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## Shop Right

NE 82nd Neighbors Fend Off Shopping Center

BY AMY JENNIGES

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AD OF THE WEEK



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**Dawn Tryon** and other folks from the Madison South and Roseway Neighborhood Associations have been going door to door lately, alerting residents to an upcoming—and probably contentious—neighborhood battle.

On NE 82nd, across from Madison High School, developers have announced plans for a huge chunk of land (the space is currently a shuttered driving range, and before that a landfill). At the November Madison South Neighborhood Association meeting, a representative for the developer explained plans to build a 240,000-square-foot shopping center, surrounded by a parking lot with 900 spaces, according to Tryon, vice-chair of the neighborhood association. When she and her allies—members of the new Save Madison South committee—are knocking on doors, "what we're finding is 95 percent of the people are opposed."

Neighbors think the proposed development is just too big—the largest building on the site will top out at 190,000 square feet—and will encroach too far into the residential neighborhood. "That's the opposite of smart growth," she says. "It'll bring a lot of cars into the neighborhood. It's any sane person's nightmare."

The Save Madison South committee has already added 350 people to their "action list" roster. Their goal is to get 2,000 people on board by early January, when the developer is expected to formally submit a permit application to the city.

In addition to concerns about the size of the project, the development may garner opposition for another reason—the developer, Smart Centres of Ontario, Canada, boasts on their website that the majority of their shopping center developers are "anchored by a Wal-Mart store." A tenant for the NE 82nd property hasn't been identified, but neighbors and city hall

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staffers have already speculated that a Wal-Mart might move in.

Tryon stresses that neighbors "are not anti-business and not anti-development." The site is currently zoned for a 60,000-square-foot store. "That's the size of a New Seasons store," Tryon explains. A project like that—neighbors have also brainstormed ideas like a gardening center—would be ideal.

"This could be a critical lynchpin to the neighborhood. It could be a very positive thing," Tryon says. "There's got to be a better way for developing this land."



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