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August 5, 2004

Ms. Christine Reed
District Engineer
Illinois Department of Transportation
126 East Ash
Springfield, Illinois 62704-4792

IDOT Plans for Wal-Mart Store,
Springfield, IL

Dear Ms. Reed:

I am a member of, and I represent, the Southwest Springfield Neighbors Association ("SWSNA"), an association of homeowners on the southwest side of Springfield dedicated to maintaining the quality of their neighborhoods. I am writing on SWSNA's behalf concerning the Wal-Mart project on West Wabash Avenue at Meadowbrook and Archer Elevator Roads in Springfield, Illinois.

As you may know, this project has generated considerable public interest. SWSNA has in its possession petitions containing the signatures of 1,000 homeowners in the subdivisions to the north of the project, all of whom object to the routing of traffic up Meadowbrook and Archer Elevator Roads through their neighborhoods, not to mention the other adverse environmental impacts (drainage, noise, etc.) of the proposed project.

As is clear from documents SWSNA obtained this week through a FOIA request to the City of Springfield, IDOT has an interest in this project because it involves Wabash Avenue, a State Route. Indeed, there has been a series of meetings involving the City of Springfield, Wal-Mart and IDOT, including a January 30, 2004 meeting with Mayor Davlin himself.

We have reviewed the traffic projections submitted by Wal-Mart to IDOT in a study dated July 7, 2004 prepared by Metro Transportation Group. While we believe those projections are grossly understated because they claim that only 10% of the new trips generated by Wal-Mart will use Meadowbrook and Archer Elevator Roads to the

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north of the proposed Wal-Mart, even those understated numbers are cause for grave concern.

We also understand from the documents that the decision to route traffic through these neighborhoods is the direct result of IDOT's decision to deny Wal-Mart direct access to Wabash Avenue. Apparently, the extreme volume of new traffic generated by Wal-Mart will require major intersection upgrades, perhaps including turn lanes, at the intersections of Wabash Avenue and Meadowbrook and Archer Elevator Roads. Those upgrades will either be performed by IDOT or by the City of Springfield under an IDOT permit. It also appears from the documents that IDOT was considering upgrading Wabash Avenue to a four lane road from Koke Mill Road to I-72. We aren't sure about the present status of those plans, but they certainly are a testament to the huge and adverse impact this Wal-Mart will have on traffic on Wabash.

In reviewing the IDOT Public Involvement Guidelines, Chapter 19 of the Bureau of Design and Environment Manual, we believe that this is precisely the kind of project where there should be public hearings to address the concerns of the 1,000 citizens who have signed petitions against this project and in favor of maintaining the character of their neighborhoods.

We hereby request that IDOT initiate the public hearing process set forth in the Public Involvement Guidelines. We also ask that representatives of SWSNA be allowed to attend meetings between IDOT, Wal-Mart's engineers, and the City engineering staff whenever these subjects are being discussed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John M. Myers

cc: SWSNA
Rep. Rich Brauer
Sen. Larry Bomke