

**Schedule 39 to the Minutes of the
Council Meeting for Public
Hearings held on Monday,
November 18, 2013.**

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

**WAL-MART SUPERCENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL
PUBLIC HEARING NOVEMBER 18, 2013**

My name is **Deirdre Whalen** and I reside at **13631 Blundell Road, Richmond**. Thank you for the opportunity to address Richmond City Council on this important subject of the Wal-Mart Smart Centres development proposal. I am **opposed to the development** and will state my six reasons why.

1. Wal-Mart does not contribute to a complete and balanced community.

What does a complete and balanced community look like? Terra Nova on Richmond's tony west side is a good example. In Terra Nova we have a medium-sized grocery store, small restaurants and services such as a credit union, insurance agency and a vet. Parks are close by and residents can walk on safe sidewalks or bike on a myriad of trails. The roads are gently curved to slow and calm traffic and bus stops are nearby. Contrast this to the proposed Wal-Mart development - a mega-mall full of big box stores, an immense parking lot covering up the natural landscape, and green roofs instead of park space. A highway dividing the mall from residents, no services, no bus stops and no bike trails.

2. Wal-Mart increases road congestion and does not contribute to building neighbourhood.

I understand the Wal-Mart Smart Centres proposal included a big concession to the City by agreeing to finance a High Way, a horizontal slash east to west through the newly built condo and townhouse developments. A highway for easy access for out-of-towners certainly does nothing to contribute to building community in the newly developed Alexandra neighbourhood. Why is it that Terra Nova residents get gently curving roads and natural parks but Alexandra residents get a highway and "green roofs" on parking garages for their children?

3. Wal-Mart lessens the ability for residents to choose alternatives.

The proposed Wal-Mart Smart Centres development eliminates real choices. Need food? Drive to Wal-Mart! Want a bank? Credit can be arranged at Wal-Mart! How about a family style restaurant? McDonalds at Wal-Mart for your dining pleasure! Invite your in-laws to stay in Richmond, but not in a hotel- in Wal-Mart's parking lot - for free! Choices? Right, as long as it's Wal-Mart.

4. Wal-Mart kills off locally owned businesses.

Wal-Mart's aggressive pricing practice makes it virtually impossible for local businesses to survive. Even though a local business will give you personalized service and high quality goods, they can't stand up against Wal-Mart's assault on prices. In one US state, Wal-Mart expanded to 60 stores and in this same time span hundreds of stores closed, including 555 grocery stores, 591 building and hardware supply stores, 161 variety shops, 158 clothing stores and 116 pharmacies. Market analysts say that for every new Wal-

Mart Supercenter that opens, two local supermarkets close and 150 retail jobs are lost.

5. Wal-Mart profit does not stay in the community.

The net worth of the heirs of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton is more than Bill Gates and Warren Buffet combined, about \$90 billion. The Walton family makes nearly \$1 billion a year in dividends from Wal-Mart. Whereas with local businesses, the money and profits stay in Richmond, with Wal-Mart the money goes directly into the pockets of one American family and their shareholders.

6. Wal-Mart flaunts labour standards and environmental laws.

International labour experts have exposed numerous labor abuses in Wal-Mart's supplier factories, mostly in China and Bangladesh, revealing child labor abuses and pay as low as 3 cents an hour. Workers in stores in the US and Canada report they are required to work unpaid "off-the-clock" hours after their shifts to restock shelves and are denied overtime. Workers efforts to organize are openly attacked and stores close if workers are successful in bringing in a union. They have been fined a number of times by the American Environmental Protection Agency for violating the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act. They pay the fines (in the millions) and pledge to do better.

Wal-Mart acts like its own country, making up its own rules. It ignores labour and environmental laws and even if they occasionally have to pay a fine, it is much cheaper than doing business within the letter of the law. In fact, Wal-Mart was ousted from investor benchmark The Domini 400 Social index. This index includes companies with positive records on issues such as employee and human relations, product safety, environmental safety, and corporate governance. Wal-Mart certainly does not fit the criteria.

In conclusion, if people really need to shop at Walmart, they can drive to the outskirts of cities next door – to Vancouver's Marine Drive or New Westminster's Queensborough. This mega-mall does not belong in the center of Richmond. If it goes ahead as is, City Councillors will have agreed to the worst deal since their bright idea to put high-rises on the Garden City Lands (Cllr. Steves excluded).

Thank you,

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