

## HERMITAGE

# Revised Kohl's plans include space for others

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By Joe Pinchot, *Herald Staff Writer*

Hermitage Planning Commission recommended approval of three submissions from the developers of a Kohl's department store, although some doubt remained with some observers as to whether the developer will be able to sufficiently handle stormwater.

"The burden is on us," said Kevin Woodman, managing vice president of development for Levey & Co. of Akron, in pledging to assure that neighboring property will not be flooded. The company proposes to build a 55,000-square-foot Kohl's on the Shenango Valley Freeway, near South Hermitage Road. The plan also includes two outparcels available for development by others, and a 9,800-square-foot section attached to the Kohl's building available for one to five retail tenants.

City Director of Planning and Development Marcia A. Hirschmann noted on Monday that Kohl's had been looking at fronting on the freeway, leaving "a big, blank wall" facing Hermitage Road. The tenant section will now face Hermitage Road. "I think we can consider that a significant improvement," she said.

Daniel Bittler, whose wife, Dorothy Kilgore Bittler, owns an adjoining parcel, said he is not against the plan, but did not believe the stormwater plan would alleviate the flooding of his wife's property. For years, existing business have been dumping stormwater onto the property eyed by Levey, creating wetlands on what was farm land there and to the west, including Mrs. Kilgore's property, Bittler said.

"It really had deteriorated the Kilgore land," said Darlene Kilgore, daughter-in-law of Mrs. Bittler, who also owns land nearby. Development officials said a stormwater detention pond will be built along Morefield Road to handle water on the southern half of the development, and an underground storage system will be built under the parking lot to accept water from the northern half.

The pond and the underground holding center will discharge into existing stormwater channels, they said. The flow of water will be slower than it is now, said Dan Wallace, partner in Wallace & Pancher, the Hermitage engineering firm working with Levey. "We've basically oversized our detention system," he said. Bittler, an engineer, said he expects the problem to be better, but he was not convinced water would stop flowing onto his wife's property.

After the meeting, Bittler, his wife and Ms. Kilgore met with Levey officials and Wallace to go over the plans. While, most members of the planning commission were satisfied, Dr. John V. Coupland was not. "I don't think we're settled, yet," he said, in voting against the land development plan. "I don't think we know enough." Coupland voted for a subdivision that combined property currently owned by L. Chris Lampros and James and Rosemary Farmakis, and a sanitary sewer planning module.

The subdivision also proposes swapping small sections of land with Robert P. Caldwell and Larry K. Arbuckle who own the property on which Pizza Hut is located. With the swap, Pizza Hut will be able to enlarge its parking area, while it will close its entrance and use a newly built one that also will serve Kohl's and one of the outparcels.

The plan also proposes revising the South Hermitage Road access to Burger King, creating what commission Chairman Charles E. Rogers called a "circuitous route" for Burger King customers. Levey official Stephen I. Franczak agreed with Rogers' assessment, but said it was necessary to create a stacking lane for people leaving the Kohl's development without constantly blocking the entrance to Burger King.