



Jefferson Manor Citizens Association

JMCA
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2006–2007 Board

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MEMORANDUM

From: Jefferson Manor Citizens Association Board of Directors
To: Supervisor Dana Kauffman and Commissioner Rodney Lusk
CC: Mr. Jeff McKay and Ms. Joan Clark, Lee District Staff
Ms. Roni Robins, A.J. Dwoskin & Associates
Re: Area Plan Review Nomination 05-IV-23MV
Date: May 16, 2006

The Board of Directors of the Jefferson Manor Citizens Association (JMCA) supports the Area Plan Review (APR) proposal by the owners of the Huntington Station shopping center and Jefferson Gardens apartments (subsequently referred to jointly as "Dwoskin"). After an 8-month process of intensive community involvement and meetings with Dwoskin and its team of consultants, and county staff and officials, we have reached the following conclusions:

- A substantial number of neighborhood residents believe that the site is under-utilized and a detracting force in the neighborhood, and look forward to redevelopment that will increase commercial locations and public amenities, and establish the site as a neighborhood focal point.
- Based on the Dwoskin team's presentation of its vision for the site as well as its continuing interaction with the JMCA Board of Directors, Land Use Committee, and Transportation Committee, the JMCA Board believes that the team is committed to the goal of making the site an asset for the existing neighborhood and residents, not just an island for new residents and a profit generator for Dwoskin. This includes the goal of attracting neighborhood-serving retail and service businesses, and site design that fits within the context of and minimizes any negative impact on the existing neighborhood.
- The Dwoskin team has professed that they will be flexible in tailoring the layout of the site to minimize the impact of the redevelopment on its immediate neighbors. We are especially concerned about the possibility of a new road that would enter the site off of Monticello Road, as well as the relative lack of a buffer between the north side of the redevelopment and existing homes. We strongly prefer an alternative in which the only linkage to Monticello is a pedestrian thoroughfare, and in which the building height is stepped down somewhat on the north side. We plan to advocate for those alternatives during the rezoning approval process.
- Redevelopment of this site presents Jefferson Manor with perhaps the best opportunity it will have in a generation to push for long-awaited changes to transportation conditions in and around the neighborhood. The Dwoskin team has presented JMCA with a proposal for changes to the North Kings Highway corridor that would improve pedestrian safety and calm cut-through traffic, a concern that is perhaps highest on the list of JMCA priorities. Most of the proposed changes have near-unanimous support from neighborhood residents, including improved crosswalks and corridor landscaping.
 - The JMCA Board believes that these changes can be made without a significant net impedance of traffic flow in the area due to increased congestion, and that the improvements are appropriate for the area immediately surrounding a transit station and would lead to increased safety for all users.
 - Although many of these corridor improvements could happen regardless of the success of the APR proposal and at later stages in the redevelopment process, the JMCA Board believes that many of the proposed changes are long overdue and that pedestrian safety conditions along North Kings Highway constitute a crisis that must be addressed as soon as possible. In addition, the APR process presents JMCA with the opportunity to expand language in the Comprehensive Plan to call for

changes to transportation conditions in the area and specify additional criteria for new development, thus ensuring that development in the area, by Dwoskin or any other entity, will be more in line with JMCA goals and meet certain standards.

- Although some of these improvements may be required of, and therefore funded by, the developer, it has become clear that many of the desired changes will require the combined efforts of JMCA, the Dwoskin team, and county staff and officials. Preservation of a unified front is regarded as the best way to build momentum for the changes and to leverage additional funds for the desired improvements. The Dwoskin team has already committed its own expertise and funds to move these improvements forward and has pledged to continue to do so.
- In addition, the APR process and the dialogue with public officials that these proposals have catalyzed also gives JMCA a unique opportunity to push for additional neighborhood priorities, most importantly the repaving of neighborhood roads and traffic calming measures to combat cut-through traffic.

The JMCA Board of Directors recognizes that the APR proposal increases the maximum number of new residential units that can be built on the site, and that such an increase potentially can carry negative consequences for the surrounding neighborhood, including increased traffic congestion and possible dilution of the residential real estate market in the area. However, the JMCA Board also recognizes that not supporting the proposal puts in jeopardy the unique opportunity to move forward with long-anticipated neighborhood improvements. Weighing the options, and informed by input received from neighborhood residents over the past several months, the JMCA Board believes that it is in the best interest of the neighborhood to support the APR proposal.

Sincerely,

Josh Delmonico
JMCA President