



# Community Meeting: North DeKalb Mall Redevelopment [Apr 26]

Thanks to [Medlock Area Neighborhood Association, Inc.](#)

*These are notes from tonight's meeting. If corrections are made at a later date, they will be annotated.*

Q = question from audience

A = Answer from developer or comment from another audience member

DeKalb Mall Development Meeting  
200 chairs, probably 250 people

Dan Webb ran the meeting.

Site right now is 50 acres, town center C2

Lost tenants like Macy's, lost others, internet sale impact  
Trying to do something more market-appropriate

(Describing the site map)

New theater to the right, food hall; hardscape/courtyard outside food hall surrounded by retail and food space, smaller retail kiosks. 2 stories, 2<sup>nd</sup> story is 2500 sq ft offices

More retail/restaurant to the west

Blank area is designed for residents 425 apts, 40-50 town homes

Residential facing floodplain

Costco, gas pumps, "power retail center"

Lease rights/obligations to relocate Burlington, etc to that area during constructions

Hotel parcel on east side

Won't see back of buildings

No plan for hotel, marriot-type

Have made "concessions" – accommodate path trail, would provide lighting, clean up greenspace

Early in process, zoning not filed yet, aiming May 3 deadline

ARC will review application

Chuckles at traffic implications

Reality: C2 means any amount of retail could go in, could have significant traffic anyway due to zoning

Question about destroying floodplain?

Make area more usable, access to [N. DeKalb Mall community garden](#), [Clyde Shepherd Nat Preserve](#)

After [ARC review](#) 3-4 months, regional impact study in Aug/Sept then to zoning

Q: In advance of demolition, reuse/deconstruction for non-profits? Needs to be arranged well in advance.  
Removal of useful items for resale, benefit agencies

A: will make a note of it

Q: is another comparable development in Atlanta?

A: [TownBrookhaven](#) (more townhomes/units) or [Perimeter Place](#), smaller than [Avalon](#) in Alpharetta

Q: What about hotel?

A: 5 story, 150 rm hotel; no more info yet. Probably Marriot or Hilton

Q: is there enough demand?

A: yes, lots of interest

Q: Traffic – getting out of subdivision. Orion main entrance? Current traffic patterns and how they work with development?

A: Orion considered main entrance by owners. Traffic will be studied exhaustively, full traffic study will be available. Study larger area, when school in session.

Q: Water, sewage, potholes, what when we have a drought?

A: Conversation about storm water, sewage. There is sewage impact and what will be increase or decrease? Working through those issues. Possibly upgrades

Q: Multi-family, is all parking for residents or do they share deck on foodcourt?

A: probably wrapped deck

Q: creek—construction runoff, contamination

A: will follow law, monitored by engineering team and county

Q: Pedestrian-friendly but see huge swath of buildings, have some pedestrian break in the middle. Excited to work with [PATH](#),

A: hard to see but finer level of detail should show pedestrian access

Q: detention area: can do as an amenity vs. big mudhole

A: will look at that

Q: Excited about development, mentioned [PATH](#)... dangerous crossing on N Druid Hills, improve access for that neighborhood

Q: using any solar or update the electrical/utilities to be more environmentally safe?

A: have not heard of that. Question now is zoning, those other engineering details are premature

Q: Are there a lot of jr boxes/anchors in addition to Costco. As we sit in empty store, will these be Amazon-proof?

A: there are existing tenants with right to relocate, power center is for them to relocate. Business that are doing well will relocate. Around new food court is smaller scale space for retail,

Q: as opposed to [Northlake](#), everything is demolished here?

A: true

Q: Is this drawing on line/be future drawings online?

A: filing with County. Drawings will be available May 3 for filing.

Q: Could you tell rationale for site selection for Costco? It backs to private residences, trucks coming and going.

A: issue being discussed; loading area sunken in Townhaven Costco. But discussion continues

Q: Left/right turns, lights. Volume is much higher than light cycle allows. Consider raingardens to catch runoff. Sufficient tree plantings. Housing is skyrocketing in cost, what is your price point on rentals, can do 10% for low-income housing? (audience claps)

A: Does not know price points, too early. Multi-family units would be rentals. A significant would be workforce housing (for rentals).

Q: Difficult to drive around here, expect robust pedestrian/cycle access. Public greenspace, public music events?

A: 50-acre site, there will be robust sidewalk network; focus for greenspace is no back.

Q: ACTIVE greenspace

A: will talk about it

Q: Where will [PATH](#) connectivity be located?

A: wherever you want it

Q: Noise? Security/safety, fence is knocked down.

A: discussing what to do with that.

Q: PATH: we @ LITTLE CREEK—there is very little connectivity from other side of Orion. Current sidewalk, curb cut for wheelchair blocked by guardrail. County talked of connecting across Lawrenceville a long time ago. Any way to connect to Clyde Shepherd? (clapping)

A: Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve is interested in being a partner, discussing

Q: Marshall Orson—housing and impact on schools, and traffic. Service to schools in cluster. School system left out of planning process. Want to support community but are you factoring school and traffic impact (applause)

A: absolutely

Q: This may be premature, concern for current businesses. New developments look great but are bringing chains. I want to see something in this plan for “mom and pop” store, non-profits, others to be able to afford to be in this area.

A: There are areas for smaller scale businesses. Power center is to relocate current big boxes.

Q: Plans for [Emory shuttle](#)?

