

To the FCB: Statement by George Pappas, Board Member, Springfield Forward, Inc.

June 16, 2009

Mayor Sarno has squandered yet another opportunity to turn Springfield around.

1. On March 19th, 2008, Mayor Sarno squandered \$550,000 of City Home Funds to Winn Development.
2. To add insult to injury, Mayor Sarno did not even know or realize he was giving Winn \$550,000.
3. In March of 2008, Mayor Sarno received hundreds of letters from citizens of Forest Park and Springfield opposing the Winn project in Forest Park. Mayor Sarno ignored the voices of his constituents.
4. In October of 2008, Mayor Sarno received written notice that Winn breached The Mayor's own conditions to "reach an agreement with the neighborhood" – it didn't matter, Mayor Sarno ignored his own agreement.
5. In March of 2009, Mayor Sarno heard from residents, neighborhood associations, and elected public officials advising that he needed to enforce his conditions that "Winn reach an agreement with the neighbourhood before proceeding forward to build a new low income project" – Mayor Sarno ignored his constituents, neighbourhood associations and elected officials.

6. Springfield Forward has written to Mayor Sarno 25 times – Mayor Sarno has ignored our efforts to reach out to him.

7. In March of 2009, Mayor Sarno said he did not want a 100% low income project at Longhill Gardens, yet he approved and authorized monies to Winn Development to build a 100% low income project at Longhill Gardens. Mayor Sarno moved from disregarding community input to sham public statements.

8. Between May 1 and May 4th, Mayor Sarno learned that the new Forest Park Middle School could be built at the Longhill Gardens site and save the City of Springfield millions of dollars. What does the Mayor do? He orders yet another feasibility study with Hayes Development and the City Financial Assets departments.

9. YETOn June 11th, Mayor Sarno ignored the feasibility study he ordered and caved into FEAR once he learned that 20 million of state funds could be used in Springfield to repair school buildings so long as his DID NOT BUILD A NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL AT LONGHILL and instead agrees to spend millions to rehab the OLD FOREST PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL AT OAKLAND STREET, even though studies have indicated such a rehab is impossible and impractical.

10. The Mayor not only did NOT stick to his promise to consider building a New Forest Park middle school at Longhill, but he failed to consult with the School Committee and now seeks to completely by pass City Council on this important decision by asking the FCB to make the hard

choice for him. **Mayor Sarno's actions epitomize a pattern of indecision, incompetence, and worst of all, unaccountability to the School Committee, the City Council and the citizens of Springfield. I shall say it bluntly – you have neither the heart, the courage or the skill to call yourself Mayor.**

11. The residents and children of Forest Park have been betrayed by Mayor Sarno because he has chosen to support an out of town Boston developer rather than the citizens of Springfield. He has chosen to support an out of town Boston developer rather than invest in a new school for the children of Forest Park. Instead, Mayor Sarno allows politicians from Boston who dangle checks in front of him to decide when and where things get built in Springfield – so much for leadership.

You sold out your City and you did it on the cheap. \$20,000,000 is nothing compared to the dollars you could have attracted through other efforts. There are more than two schools that need to be stabilized. Instead of investing in Springfield's future, you sold out cheap.

You have now become a builder Mayor Sarno. You have become the developer of Sarno's Ghetto at Longhill Street. For the next 30 years, residents in Forest Park and Springfield will have a memorial to your disdain for the citizens of Springfield, you disregard for our community voice and it will be you who will be remembered as the Mayor who did not show courage, compassion or intelligence - you are the Mayor without clothes.

Mayor Sarno, your decision not to build a new middle school at Longhill Gardens but instead to build a 100% low income project is disgraceful

