

November 5, 2021
City of West Allis
7525 W Greenfield Ave
West Allis, Wisconsin

Re: Common Council Meeting November 16, 2021
Comments on Proposed Amend Zoning Ordinance 2040 Comprehensive plan

Greetings:

The owners of the Southtown Plaza Shopping Center located at 2908 S 108th Street (Tax Parcel 519-0339-019) want to share our concern about the potential adverse economic effect with changing property zoning from C-4 to C-3. In particular eliminating "nominal price retail" facilities which would include Dollar Tree, Dollar General, Popshef, Five Below and Ollies Discount Store.

Southtown Plaza was developed more than 25 years ago with bay depths of 125 to 200 feet deep. At the time there was an abundance of tenants with space requirements ranging from 10,000 to 25,000 square feet. Today many of the retailers who formerly would lease "deep bay" stores have ceased or cut their size requirements. This is largely due to the competition from the e-commerce market with overnight delivery, no bricks and mortar overhead (other than warehouse space) and on line shopping offering cheaper prices and free returns.

One example of a community which enacted a similar restriction is South Holland, IL. In 2000 South Holland refused to permit a dollar store to open in a closed Walgreens at 162224 South Park Ave. This facility sat vacant for 16 years before it was torn down and replaced with a smaller footprint restaurant use. Stores that sit vacant for extended time become obsolete and have an adverse effect on adjoining tenants due to the decrease in cross shopping traffic.

Southtown Plaza has had a number of mid-size retailers declare Bankruptcy including Hancock Fabrics March 2007 (which is now leased to Dollar Tree and would be non-conforming under the proposed C-3 zoning) and Chuck E Cheese March 2020.

We strongly urge West Allis to permit dollar and discount outlet stores in an existing center in this district with bay depths of 100 feet or more. This will allow owners of somewhat obsolete deep bay stores to market to nominal priced retail users which today is the largest retailing group entering into leases on stores ranging between 10,000 and 25,000 square feet.

Sincerely



Dale Dobroth
Manager