



HIGHLAND ACRES NIA

%2110 SE Swygart St
Topeka, KS 66605
August 6, 2013

RE: PUD 13/1 Walmart

Topeka Planning & Zoning Board
Topeka, KS

Greetings,

Highland Acres NIA (HANIA) excitingly endorses the approval of the Walmart Commercial Center, with the following concerns and possible solutions. HANIA at our meeting on July 1st found 82% of our members felt that the Walmart development would be beneficial to our neighborhood. Nearly 53% of our members felt the development would be EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL. A copy of the recap of the survey is available at Topeka P&Z website.

HANIA had the following 4 major concerns, all of which dealt with safety issues for our neighborhood. Concern 1 & 2 were resolved and we thank City Planning and Walmart for their participation in the resolution even before the July 24th Neighborhood Meeting.

1. CONCERN: There is considerable pedestrian traffic from the multi-family units to the East of proposed WM Drive "B" on SE 25th St. There are many elderly, handicap in motorized wheelchairs and baby strollers used by pedestrians in this area. There is an above normal amount of pedestrian traffic that crosses the proposed 36'+ entrance. The concern is since the traffic study does not require a traffic signal, how can pedestrian safety be best achieved crossing this expansive entrance with three lanes of traffic?

*******THIS CONCERN HAS BEEN RESOLVED*******

2. CONCERN: The HANIA was approved by the City for a Federal Grant for 450' of sidewalk from the SE Corner of SE Burr St. west to existing sidewalk. This approval is awaiting funding from Washington, DC. With the proposed entrance the HANIA will have to reapply next year for the approximate 220' of sidewalk. If that application were approved, the sidewalk would not be installed till 2015. During this time pedestrian traffic would be on a dirt path or street, as currently transverse, to the West side of entrance "B". HANIA considers this an extreme pedestrian safety hazard and unacceptable.

*******THIS CONCERN HAS BEEN RESOLVED*******

Concerns 3 & 4 remain a high priority that HANIA hopes can be resolved and become part of the final PUD specifications.

3. CONCERN: HANIA cannot determine from the site plan, answers to our concern for above average lighting of all areas of the entrances, parking and around the building. Our neighborhood noticed a reduction of crime and increase in the sense of safety when USD 501 installed special lighting at Highland Park High School in 2011. We would like more detail and clarification about security lighting.

DISCUSSION: CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED) HAS BEEN A PART OF CRIME PREVENTION OF TPD FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. CPTED HAS BEEN EXPLAINED IN A PROGRAM TO HANIA MEMBERSHIP AND IS EFFECTIVE FOR BOTH HOMES AND BUSINESSES. WHEN CUSTOMERS AND NEIGHBORS FEEL SAFE IT IS A WIN FOR THE BUSINESS AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

IT IS HANIA DESIRE THAT WALMART MEET OR EXCEEDS THE LUMEN SPECIFICATIONS OF HPHS LIGHTING, AROUND THE WALMART BUILDING, PARKING AREA AND BOTH ENTRANCES.

4. CONCERN: HANIA cannot determine from the site plan if there are sufficient barriers to restrict access to areas to the East and South of the Walmart property. Our concern is that pedestrian traffic is not accessible to the property except through the two entrances and not through Eastern and Southern areas of the property. We were encouraged by the restrictive barrier around properties to North but inquire for more details concerning barriers to residential areas to the East and South.

DISCUSSION: WALMART PROPOSES A 9 FOOT BERM WITH TREES AND LANDSCAPING ON THE TOP OF THE BERMS AT THE BACK OF THEIR BUILDING. HANIA HIGHLY ENDORSES THE BERM AND LANDSCAPING AS PROPOSED. THE BERM DOES OFFER A NOISE BARRIER AND AESTHETICALLY ENHANCES THE VIEW FOR RESIDENTS LIVING EAST OF THE STORE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT WILL DO LITTLE TO IMPEDE ILLICIT PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC TO AND FROM THE NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE EAST AND SOUTH.

AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AT THE AUGUST 5TH HANIA MEETING, AND UPON A UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE MEMBERS PRESENT, HANIA HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING TO DETER ILLICIT PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC THRU THE NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE EAST AND SOUTH OF THE WALMART COMMERCIAL COMPLEX.

