

Why Vote "NO" to Rezoning on May 5th

Shouldn't Whitman be able to do what he wants with his property?

Every property owner in the Township has zoning restrictions. They are in place to assure orderly development of Bedford, and to protect each of us from inappropriate uses that would detract from our property. For example, how many of us would want a neighbor to start a pig farm next door? The residents near the Whitman property have a right to enjoy their homes and to protect their investment from unacceptable intrusion by huge commercial development. They have already suffered loss of home value due to the current recession. How much more should they have to lose, just so one family may make huge profits?

But, the Whitman family has been good to Bedford. Don't we owe them?

Yes, the Whitman's have been good corporate citizens. However, Bedford has been good to the Whitmans. We have provided a home to their very profitable dealership. We have bought cars from them. They have serviced our cars. This "good neighbor" relationship has been a 2-way street thru the years – as it should be. But, that doesn't alter the fact that Whitman should be subject to the same requirements and restraints as the rest of us.

Won't a Big Box Store bring in needed taxes? Won't we get a lot of property tax money for the Township?

WRONG – The state dictates what portion of the property tax goes to the Township, what portion to the County, what portion to the State. The Township General Fund would get very little of this money; only about \$20,000. Sounds like a lot until you realize this is only about 65 cents per person.

OK, but the schools will get more badly needed money.

WRONG AGAIN - The schools won't get a single cent more to pay for operations (salaries, books, busses, etc) because the entire operating budget is set by the state. Whatever tax we collect locally is subtracted from the state's contribution.

The schools would get a little more money towards debt retirement, but not much. And, this really would not reduce our taxes, so much as it may mean the debt gets paid off a little sooner.

But what about the sales tax?

All the sales tax goes to the state, none of it goes to Bedford Township or to our Schools.

Shouldn't we do our part to get the state more tax dollars?

That sounds nice but ... as outlined below, the cost to Bedford of having a Big Box Store is far greater than the money we would get to pay for these added costs. **In short, we home owners would end up subsidizing a Big Box Store.** Should you and I have to pay to make the folks such as the Walton family even more money than the billions they already have?

But I can save money shopping at a Big Box Store

We have two Krogers, two Food Towns, a Meijers, and a Target nearby. How many stores do we need nearby? Tell me again why we need a Big Box Store in Bedford?

Won't a Big Box Store provide a lot of jobs? Lord knows we need them.

Will a Big Box Store really increase crime?

You Bet!!! If you research this, you'll find that crime definitely increases with a Big Box Store. For example, based on data from the Wal-Mart store at Central and Holland-Sylvania, we could expect that at least one of our deputies will be tied up about a third to a half of his time just dealing with bad checks and shoplifting. And, this is the "easy" stuff. The parking lot crime – muggings, thefts, assaults, drugs, etc would not only keep our deputies busy, but this kind of crime spills over to our neighborhoods and schools.

The deputy time spent on Big Box Store problems is time you and I are paying for – Time the deputies won't be patrolling and keeping our neighborhoods safe.

What will be the impact on our roads?

You tell me !!! Our roads are a mess now. We have about 32,000 citizens in Bedford. Subtract kids and others who don't drive, and we likely have maybe 25,000 drivers. A typical Big Box Store draws about 76,000 cars each week. How much more can our already poor roads handle?

And, traffic on the main roads in our township has already increased to the point our kids can't ride their bikes safely. What will another 76,000 cars mean?

Yes, but won't Big Box Store taxes help pay for road repair?

No! A Big Box Store won't pay a single dime into the road repair fund. This fund depends 100% on fuel and highway taxes, not sales tax, not property tax, not income tax. Just fuel and highway taxes. Bedford Township, for many years, has used part of its operating budget to help fund the most needed repairs. But, that doesn't go very far. So, the folks in Greenhills had to pay for their own road repairs. The people in Indian Acres and other developments will soon face that same kind of decision. Meanwhile, the Big Box Store gets the roads for nothing.

Why do the neighbors feel so strongly against large scale commercial development?

In addition to all the issues above, the nearby neighbors would have to put up with the noise, lights, litter, all nite comings and goings of cars and semi trucks. Would you like to live in the "backyard" of a huge a Big Box Store? Just ask Kroger's neighbors about it. The development envisioned by Whitman would be many, many times larger than Krogers.

Yes, but why should I care – I don't live there?

The current rash of foreclosures has reduced the value of all our homes. In the same way, if a Big Box Store ruins home values in the neighborhood, that trickles down to all of us. Besides, if we aren't going to look out for one another, what kind of community do we have?

Won't the rezoning also provide more Senior Housing?

The proposed rezoning does have a small portion allocated for Senior Housing. But, that doesn't guarantee it will ever be built. And, what's shown is 3 story, high density apartments, virtually in the back parking lot of a Wal-Mart or other such Big Box Store. Noise from loading docks that are busy 24/7, HVAC units, compactors, dumpsters at all hours of the day and nite – lights turning night into day – parking lot crime – all right outside the windows. No thanks. It's not a place I'd wish for anybody to have to live.

What's The May 5th Referendum All About ?

Background

In the '70s, Mr. Paul Whitman requested rezoning of a portion of his property at Lewis and Sterns in order to build his new dealership. In response to neighbors' concerns, residents of that time recall his assurance that those portions west of the dealership would be developed as residential and would never become commercial. Based on this, the neighbors supported his request. In the years since, people have moved into the area, secure in the belief that the residential zoning was secure.

More recently, however, his son Jon, has pursued rezoning to allow large scale commercial development. He has repeatedly made such requests and has even tried to win rezoning thru a lawsuit, which he lost.

The most recent rezoning request was partially approved even though it is inconsistent with the senior Mr. Whitman's prior assurances to the community, and it violates the Township Master Plan. The upcoming referendum is to allow the citizens to "**Just Say No**" to this rezoning.

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Yes, but –

Most of the jobs will go to Toledoans. They outnumber us 10 to 1. So, Bedford homeowners will be subsidizing jobs for Toledo.

The jobs a Big Box Store provides are poor paying with sub-standard benefits. Why do you suppose Wal-Mart fights so hard to stay non-union? What other business do you know of that has so many employee lawsuits against them for unfair practices?

Finally, when you shop at a Big Box Store, there's a 70% chance what you buy will have come from China. How many good paying jobs have Americans lost to China because Big Box Stores want to buy their merchandise cheap – without regard to how much it hurts American workers?

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