

July 17th, 1897.

Mother M. Praxedes,
Care: Sisters of Loretto,
Loretto, Ky.,
Reverend Mother:--

Your letter of the 15th inst. authorizing me to negotiate for the purchase of Block in Webster Park, received and noted.

That part which you desired that I give you benefit of my judgment as to whether you had made the best possible selection in all things considered, was duly noted. In order to determine the matter I went out to Webster this morning in company with our Mr. McMillan and selected a site

located one block east of Father Kain's church, that is to say, one block nearer the city. It is the residence property, or rather the Homestead

of Mr. B. F. Webster and contains $6 \frac{7}{8}$ acres, so he states, -- For a general description of same I hand you herewith enclosed a letter from Mr. Webster

It is a most magnificent location, the foliage on same is very beautiful and in my judgement, much more attractive than the other site. The objection to it, however, is that it does not have the same frontage that

the Webster property has, but that is counterbalanced by the fact, First, on its having a front on what is known as Big Bend Road on the

North side, and Lockwood Avenue on the other. The street car line which you rode out on, and which runs in front of Father Kain's Church and

residence, is on Lockwood Avenue. Father Kain informed me this morning that the Lindell Road (one of the Main Street Railway Systems in the City)

has a right of way to build on the Big Bend Road. Therefore, you would have two car-lines, one running at your front and the other at rear, both

of which lines touch all of the prominent little towns in the country as well as reaching all parts of the City of St. Louis. The Lindell System

is far more important than the present line, which is on Lockwood Avenue

Second: The Webster Park property is practically a barren piece of land as compared with the Webster Homestead site. The growth of foliage, fruit

~~trees, grapes, and shade trees on the Webster property, make it exceedingly~~ beautiful and valuable for your purposes; and in my judgement it

would take at least ten years to make as handsome a place out of the Webster Park property as you find on the Webster Homestead to-day.

In addition to all of the above, there is an old frame residence of 13 rooms at present on the Webster Homestead which could be used by the

Sisters as temporary quarters. Father Kain suggested that his old church could be used for a school temporarily. Thus you will see that by the

purchase of the Webster Homestead you could experiment on the site for a school, and if you should happen to find the location impractical, avoid

the necessity of building. Not that I fear you would encounter any such experience, but it is a point in favor of the Webster Homestead. As to

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price, Webster is asking \$25,000 (Twenty-five Thousand Dollars) but states however, as you will note, that he would consider an offer over Twenty Thousand Dollars.

I had an interview with him to-day, and told him that I felt I had a party who would give him \$17,000 for the property. He declined it absolutely, and in as much as this is an entirely new location to you, I concluded I had better not do anything further until I had communicated with you.

In regard to the Webster Park location, I offered the Webster Park Association \$15,000 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars) for their block; That was declined most emphatically. They finally said, however, that they would sell for \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars), subject to the following conditions:--First, restricting the property to residence purposes only; Second:--Requiring the purchaser to grant them permission to grade the lot within four feet of Lockwood Avenue, which would take off about five feet off of the top of the whole as it is located at present. Third:--Require the purchaser to dedicate ten feet off of the lots on Lockwood Avenue so as to make Lockwood Avenue eighty feet wide. The price is all right. The cutting down of the property would in my judgement be very injurious to the site. It would mar its beauty, but greatly enhance the value of the remainder of their property. The restriction clause prohibiting anything but residences being erected might be overcome by agreement, but if they cut down the property five or six feet, it will destroy every tree on the place and in no way compare with the Webster Homestead property.

I requested Father Kain to write you in regard to the Webster Homestead giving you the benefit of his judgement as to which of the two locations would be best for your purpose. When I saw him he was of the opinion that the Homestead property would be by far the best.

I called on Mother Superior of the house on Jefferson and Pine to-day, and told her of my investigations and that I would prefer for her to go out and see the Homestead property and that I would forward her a copy of this letter so that she might know what I conveyed to you on the subject. After she had seen the property I suggested for her to write you as to what she regarded as the best of the two locations.

I told her that I expected to get an option on the Webster Homestead property, so that she could go out and investigate same, but I am unable to do so, unless it would be to take option at a greater price than I hope to be able to purchase the property for by negotiating with Mr. Webster without his knowing the purpose for which the property is intended to be used. Therefore, she will have to make her investigations in the most diplomatic way possible so as to avoid their determining that the Sisters desire the location.

You understand, of course, that I have not looked anywhere else except Webster and even in Webster confined my investigations to within two blocks of Father Kain's Church, because I understood that it was essential that you should be located in the immediate vicinity of the church.

I leave for Washington to-night and expect to arrive at Cape May,

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about the middle of next week. Mr. McMillan, our Secretary, is familiar with the situation at Webster. Should the Sisters here or yourself, desire to carry on negotiations further, while I am absent, please communicate with Mr. McMillan with the assurance that he will guard your interests with the same fidelity and care that I would myself

I expect to return home the latter part of August or first of September. If you prefer to let the matter rest until my return, I see no danger in doing so.

Very respectfully,

Festus J. Wade.