

To Public Hearing
Date: November 18, 2013
Item #: 7
Re: RZ 10-528877
4660-4740 Garden City Road
9040-9500 Alexandra Road

Schedule 10 to the Minutes of the
Council Meeting for Public
Hearings held on Monday,
November 18, 2013.

Mayor and Councillors

From: Mayor and Councillors
Sent: Thursday, 03 October 2013 4:13 PM
To: 'Shawn Sangha'
Subject: RE: Smartcentres application for Walmart in West Cambie

cc: Wayne Craig
Joe Greig - Fyi

This is to acknowledge and thank you for your email of October 3, 2013 to the Mayor and Councillors, in connection with the above matter, a copy of which has been forwarded to the Mayor and each Councillor for their information.

In addition, your email has been referred to Wayne Craig, Director of Development for response. If you have any questions or further concerns at this time, please call Mr. Craig at 604.276.4000.

Thank you again for taking the time to make your views known.

Yours truly,

Michelle Jansson
Manager, Legislative Services
City of Richmond, 6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
Phone: 604-276-4006 | Email: mjansson@richmond.ca

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-----Original Message-----

From: Shawn Sangha [mailto:shawnsangha@yahoo.ca]
Sent: Thursday, 03 October 2013 12:10 AM
To: Mayor and Councillors
Cc: stevesangha@shaw.ca; news@richmondreview.com; editor@richmond-news.com
Subject: Smartcentres application for Walmart in West Cambie



Dear Mr. Mayor and councillors,

I am writing in response to the upcoming Planning Committee meeting tentatively scheduled for October 8th in regards to the proposed Walmart development in the West Cambie area.

My family owns two strata properties located at 4560 and 4562 Garden City Road which are part of the proposed connector road realignment b/w Leslie Road and Alexandra Road. My brother, Dr. Steven Sangha, also wrote to you on September 18th and I would like to reiterate some additional concerns and disturbing oversights we would like you to reconsider.

The councillors are absolutely correct to be concerned and try to nullify any current or future liability of the connector road properties against the taxpayers of Richmond. How does Smart Centres know the exact price in 10 years from now? They cannot even predict who will own the properties in 2023, let alone the asking price! This is a false and dangerous presumption that will leave Richmond taxpayers, including my family who has proudly resided in Richmond for over 40 years, on the hook for a large corporation's goal to execute its mandate.

During the last Planning committee meeting on September 17th, Mr. Victor Wei stated the City's Real Estate division was involved in determining appropriate land costs for the two

properties (one of ours) for acquisition. However, nobody from the City has EVER contacted us to discuss any plans about costs to acquire these lands. The City Real Estate division's "involvement" is severely one-sided and appears to be communicating strictly with the developer and NOT the actual owner(s) of the properties. This seems to be perplexing since the proposal has been in the planning stages for over a decade. Even after the keen questions posed by the respected councillors on the Planning Committee, there have been no discussion/calls/contact made from City staffers as vaguely suggested at the September 17th meeting. It is a false presumption on the part of the developer and the City's staff, who are responsible for forwarding the information to Planning committee, to assume and possibly suggest the final sale price of the "holdout" properties on Garden City Road without the consent of the property owners.

Both Sandra Kaiser and Mike Gilman have stated at the September 17th, 2013 meeting, and I quote for the record, "their company would NOT provide the balance of funds needed to acquire the remaining two properties in order facilitate the connector road should the current amount proposed be insufficient". This hardly sounds like a confident analysis or prediction after having City staffers and Smart Centres claim they have done their homework in a diligent, accurate and predictable manner.

Moreover, we find the comments of GM Planning and Development Joe Erceg's suggestion that the City has the option to expropriate our property for the connector road preposterous. We also thank Councillors McNulty and Steves for challenging this suggestion. Again, another false assumption by senior city staff to make the city liable for the connector road. I sincerely hope the City will not enter the business of "kicking" owners/tenants out of their homes and land when the developers themselves should continue their own negotiation(s) for a private acquisition they are strictly responsible for.

