

Brookhaven Peachtree Community Alliance

Making Brookhaven Better

July 7, 2012

Mr. Robert T. Smith
General Manager - Cherokee Plaza Kroger
3871 Peachtree Rd, NE
Atlanta, GA 30319

Dear Bobby,

The BPCA appreciates your continued efforts to keep the lines of communication open and to “do the right thing” for the Brookhaven community.

While we were pleased with the progress made on several Overlay related requirements, the outcome of the Zoning Board of Appeals hearing was met with great disappointment. The community’s goodwill toward Kroger has eroded, and for many it’s been replaced with distrust and disbelief.

The residents of our neighborhoods are struggling to understand why Kroger will not support their vision for a better Brookhaven, after they have supported Kroger with their business for so many years. The message they have asked us to deliver to Kroger executives is . . . “We have supported your store for years . . . it’s now time for you to support us, your customers.”

The two key points that people keep making during community discussions are:

1. **Best prices don’t win their loyalty:** The Publix brand is great customer service. Whole Foods is quality, organic food, and the Kroger brand is best prices. While price will always bring a certain segment of the population into a store, it is not enough to win the loyalty of an upscale community like Brookhaven that values and rewards corporate social responsibility.
2. **Community & Quality of Life Matters the Most:** The community is passionate about its vision for “a better Brookhaven” and walks the talk. They spent five years working on the LCI study and passing the Overlay Ordinance, and then raised money for the BPCA legal fund to support and defend the Overlay. They volunteer their time to serve on committees supporting the vision of the LCI, and they spend their money at retail establishments that support this vision. *Many residents in Brookhaven care more about their surroundings and quality of life than they do about the inside of a grocery store.* A new and improved Kroger will not win their hearts or their business.

Your store is surrounded by high income neighborhoods whose residents share a vision that reflects their values. Where they spend their money, also reflects their values.

The bottom line is, Kroger stands to lose a significant segment of their customer base should they put short term savings ahead of addressing the long term interests and vision of the people that have shopped in their store for years.

Please consider inviting your national finance and/or real estate management executives from Cincinnati, or better yet Bruce Lucia, to attend one of our community meetings. I believe that once they experience (first hand) what's really happening on the ground and witness the almost missionary zeal the community has toward creating a better Brookhaven, they will realize that supporting our vision is not only the right thing to do, it is indeed in their financial interests.

If Kroger will commit to developing an LCI compliant street frontage, the BPCA commits to supporting Kroger. We will promote Kroger at community meetings, through our email distribution lists, on our website, and through the local press. I'm confident we (the BPCA and our extended network) can win back the community's goodwill towards Kroger and inspire a great deal of excitement around your new store. We will promote the new store with pride as . . . "Our" new Kroger, a leader in realizing the Brookhaven LCI vision. Now that's exciting and would make a great editorial headline!

Thank you for your time, consideration and commitment to a Better Brookhaven. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Kathy Forbes
BPCA Board Member & Brookhaven Heights Neighborhood Association

Cc:
BPCA Board of Directors
Eyvonne Johnson, Kroger Real Estate
Robin Sanders, President, Brookhaven Heights Neighborhood Association
Bill Roberts, BPCA, Brookhaven Heights Neighborhood Association
Frank Clementi, President, Historic Brookhaven Neighborhood Association
Kerry Witt, President, Pine Hills Neighborhood Association
Linda Taylor, President, Oglethorpe Estates, Neighborhood Association
Cheryl Dupree, President, Brookhaven Arbors Neighborhood Association
Jerry Goebler, President, Brookhaven Fields Community Association
Jack Honderd, BPCA, Brookhaven Fields Community Association
Ronnie Mayer, President, Ashford Park Community Association
Jim Eyre, BPCA, Ashford Park Community Association
Quill Healey, One Brookhaven Condominium Association
Gary Cornell, DeKalb County Planning & Sustainability