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Mell impatient with Addison site's fate Alderman still hopes to land magnet school

By **PATRICK BUTLER**

Staff Writer

Ald. Richard Mell (33rd) has given the city until March 1 to find a new buyer for the long-vacant International Paper Co. property at Addison Street and Kimball Avenue, but didn't say what he would do if that deadline isn't met.

"I guess we'll have to take care of it ourselves," a visibly frustrated Mell said Thursday, Feb. 17, after telling his 33rd Ward Advisory Council that plans to move the Inter-American Magnet School from 919 W. Barry Ave. were the second "solid" proposal vetoed by Mayor Richard Daley, who Mell said "didn't think an industrial area was a good place for a school."

For "pretty much the same reason," Daley also vetoed a plan for Lincoln Park's St. Vincent DePaul Day Care Center to buy part of the 10-acre site, said Mell, adding that he "certainly wouldn't object" to a letter-writing campaign to get City Hall to reconsider its opposition to relocating Inter-American to part of the site.

Noting that "a large number of students from our area" commute to Lake View to attend the highly regarded school, Mell said he hasn't given up hope of relocating Inter-American to the 33rd Ward even if Daley remains adamant.

Mell, who said the school needs 3.5-4 acres, said he is looking at another site around Sacramento Avenue and Addison.

"They don't want it (on Barry Avenue) and Illinois Masonic (Hospital) is willing to pay so much for that property it wouldn't cost (the school system) that much to move here," said Mell.

Another advantage to the community in having another new school here (along with the magnet high school that opened last fall near Kedzie and Bryn Mawr avenues) is that "it would almost guarantee resumption of the Kedzie bus line," predicted Bill Toedt, of the UNITE civic organization, who served as the Advisory Council's acting chairman in the absence of vacationing Harriet O'Donnell.

Mell said that while it's "laudable" the city wants to save an industrial base here, Kimball and Addison may no longer be an ideal location -- not with "big box" stores like Menards prepared to pay up to \$22 per square foot and residential developers willing to pay \$12 to \$19, compared to the \$6 manufacturers are usually able to afford.

"The community is going to have to get behind this and put pressure on the city," Mell told the two-dozen neighborhood representatives who turned out for the monthly meeting at Horner Park field house, 2740 W. Montrose Ave.

"I'm tired of catching all the arrows myself."

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