A: Heard about this recently. No details

Q: Outer loop will on outside perimeter?

A: secondary loop more on west site, primary drive center of site

Traffic will change a bit

Q: Conversation with MARTA – routes?

A: unknown, can talk more, too early to discuss

Q: Shuttle has impacted road integrity.

Q: Around property, you have Horse Farm, Clyde Shepherd Nat Preserve. Adding 400+ apts... when we don't know full impact of other apartments recently built will impact. Valley brook Rd –one way in and out.

A: traffic study will be more intensive than previous developments.

Q: also impact on CSNP and Horse Farm: noise impact on wildlife/animals. A lot of us bought in here because of canopy.

A: this area is already developed

Q: It will NOT be the same. You said there is no impact

A: undisturbed in terms of current us. Fuqua was a church and 33 houses, that was more of an impact.

Q: Who is traffic engineer?

A: [Kimberly Horne](#)

Q: you said traffic could improve?

A: study of intersections, sync lights,

Q: more people, how can it improve?

A: people can do a lot of things without getting in care. Some reduction in traffic

Q: if all works to plan, deadlines?

A: May 3 + [DRI process](#) = summer DeKalb Co... so end of year, so 8-9 months. Then 4-6 months permitting, then construction can begin. It will be phased (power center built). It will be a while. Will get more info.

Q: When/how participate in regional impact—input from public?

A: DRI review is not public, 3 public meetings, etc. that all still applies.

Q: Suggestion: people are interested in seeing comparison of current traffic vs proposed development.

A: addressed in traffic study

Q: Trees removed, and will movies still be \$6. (applause and laughter)

A: Not known plan for area, don't know

Q: Any renderings of looks, finishes

A: Yes, later. There will be answers to all this later

Q: Goes to movies every week. Will leave theater up while development happens? What about Dollar Tree and Post Office?

A: Not sure about Dollar Tree and Post Office. Movie theater will stay open.

Q: Walking inside mall. It's dry and warm. Where are we going to walk?

A: outside

Q: don't want to walk outside!

A: outside on nice sidewalks and landscape. Can't afford to maintain malls just for walking. Walk around Costco... and they have samples.

Q: My experience, other developments, things won't be sold. All these commitments made to people, what happens to commitments? SJ Collins is selling another Whole Foods. Don't trust people for continuum.

A: Will be zoned to site, only what's on site plan can be built. Let's say 10 years from now, they can't just build something industrial, would need to repeat process. There will be conditions in place, targeted requirements, we've done this with other projects around here. The conditions can be exhaustive. Another can be a private agreement with neighborhood groups.

Q: If it goes to DRI/DeKalb Co, and they say certain components not approved, can project happen?

A: not sure,

Q: is deal contingent on any plan

A: multi-family is driving current zoning

Q: similar question: townhomes would be part. Pulled out on Decatur Crossing.

A: 2<sup>nd</sup> phase went through which cancelled that proposal

Q: How to stay on top of this development? The minutia. Noise of dumpsters every morning. What noise level from trash, loading/unloading?

A: taking notes and working through these questions. Probably will drill down to these details

Q: Why so many apts vs townhomes? So many apartments everywhere. How did you come up with the numbers?

A: There are developers who have own data and #s that will sell or rent. Market forces. Started as all-multifamily deal. Some neighbors wanted for-sale items and that's where that came from. I'm a realtor, believe there's market for for-sale (applause).

Q: (something about impact of schools, families = # cars)

A: Having this conversation with Decatur... so protective of schools. Question is what's impact on schools? Decatur has 4 yrs of history and impact is surprisingly low. This type of use is probably not high student.

A: 425 units inhabited by families? Data says a lot of singles, younger couples.

A: Even if 425, multiply by 1.7 cars. Napkin calculation... 3,000 cars/day during commutes. They may walk around to get breakfast but will need to drive. Traffic backs up from Lawrenceville Hwy to 85. (applause).

A: Hospital and Druid Hills School --- new buidings coming in the area...

A: But those people are already here.

A: N Druid Hills is a high performing school, IB program expanding, grab more of that residential space than you might think. Likely to draw more students. [Orson comment] More revenue but do the broader analysis. If you draw an extra 200 students, that requires the schools to adapt. School systems get left out of these discussions.

Q: [Theresa Same] Need to clarify something, I'm part of the [neighborhoods meeting group](#), we asked for townhomes but did NOT ask for them in addition to apartments. So looking for a reduction in # of apartments. The group did not ask to add MORE apartments.

A: Webb said he has not been to all meetings, he just wanted to clarify the idea of 50 townhomes came from the community.

**NB:** if anyone wishes to send their comments/concerns to the Cross-Neighborhoods Council, email them at [crossneighborhoodscommittee@gmail.com](mailto:crossneighborhoodscommittee@gmail.com)

Q: What groups are you meeting with and will continue to meet?

A: we have reps from Laurel Ridge, MANA, Valley Brook, N Druid Valley, Tuxworth Springs, GGDeKalb, Clairmont Heights, Horse Farm...

Q: Look forward for progress. Ready for Costco

Q: Also happy to see development. Concerned about apartments—building more when other apts are not filled yet. But traffic really is impacting the area.

Q: Don't say no kids. Glad to see development but did not know this was happening until a couple weeks ago. Can we list the people listed who are in the group, who are the contacts?

A: Need representatives, can't have meetings of 300 people...

End of meeting