

Councillor McNulty and committee,

Schedule 2 to the Minutes of the  
Planning Committee Meeting of  
Tuesday, October 8, 2013.

This Walmart mall will be one of the worst-ever affronts to our community unless the plan is fixed or terminated.

Before it goes further, please require the developers to fix the flaws that you and the public have revealed. It's neither fair nor practical for the public to have to deal with it all in a public hearing.

A citizen named Rick Xavier revealed one basic flaw. He wrote to you, and a planner named Brian replied that "The Alexandra Neighbourhood Land Use Plan establishes the vision of a complete and *balanced* community." In turn, Rick explained how the application "certainly does *not* meet the standard of contributing to a complete and *balanced* community." Rick also explained in the *Richmond Review*.

I went to the Alexandra plan too. The maximum size for Alexandra retail is *100,000* square feet. The proposed Walmart is *more than 60%* larger. That typifies how the *mall* plan feels free to ignore the OCP.

I must add that Alexandra retail *can* be larger for one stated reason: to achieve "high quality urban form." However, the vastly oversized Walmart building would achieve *terrible* urban form. It would deface our priceless legacy of world-class viewsapes. It would achieve immense harm to quality of life in the Garden City Lands area forever.

The developer has *already* harmed the once-thriving ecosystem of the Alderbridge wildlife corridor. And that includes ESA along Alderbridge that applied at the time and *supposedly* still applies. Perversely, the applicant now implies that it's fine to wipe out every vestige of the ecosystem *because* the applicant has already compromised it.

Jim Wright, President, Garden City Conservation Society. Address: 8300 Osgoode Drive, Richmond.

As a citizen, I think the applicant should be held responsible for restoration, *not* rewarded for harming nature.

Richmond's Alexandra plan says that "significant effort should be made to incorporate mature vegetation elements." That applies to the mixed urban forest in the marred ESA of the remnant ribbon of Alderbridge wildlife corridor the citizens want to keep. It's roughly at street level, and the developer could still raise the surface behind it for the mall.

Even if they allow 20 more metres for woods than the tiny 3 metres being proposed, they'll have lots of space available after right-sizing the mall. My main concern is that it be done in a highly results-oriented way.

By the way, the developers could do it at a level of excellence with transformative results for them and us, but that's another topic.

I *will* briefly mention the economic loss the proposal would cause. If the legacies of the Garden City Lands are *saved*, our central park will retain immense potential to make Richmond a tourist destination. However, currently the Walmart mall will destroy the natural viewscales, and the optical illusion that the mall is *on* the lands makes that even worse. The only tourism value of the *Walmart* City Lands would be for ridicule.

But the social, physical and spiritual wellness of our own citizens is *most* important, and for time reasons I'll bet you read my Digging Deep column about it last Friday. Even if the problems would only halve the wellness values of the park, that's like sucking out half of the \$59 million purchase price *and* half of the annual \$1.6 million opportunity cost. Again, though, while that economic effect is large, the loss to nature and community wellness matters far more.