



February 8, 2008

City Council of Sandy Springs  
Ms. Nancy Leathers, Director of Community Development  
Sandy Springs, GA

Dear Council-members and Director;

The Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods for the record wants to express our concerns about the Lakeside Project presently planned along Glenridge Drive and north of I-285. We believe that as presently planned this project will irretrievably damage the currently unacceptable daily traffic congestion along this part of Glenridge Drive, will further degrade our air quality, and does not comply with the intent of a “transit oriented” project.

The minor road and ramp expansions proposed by the petitioner are at best a band-aid and do not effectively address the 10,000 or more additional car trips that the petitioners say will be added to the traffic jam. This is a 50% increase over the present traffic count in this area. If accepted and these minor adjustments prove insufficient the owners can simply sue the City to make the necessary infrastructure changes. How much additional tax base will be necessary to pay for that?

Even on a good day at off-peak times, west bound cars entering I-285 jam into the cars standing in queue to exit at Roswell Road. The mayhem of cars trying to enter the westbound flow of I-285 with the cars trying to exit at Roswell Road is already treacherous. We can only imagine the additional public safety issues that are likely with even more rush hour traffic from this project. Any relief from a redesign of the interchange at Roswell Road, at best, is years away.

The petitioner’s analysis appears to ignore the other mega-projects that are planned for the Hammond and Peachtree-Dunwoody Rd. intersection. Traffic from both the Concourse expansion and the Ackerman site that wish to travel west on I-285 must also pass this project – at least until the planned half-diamond interchange is completed at Hammond. When will that be?

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan indicates the majority of this site to be in a “Live-Work Community” area. This is a sensible transition from the higher density Regional area to the east. Only a very small portion of the site falls within a ½ mile radius of the Medical Center MARTA station. Is it not the intent of the “transit-oriented” special conditions allowed to a site to recognize and encourage pedestrians to walk to the mass transit available from MARTA?

This site is hopelessly blocked from any pedestrian access by both I-285 and GA 400. To suggest that any portion of this site should be granted transit-oriented special conditions is just silly and allows an arbitrary boundary to trump the substance of the transit oriented policy. GA 400 is the rational boundary for this Regional node and transit access in this area. Do we mean to encourage pedestrian use of MARTA, or will you grant higher density and reduced parking requirements to a petitioner with no benefit to congestion because of a mapping oversight?

Another flaw with this project is the likelihood that drivers from this site will seek any avenue available to them to avoid the mess on Glenridge. The only alternate route available is to cut through the Glenridge – Hammond

neighborhood to the west. Do you really believe we can prevent that intrusion into this protected single family neighborhood? Are you willing to fund a City officer there every day to assure compliance?

This does not even begin to address the other major issues before us today – inadequate water supply to meet the demands of existing users, even before the already approved projects in our area come online, and the poor air quality along I-285 in summer. Yet another project of this size can only make things worse and will negatively impact all the neighborhoods along Glenridge and in our City.

We urge you to deny the petition to redevelop the Lakeside Project as proposed by Greenstone Properties and Met Life. At a minimum this project should be required to comply with the Live-Work Community standards that should rationally apply to the entire site. We believe approval of yet another mega project in this area is simply irresponsible and requires you to ignore the realities we face – whether we want to admit them or not!

Sincerely,  
Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods

Larry Young, President