

Old Worthington Association

July 9, 2010

To: Worthington City Council Members

From: Jim Ventresca, President, Old Worthington Association

Re: Neighborhood Commercial, Conditional-Use Zoning

Ref: Memorandum to Worthington City Council Members, dated June 20, 2010.

The Board of Trustees unanimously urges City Council to defeat the proposed ordinance (No. 24-2010) to add Neighborhood Commercial as a Conditional Use in the AR-4.5 zoning districts.

The Worthington strategic development plan must include two supporting interdependent parts:

- 1) Populate our high-vacancy-rate commercial properties with successful businesses, and
- 2) Preserve our built-out housing stock that is the basis for a healthy population needed to enable and promote current and future economic development

Healthy businesses have always been beneficial, but the trend in housing has changed in the 21st century. Urban property value is increasing and overtaking outer-ring suburbs on a nation-wide scale. Worthington is a model for this new trend as an engine of growth with its urban-style housing in walkable neighborhoods. On the demand side, researchers see every demographic group from millennials to seniors seeking to make their homes in these urban spaces for the long term.

It would seem to make good long-term-strategic sense to continue to develop our housing and to avoid reducing it by converting it to commercial use, even for the short term, because each conditional use is likely to be in place for a long time.

Council has wisely stated that its judgment would be based on sound development strategy and not on any specific application.

OWA urges Council to reject Ordinance No. 24-2010, because only then will there be a coherent strategy for the long-term growth of Worthington.

Respectfully,

The Board of Trustees
The Old Worthington Association

Jim Ventresca, President

c. Matt Greeson, City Manager