

January 13, 2012

Dear _____,

Last evening I was present at the community meeting regarding the Proposed Grocery Store at Grandview Commons. My assessment is that most of the estimated 150 people present were against the proposal.

We listened politely to Steve Cover, Director, City of Madison Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development; Michael Waidelich, Principle Planner, City of Madison Planning Division; and the representative of the team developing the town center including the proposed grocery store.

As instructed, we dutifully submitted our questions which were answered dispassionately answered by representatives of the appropriate departments, divisions, and developers.

In my view, the neighborhood folks were drawn into asking the wrong questions. Or the questions asked were polite informational questions. How many square feet? How many semis unloading in a day? How many parking spaces? How many feet along the pedestrian walkway from one location to another? Who's responsible for landscaping or retaining walls? How many cars pass along Cottage Grove Road in 24 hours?

Behind, underneath these questions lie the far more important ones. Who's asking for this grocery store? Whom will the store benefit? (Who profits?) What's the impact on land use or urban sprawl? How is quality of life diminished? How is the environment (land, air, water, light) degraded?

As I indicated earlier, we were a nice, polite audience. No one stood up and declared, "We are opposed to this project. We do not want it. We do not need it. It does bad things to the neighborhood. Stop telling us that if we want a town center, then we have to accept the grocery store which is a blatant variation on 'vulture capitalism.'" In short, the nice, polite people were steamrolled.

The proposed grocery store offends the intelligence and the spirit of the folks in the surrounding neighborhoods. The development of this project should be stopped immediately.

Passionately,

Jon C. Schultz
6017 Cottontail Trail
Madison, Wisconsin 53718