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Lombard remap was self-serving

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In response to "Lombard trustees keep districts in remap," July 14, the facts lead to the conclusion that incumbency protection was the number one priority.

This is evident by Lombard's adoption of a map in which a one-block-wide section of District 2 extends two blocks into an area surrounding District 6 in order to keep an incumbent's home in District 2. This is further evident by the fact that 10 maps were dismissed for lack of incumbency protection.

We cannot know what kinds of decisions led to 19 potential maps in Lombard, because despite alternatives such as holding a workshop or a special village board meeting, Lombard trustees decided to keep the process closed by each trustee meeting separately with staff members in redrawing the boundaries, thereby deliberately thwarting of our state's Open Meetings Act.

The fact that 19 different maps resulted from those private meetings attests to the possibilities that there are all kinds of decisions that could go into redistricting: some are mandatory such as those demanded by the Voting Rights Act, and others just make sense in a healthy democracy.

If the process of redistricting doesn't include all the stakeholders, then the process becomes "malnourished" and the result is a less than healthy democracy. One consequence is fewer candidate choices at the ballot.

In contrast, if the decisions behind redistricting are made for reasons that protect the interests of the residents in the potential district rather than the interests of a the incumbent politicians, then the process will result in a healthier democracy where, for example, voters have meaningful choices of candidates on the ballot.

When politicians are in control of the process, they will act in self-serving ways. An alternative is a process that includes meaningful participation by other stakeholders.

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