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**Brooklyn · Ohio**

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February 10, 2017

Dear Fellow Brooklyn Resident:

On January 31, 2017, City Council approved a Planned Unit Development Zoning to be placed on the May ballot. This letter will explain what this proposed Zoning is about and why it is necessary to keep our city competitive, keep our taxes down, and increase home values.

**First, what is a Planned Unit Development (PUD)?**

A PUD is a special type of zoning district which generally does not appear on the municipal zoning map until a designation is requested. Brooklyn's traditional zoning does not have flexibility for mixed uses. If approved, a PUD would allow for a mixed use in one consolidated area of land. It is proposed that a single owner must acquire at least 25 acres of land to submit a PUD plan for a mixed-use development. City Council and Planning Commission then may allow the area to be designated as a PUD. A PUD requires many different layers of approval at every stage of a project. The review process has at least 13 public hearings and is subject to a rigorous decision process by the City Council and Planning Commission. Most suburbs in Cleveland that have new construction projects, have a PUD type zoning designation.

**Second, why do we need a Planned Unit Development (PUD)?**

American Greetings departed Brooklyn and the annual loss in tax revenue to the city is estimated around \$6 million or approximately 30% of the city's total income tax revenue. In order to replace this lost revenue, Brooklyn must create more office space other than the former American Greetings property. Companies currently don't look to Brooklyn as a place to grow or relocate their operations because we don't have a competitive supply.

In 2006, the City of Brooklyn completed a Master Plan for Brooklyn. As part of the comprehensive surveying and research, the Master plan outlined a "City Center" concept for Brooklyn on Memphis Avenue in the area of City Hall from Ridge Road to Rodoan. The City Center was to "create a community focal point and gathering place by concentrating a mix of uses within a compact land area to provide residents with jobs, shops, and services within walking distance of their homes or reachable by public transportation, and characterized by a cohesive design which helps create a sense of identity and place." The Master Plan indicated the need to create a "mixed use" zoning code at that time.

**Third, we must replace our aging City buildings.** – In 2015, the City contracted with Architectural Vision Group to conduct a needs assessment on all the municipal buildings. The total cost recommended by the architects to repair the current city buildings was **\$19,700,953**.

We have to make a hard choice as to whether we spend this money on older structures or build new.

It is clear to the City Administration and Council, despite a healthy reserve balance, the city needs to either to create revenue or cut services in response to the loss of American Greetings. To **PRESERVE SERVICES** and **AVOID TAX INCREASES**, the Administration started looking at creating a mixed-use development on city owned land as was recommended in the 2006 Master Plan.

In December of 2016, City Council approved an agreement with Geis Companies for a development and planning study related to the City Center Project. A steering committee made of residents, business owners, and the school superintendent have met several times in public meetings to discuss preliminary concepts. A conceptual plan will be created for Geis Companies to bring a preliminary concept to the marketplace to see what is financially feasible in this area.

**The approval of the PUD is not an approval of the City Center concept.** At this point, the City Center concept still needs extensive vetting by city council and the public before a final concept would be a reality for development.

There has been some talk about the City of Brooklyn eliminating Memorial Park as part of the City Center project. This is not accurate. The steering committee is exploring moving some of the park area around for better utilization of space. In all the preliminary concept plans thus far, the city would have 50% more park space than currently exists.

In the weeks to come, the City will be releasing community meetings dates to discuss the Planned Unit Development. In addition, you will be receiving more literature to help explain the need for Planned Unit Development Zoning in our community.

Please feel free to contact our Economic Development Director, Mr. Andi Udris, at 216-635-4289 or [audris@brooklynohio.gov](mailto:audris@brooklynohio.gov) with any questions or concerns. We value your feedback on this issue.

Sincerely,



Katherine A. Gallagher, Mayor