

January 18, 2012

Dear members of the UDC,

I am writing to you regarding the proposed Grandview Commons Town Center Amendment Request submitted by Vandewalle & Associates, Inc., on October 19, 2011.

I disclose that I am a member of the board of directors of the McClellan Park Neighborhood Association of which Grandview Commons is a part. However, I am writing on my own behalf as a resident and home owner in the area.

Have you given a thorough review of all elevations of the proposed big box? The developer has provided views for all angles except one. This missing view is the most offensive part of the structure. As I understand it, this structure will be in excess of 30 feet and will tower over the adjacent residential properties. Why would this be allowed? I ask that you take the time to examine this thoroughly before making a decision.

I have been active on this issue for nearly two years. I can assure you there is *not* equal support for this proposal. Based on my involvement in the community which is considerable, I estimate 8 people opposed to this proposal for every 1 in favor of it. All are in favor of development but residents see this big box with polar opposite qualities to that of the neighborhoods surrounding it. I believe those in favor of it are (most typically) employees, spouses or others that stand to gain financially from the corporations that are pushing this. I believe you saw evidence of that when this proposal last came before UDC. And of course the alder of the district is lobbying for it which leaves many dismayed, confused and disappointed. Everyone I've talked to (including those in favor of this) understand that Roundy's no-compete clauses will complicate or destroy the opportunity for a true town center. If approved, it will be one more urban sprawl, big box with a massive expanse of asphalt surrounding it.

There are many options available for this land. I ask that you not fall for the "we must act now, sky is falling" spin that is being used to push this through. I had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Jeff Rosenberg in the Fall of 2011. In that meeting Mr. Rosenberg described an option of upscale apartments and condominium homes on the available land. Mr. Rosenberg described this as a good business option. I told Mr. Rosenberg that that option would be more desirable than a big box retail grocery store. At that meeting I felt that was a serious consideration and a reasonable compromise for the land owners and residents of the community. There are options. This is not a crisis.

Information from a traffic study was disclosed within the last week that is far worse than what people in the community had anticipated. Worse case scenarios expected to bring hundreds of additional cars through the neighborhood. In fact, the study revealed that number of additional vehicles will be measured in the thousands. Numbers at a recent district meeting ranged from 1,400 to 2,000 additional vehicles each day passing through the area due to this big box. This has alarmed the board of directors of the McClellan Park Neighborhood Association and they have called for a meeting with the city to further discuss the impact and safety risks this will introduce to the residential areas. I personally believe that further facts about the traffic impact need to be considered. I think this information will impact the role the UDC plays. At this time, this information is not available to you. I'm asking that you not make any recommendations until you've had an opportunity to review this information once it has been made available to you.

Ultimately, you may for some reason approve of this but tonight, you don't have the information you need to do that. A comprehensive, city managed traffic impact study needs to be conducted. Please give the community some time to understand how traffic will impact the safety and quality of life in their neighborhoods. They at least deserve this opportunity before this goes any further.

Thank you,
John Driscoll
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