HANIA RESPECTFULLY REQUESTS A WROUGHT IRON FENCE, AT LEAST EIGHT (8) FEET HIGH, AROUND THE ENTIRE PERIMETER OF THE WALMART EAST AND SOUTH PROPERTY LINES. STARTING FROM THE POINT AT THE 25TH ST ENTRANCE WHERE PROPERTY LINE TURNS SOUTHEAST NEAR THE DEER CREEK COMMUNITY CENTER, PROCEEDING ALONG THE PROPERTY LINE TO THE MOST EASTERN PROPERTY LINE, THEN SOUTH TO THE SOUTH PROPERTY LINE, THEN WEST UNTIL IT INTERSECTS WITH THE WOUGH T IRON FENCE OF THE EXISTING STORAGE LOT FACILITY.

ATTACHMENTS:

The following (2) written attachments are from adjoining property owner:

1. Attachment (1) is from Dr. Beryl New, Principal, Highland Park High School

From: [BERYL NEW](#)

To: [Bob Schneider](#)

On Aug 6, 2013, at 8:05 AM, "BERYL NEW" <bnew@topeka.k12.ks.us> wrote:

To Whom It May Concern:

The administrative leadership of Highland Park High School is in full support of the construction of the Walmart at 27th and California Avenue. We believe that this store will provide families on the east side of Topeka with excellent shopping options. We will be active in communicating to our high school students the importance of entering and exiting the facility and the adjacent grounds safely and appropriately. Students will be instructed to use the sidewalks, cross the street at the crosswalks, and use the pedestrian lights when directed to do so. This information will be reviewed at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year as opportunities arise. Our school resource officers will also be available throughout the day to monitor appropriate visits to the store, such as at lunchtime for those students who have open lunch privileges.

The HANIA voted unanimously to request an 8' wrought iron fence around the entire east and south Walmart property line and keep berms and landscaping proposed. Highland Park staff support the plan to install the 8' wrought iron fence and to maintain an open view of the area for neighborhood security and beautification reasons. It was really great to see the different interests of the neighborhood discuss and agree. We are excited to join in this partnership to support the Walmart store.

> --submitted by Dr. Beryl New, Principal of Highland Park High School

2. Attachment (2) is from Eric Mitchell, Property Manager, Century Plaza Apartments

From: Century Plaza

To: Bob Schneider

Hi Bob,

Just wanted to take a moment and express our concerns of the Wal Mart that is to be built in the future off of 25th Street. Our property is located on SE 28th Street the north end of our property will be close to the south end of Wal Mart's property. Our concerns are pedestrian traffic and noise, Century Plaza Apartments is a quiet senior community all of our residents are 62 years of age or older and/or disabled. We already get some pedestrian traffic from people going to/from Dillons with the addition of a Wal Mart that will significantly increase quite a bit with this increase in traffic it could possibly subject our residents and property to criminal activity which is a serious concern. A portion of the north end of our property is fenced in however there are two vacant lots of land on either side of us and no barrier to prevent people from neighboring homes and surrounding communities from cutting through to get to their destination. We want our residents to have comfort and security in their home and would feel more at ease if there was a barrier preventing people from trekking through the two adjacent vacant fields leaving them only access to Wal Mart through their main entrances.

Thank you,

Eric Mitchell

Property Manager

Century Plaza Apartments

2200 SE 28th St

Topeka, KS 66605

CONCLUSION:

Again, HANIA ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORTS THE APPROVAL of the PUD 13/1, but asks the P&Z Board to carefully consider the additions herein to the PUD specifications and thus increase the safety of our neighborhood.

HANIA is thankful that Walmart sees the economic opportunity that exists in the underserved eastside of Topeka. Our membership survey showed that 93% want Walmart to become an ACTIVE member of the HANIA. We observed, in our limited time, working with the Walmart Corporate staff that they truly desire to be a good neighbor. HANIA looks forward to working in partnership with Walmart and exemplifying the HANIA motto "Together We Can Do It".

This communication was unanimously approved by HANIA membership at our August 5th meeting.

Respectfully,

s/s

Beverlee Schneider, President
Highland Acres NIA