

North Hills plans get residents' approval

By Dawn Wotapka
Staff Writer

RALEIGH - In a joint vote, the Falls of the Neuse and the Six Forks roads Citizens Advisory Councils voted Wednesday to support John Kane's redevelopment of North Hills Mall and plaza.

Of the 280 people attending the meeting in the mall's former Lerner clothing store, 121 supported the plan and 50 did not, said Daniel L. Tew, a Raleigh community specialist. CAC votes aren't official, but the City Council

considers them when voting on projects.

Kane, with Kane Realty, wants to bulldoze the venerable mall and build a Target, hotel, movie theater, condominiums, offices, restaurants and shops. JCPenney will remain, while eateries including Chik-fil-A and Bruegger's Bagel Bakery will likely return after construction, Kane said.

At the nearby The Lassiter at North Hills plaza, Kane plans more condos. Most neighbors support the redevelopment, but

fear extra vehicles on their roads.

"I think there are a lot of concerns about traffic and some minor tweaking to be done," said Barry Woods, a biotech salesman who lives on Rockingham Drive.

During his speech, Kane said the new center would not generate more traffic than North Hills Mall and Plaza did when both were "vibrant and successful."

He also said that the gasoline plume under much of the property should be cleaned by mid-November.

The North Hills Neighborhood Association, a community group monitoring the plans, has several concerns, said Becky Hodge, a member who lives on Gates Street.

It wants to negotiate to:

- lessen the project's density;
 - reduce the traffic generated;
 - increase building setbacks;
- and

- improve stormwater runoff.

Philip Isley, a City Council member, said he is pleased with the work Kane has put into the project and that the developer

has discussed each step with residents.

"It's really something so much better than what exists," he said. "It's a bold vision. It could be a crown jewel for Raleigh."

Added Bettie Phillips, a resident of Hillandale Drive since 1979: "I think it's going to really be a facelift for this whole area. This might be even better than Cameron Village."

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