

Little fighters TKO big boxers

The Save Madison South campaign scored at least a temporary victory last month. SmartCentres of Canada, which had sought to build a 180,000-square-foot big box retail facility on a former landfill on Northeast 82nd Avenue at Siskiyou Street, abandoned its request in advance of a scheduled hearing on Oct. 16. The Madison South and Roseway neighborhoods had opposed the project, charging that the building would probably house a Wal-Mart outlet, and that in any case this sort of facility would be inappropriate for the site. They had raised thousands of dollars and recruited hundreds of sympathetic residents to purchase anti-big box lawn signs, write letters of protest and pledge to attend the hearing.

SmartCentres retains an option to purchase the 26-acre property through January and has pledged to put together a new development proposal. The company, and property owner Mike Hashem, have also promised to meet with neighborhood leaders to seek a compromise.

Madison South and Roseway are aiming to put together alternative development proposals and are seeking possible developers to pursue them. ■
