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City County Planning Office
Lawrence, Kansas

December 15, 2013

To Mr. Bryan Culver, Chairman, and Planning Commissioners
Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Commission

RE: ITEM NO. 2A: RS10 TO RM12-PD; 19.3 ACRES; 3901 PETERSON RD
ITEM NO. 2B: PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR ASSISTED LIVING BY AMERICARE;
3901 PETERSON RD

Dear Chairman Culver and Planning Commissioners:

After reviewing the rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan for the Assisted Living Plans for the Americare proposal, we have some questions that give us concern.

1. We question whether the amount of parking planned for the project is adequate for its proper function. We realize that the developers of the project have assumed that the residents will not be driving, for the most part, and that the parking will be needed primarily for the staff. However, has the added parking needed for visitors, mail delivery, clubhouse visits and servicing, for example, been considered? Our concerns are based on personal experience of some of our members. They have suggested that the parking provided shown on the plans would be insufficient.

2. Another question is what would likely happen should the project fail due to overbuilding for retirement facilities? Has the staff made any projections as to what the needs will be in view of the current projects present and planned that would meet the predicted needs? Should there not be a demand, would the project revert to a standard RM12 development? Would the current location, building and parking plans and connected open spaces provide for the needed expansions? Would a standard RM12 type of change be appropriate for the current location?

3. Given the above questions, would it be possible to achieve this type of care facility in an RS (Single Family) District with a Special Use Permit? We realize that this type of facility, because of the comparatively low automobile traffic and other factors that reduce its intensity, is better suited in a low-density residential neighborhood than an apartment complex of the same zoning would be, both for its benefit and for that of the neighborhood. We compliment the staff and developers for seeking a Planned Development for this project with its predictability, design requirements and other features of the PD Overlay District.

However, we continue to have concerns that our Comprehensive Plan (CP), as currently interpreted, gives neighborhoods very little actual protection because of its unpredictability. As we have pointed out previously, interpretation of the density shown in the CP still allows the development of three-story or taller apartment buildings in an existing or potential single family district as long as its density remains at 6 units an acre. We have some recent examples of this, of which you are probably aware.

Sincerely yours,

Cille King
Cille King, Co-President

Alan Black
Alan Black, Chairman of the Land Use Committee