as a whole." Two different township advisors say this would benefit the area. Should a township board vote against its advisors to deny rezoning when doing so hurts the surrounding property values?

Governor Granholm has projected an additional 760,000 job losses for the state of Michigan over the next 18 months. If this comes true, the county's share of job losses would bring our unemployed to 22,000. Bedford's share of the county's unemployed persons would be 4200. The economic effects of these losses are hard to imagine.

Given this reality how can county and government services remain anything like they are now? It seems a guarantee that our standard of living will be significantly reduced. Yet the priorities in Bedford Township spending focus on a perceived threat from new retail, when our real threat is the Township's hostility toward interested companies that would bring much needed jobs and taxes. Bedford's policy is in sharp contrast to Toledo's current tax abatement to retail stores.

I look back to the decision rejecting a Wal-Mart settlement with its 500 jobs, \$50 million in new investment, and \$5 million per year in sales and real estate taxes. Very few places in the Midwest had the opportunity the Wal-Mart development offered to Bedford. E-mails I received after our trial clearly said the antagonism our family and Wal-Mart encountered convinced them Monroe County is a poor place for their business to locate. Can we continue to have the philosophy and national reputation of "We don't want your business" and "Take your jobs elsewhere" and still maintain our standard of living in Bedford Township?

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jon Whitman".

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