

## Jennifer Swokowski

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**From:** Robert Dewane <Robert.Dewane@WICOURTS.GOV>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 20, 2023 10:23 AM  
**To:** Jennifer Swokowski  
**Subject:** External: Public Input regarding conditional use permit for lotus recovery home

To the members of the Manitowoc City Council and Mayor Justin Nickels:

I regret that I am unable to be present at tonight's meeting, but I have fallen ill and don't want to risk getting others sick right before the holidays. Please excuse my absence but know that it takes nothing away from the weight of my remarks. I strongly urge the City Council to grant the conditional use permit for the Lake Street Property owned by Lotus. I have seen both the flyer that was circulated and the billboard that was put up by opponents to this request. This level of fear mongering is repulsive. To attempt to garner support for opposition to this request by characterizing a sober living house as a "correctional facility" should not go unmentioned. It is disgusting and genuinely beneath ethical practices for the attorney responsible for it. This level of disconnect is so outrageous, that if this attorney were to attempt to make this kind of equation in my courtroom, I would warn him that to do it again would result in my finding him in contempt. It is disingenuous and flat-out wrong. A sober living house is NOT a correctional facility. It is supposed to be a safe place where people looking to work on breaking free from their addiction to drugs can go to get help and support as they try to remake their lives. Have drugs been found in sober living houses? Yes. Have they been found in jails and prisons, as well? Yes. The bottom line is that drug addiction is simply that strong. It forces people to do things they don't want to do in ways they know they shouldn't. When one finally musters the courage and the strength to attempt to break free from their addictions, shouldn't the City look to support organizations that are willing to create these kinds of safe spaces? Obviously the answer is yes. And to this point, the City has been a strong and steadfast partner in our community's battle to stem the tide of drug addiction in its' population. I encourage you all to continue to be that strong partner and grant the requested conditional use permit to Lotus.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Robert Dewane  
Circuit Court Judge, Branch 3  
Deputy Chief Judge, District 4  
1010 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mantiowoc, WI 54220

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