

Proposed Apartments, Garbage Transfer Station Require Strong Villas Resident Opposition

By Lee Harris

April 6, 2009 – Many residents turned-out at the Lawrence Government Center tonight to hear a proposal for building a massive apartment complex on the Northwest corner of 56th Street and Carroll Road. The representation was good, but the Lawrence Planning Committee, meeting without public input, voted to send the proposal to the full Lawrence City Council. That meeting is scheduled for April 30th at 6:30 p.m.

A public meeting will be held on April 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the Lawrence Government Center. Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) will be taking public input on the proposal to allow a Garbage Transfer Station at the Waste Management operation at 56th and Pendleton Pike.

Each of these proposals, if approved, will impact every owner in the Villas and homeowners in all the Winding Wood neighborhoods. Will it would be nice to provide a big drawing for you to study, this document hints at what to expect.

550 Apartment Units Proposed

If this development is approved 554 apartments with parking allocated for 871 cars will be constructed in two phases. (Site Map PDF) Members of the Planning Committee were directed NOT to discuss the project with anyone. Lawrence Mayor Paul Ricketts was asked after the meeting was adjourned if there were any impact reports on the project that covered roads, sewers, schools, etc. He said that he just received a thick package of papers on the proposal and had not been able to review them or study them in detail.

Ricketts suggested that residents interested in seeing these documents contact his office in a couple of days and he will do what he can to make them available. The Mayor's office phone is 545-6191. <http://www.cityoflawrence.org/>

Garbage Transfer Station

The IDEM meeting on April 14 creates a confrontational situation from the start. The City of Lawrence and residents in the surrounding neighborhoods can have this transfer station approved by the State. Approval will bring garbage trucks from surrounding states loaded with compacted garbage to be deposited at the facility, sorted, and then transferred to a landfill. These 'garbage trucks' are semi tractor-trailer loads which will come to the facility 12-hours a day Monday through Friday and eight hours on Saturday.

Jonathan Little, a Lawrence attorney, is spear-heading a major effort to turn-out as many people as possible to oppose this plan. A flyer proved by Little points out that a development at this site will impact future retail development in the area, a strong possibility of lower property values, plus the noise, congestion and pollution associated with this operation.

Asked why IDEM was considering this location rather than expanding the Transfer Station just off the Mount Comfort exit of I-70 Little related that he had tried to get IDEM to consider it and brokered a possible property swap to make that workable. IDEM was unsympathetic.

Little believes the only chance of stopping this Garbage Transfer Station is to pack the house next Tuesday, April 14. Citizen input is what it is all about and if you fear public speaking, you can submit your opposition in writing. For more information on this proposal contact Elsie Lytle, 823-4717.

Please Join in Opposition

Attending both meetings can make a difference. Mark the dates and times on your calendar now:

OPPOSE GARBAGE TRANSFER STATION - April 14 – 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.,
Public Assembly Room, Lawrence Government Center, 59th Street and Post Road.

OPPOSE MASSIVE APARTMENT DEVELOPMENT - April 30 – 6:30 p.m. –
Public Assembly Room, Lawrence Government Center, 59th Street and Post Road.