

Madison County Approves The \$3.86 Million Sale Of Property Along Illinois Route 159

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EDWARDSVILLE — Officials approved a \$3.86 million sale of Madison County land Wednesday night to a St. Louis developer.

The Madison County Board approved selling 15.41 acres of property along Illinois Route 159 to The Staenberg Advisors, LLC of St. Louis for \$3,868,000. The acreage is

located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Plum Street (Route 159) and Governor's Parkway in Edwardsville.

The county put the land up for bid, or "silent auction," and The Staenberg Group was the sole bidder and met all specifications.

"By statute, this is what the county must do — put the property up for auction," Chairman Kurt Prenzler said.

A group of Edwardsville citizens submitted a petition with more than 1,200 signatures to the county, asking for the land not to be sold until the developer disclosed what it planned to build. The group asked the county to keep the land as green space.

Prenzler said the county has no parks and the site is located within the City of Edwardsville's corporate boundaries. He said that by selling the land, the county no longer has to maintain it, saving taxpayers money around \$16,000 annually.

In February, the county voted to transfer six-tenths of an acre to Madison County Transit. The acreage — at the southwest corner of Plum Street and Governor's Parkway — along with Illinois Department of Transportation easements, totals around three acres.

"The land was too small for development," Prenzler said. "MCT plans to develop a trailhead connection that will connect with the surrounding development, including Edwardsville Crossing. The land will remain green space.

The 15.41 acres were originally part of the site of the county's tuberculosis sanitarium. In 2003, the county sold the property east of Plum Street to make way for the Edwardsville Crossing development.

Recently, developers began removing trees south of Governor's Parkway in Glen Carbon to make way for the Menard's development. The work started at the same time the county put its property out for bid and it caused confusion for some as to what property the county-owned.

On March 9, County Board member Bruce Malone said during the Facilities Committee meeting that he was sympathetic for those who wanted the land to remain green space; however, as an Alton representative, he had a problem with the county continuing to own the property in Edwardsville.

"I don't think we will get the developer to tell us what they are going to do with it until they buy it anyway," Malone said. "(The county) needs to get out of the property business."

County Board member Mick Madison, chair of the Facilities Committee, said the county began working toward selling the land in 2017. He said the county and city worked together to try and sell it, however, it didn't come to fruition and the county decided to start over again.

“The only thing we can do is put it out for auction,” Madison said. “And that’s what we did.”