When one takes a close look at the Garden City, Leslie and Alexandra Roads, there are some important details that the developer and City staffers failed to mention in any of the previous Planning Committee meetings. The two largest and closest competitors for Walmart, both Target and Loblaws (aka Superstore) are within a two to five minute drive from this proposed development.

Target, the new major anchor at Landowne Mall, is set to open within weeks and will draw a heavy volume of additional traffic down the Alderbridge corridor and along Garden City Road.

Superstore is currently partaking in a \$4 million dollar renovation and upgrade to their store on Number 3 Road to match the modern day selection and amenities offered by their competitors Target and Walmart. Superstore is located at the West end of Leslie Road. Even without the Walmart development adding 45 to 50 new stores, current traffic patterns show a hundreds of vehicles daily trying to avoid Alderbridge road and transverse their way along Leslie Road to Garden City Road or Alexandra Road between Garden City Road and # 3 Road.

The terminus point for this high volume of diversion is at the Pennzoil Auto Centre and Car Wash located at Alexandra and Garden City Road. A constant stream of vehicles dangerously passes through this private complex on Alexandra road adjacent to the Harvest Montessori School next door where families stop to take their kids to pre-school.

If this state of congestion already exists at the "inner roads" of Alexandra, Leslie and Garden City Road, imagine the heightened chaos and risk to the safety of commuters/pedestrians and associated congestion and liability that the new Walmart development would bring. Victor Wei suggested intersection improvement can adequately manage the anticipated increase in traffic volume. As a regular commuter of the Garden City Road/Alderbridge way intersection, I strongly suggest intersection improvements are needed now, regardless of additional Walmart development at the corner. If the proposed Walmart development is to proceed, the connector road should NOT be delayed for 10 years, rather steps taken to ensure its construction be built concurrently with the proposed development.

In addition, there are several Garden City Road homes accessing their properties off the back lane from Alexandra Road. For these homes, there are no driveways off Garden City Road. Alexandra Road is not merely a service road as suggested by Smart Centres, it is a life line to the families of these homes. We know...we lived there since the early 1970's. With the congestion of heavy trucks, speeding delivery vehicles and a vast number of store patrons having access to the road, the flow of traffic will instantly back up more at the intersection of Alexandra and Garden City Road, thereby "choking" the residents trying to access their homes. I am very interested to see if the forecasted traffic counts Councillor McNulty has requested for from the developer includes the effect of the service road on these longtime residents.

Finally, I would like to comment on the potential loss of 0.4 acres of ESA land. The 10 years of degradation and neglect by Smart Centres between Alexandra Road and Alderbridge Way on their previously purchased properties is sad to say the least. This shouldn't be a reason for the City and its residents to lose an additional 0.4 acres of ESA land. My parents have proudly owned/operated farmland throughout Richmond for 36 years and continue to do so under the City of Richmond business licensee "Blueberry Lane". They/we don't farm for profit. Trust me, the margins are so thin and the year long work is strenuous, even with the advent of machinery over recent years. We farm because of the value it brings to the City, the food sustainability for our long term customers throughout the City and the acres of livable green space we maintain for ourselves and our children. The City's goal and mandate to protect and preserve ESA land needs to be respected.

The green space replacement suggested by the developer is an elevated deck. Are you kidding me?. People are coming to shop at Walmart and its neighbouring tenants, not to walk around a loosely accessible garden. This elevated green space should be a community garden for the Richmond's food bank and its users OR an educational grounds for local school children, a concept similar to Richmond's Community Garden. I understand that would carve into the Walmart's produce sections sales and profitability, but as the current proposal stands, they would save money on the connector road AND pass on the liability risk to the City anyways.

In closing, we thank you for your ongoing critical evaluation of this development. Our request as loyal, life long Richmondites and property owners is for the connector road to be an immediately constructed prerequisite for issuance of a development permit, at no risk or cost liability to the City of Richmond taxpayers and the reevaluation of the ESA land potentially lost. Otherwise, we will continue to look after our long term home and the ESA land remain in its current humble state.

Kind regards,
Shawn Sangha on behalf of the Sangha family
T: 604-312-7067