

SOUND OFF

BATTLING BEAVERS: A story on page 1N discusses Greystone's fight to control beavers in its lakes.

QUESTION: Do you think beaver traps are the way to go or should Greystone pursue other methods?

Sound off by calling 829-8930 or by sending an e-mail message to soundoff@newsobserver.com. Tell us your name, address and phone number.

North Raleigh News

North Views

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2N

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A winning strategy for North Hills' rebirth

Bert Rosefield, the tireless president of the North Hills Neighborhood Association, appeared before Raleigh City Council members this

BETWEEN YOU & ME



Thad Ogburn

owner John Kane won approval for his ambitious renovation plan, neighbors won concessions to make the project match their

week with an offer — to make the redevelopment of North Hills Mall and Plaza a "win-win" situation.

Such a scenario would be achieved, Rosefield said, if three things happened: North Hills

community and the City Council won the type of mixed-use development it has long promoted but has had a hard time achieving.

In the end, some might see the unanimous vote in favor of the project as merely a "win-win" for Kane and the council, with the neighbors losing out.

But honestly, there are no losers here. No matter what you think of the plans, there's plenty to be proud of in this vote. Namely ...

■ This is a textbook example of how developers and neighbors really can work together.

Kane's first proposal two years ago called for incongruous 13-story towers on the site. Residents, correctly, cried foul.

Both sides then cooled off, talked with each other and found common ground. Kane made significant changes. There

was no name calling, no angry signs, no secret maneuvering.

"I've all have worked together unlike anything I have ever seen," Councilman Philip Isley said at Tuesday's meeting.

It's such a contrast to other North Raleigh development disputes we've seen recently. (Copperleaf, anyone?)

■ Although residents will lose the wooded buffer that had separated Pamlico Drive homes from the site, in truth the buffer has been overgrown and in pretty sad shape for years.

Plus, the buffer originally came about because a post office and bank were on the corner, and there needed to be something to separate them from the neighborhood. Now, Kane will put housing units in that quadrant of the property. "Why would you buffer resi-

dential from residential?" he asked this week.

■ Finally, this is the right kind of development for Raleigh to be pursuing right now.

We've seen numerous examples of growth sprawling outward rather than being concentrated in existing areas.

But this is a new use for a site that already has a retail infrastructure in place. The project just makes sense here.

Change is hard, though, and you can sympathize with those in North Hills who are facing it.

Sure, the neighborhood association may feel dejected now. But give this project time to play out, and I'll bet it is seen as a "win-win-win" after all.

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THE NEW ND APPROVED NORTH HILL

