

Tom Connelly

From: Anne Foreman <anne@sketchesbyanne.com>
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2019 11:51 AM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: Save Woodsdale Hill

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I am a resident of 32 Poplar Avenue, two blocks away from the proposed development on the top of Woodsdale Hill. I wrote to a few weeks ago and after attending a public community meeting last night, I feel I should write once again.

The scope and reach of this proposed GC&P "Mixed Use Village" is a concept that is totally unrealistic and untenable. So many issues will be involved, from road expansion, mining minerals for five years, infrastructure impact during and after construction.

The displacement of wildlife, already a problem, will be worse. The magnificent backdrop of trees will disappear to be replaced by light and noise pollution.

I urge you and the Planning Commission to deny the change in the Comprehensive Plan from Conservation to Commercial use.

Our property values and wellbeing depend on keeping this designation sacred.

I appreciate your efforts on behalf of the citizens of Wheeling.

Thank you for considering this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Anne Hazlett Foreman
32 Poplar Avenue

Tom Connelly

From: Ed Jepson <edjepson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2019 9:45 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: GC&P Development

Dear Mr. Connelly:

Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan describes this development area as "conservation."
Five years of planned strip mining before anything can be built falls so far outside any concept of "conservation" that this becomes an obscene insult to the city's planners and citizens...with NO GUARANTEE that anything will be built or that any site restoration will occur.

Please stick to the Comprehensive Plan and do not change it at all. Do not allow this possible destruction on the promise of an imaginary development. One that still violates the plan.

Please pass this onto the Planning Commission and City Council.

Thank you,

--

Ed Jepson
2 Hazlett Court
Wheeling, WV 26003
edjepson@gmail.com

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Tom Connelly

From: Timothy Futey <tfutey13@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 12, 2019 10:54 AM
To: Tom Connelly
Cc: tfutey13@gmail.com
Subject: RE: GCP Development Project

As a homeowner and resident of Greggsville living adjacent to this proposed rock quarry (disguised as a plan for a retail and housing development), I'am STRONGLY OPPOSED to this SCAM. Please be aware of this when considering this project. This is just a front to get his rock quarry approved. Thanks TFutey

Tom Connelly

From: Sandin Phillipson <sedphil24@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 12, 2019 2:58 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Cc: Wendy Scatterday
Subject: GC&P Geotechnical Summary, Exhibit 11
Attachments: Planning Commission Geotechnical Response.pdf

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I wish to provide commentary regarding the document entitled "Geotechnical Summary, Exhibit 11" recently made available on the City of Wheeling's website, for the Planning Commission, in association with a proposal to change the existing designation of Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan. As always, for the sake of completeness I am cc'ing my 4th Ward representative, Wendy Scatterday.

Sincerely,
Sandin Phillipson
24 Shady Street
Wheeling, WV 26003

SANDIN E. PHILLIPSON, PH.D.

24 Shady Street
Wheeling, WV 26003
304-218-9975

October 12, 2019

Mr. Tom Connelly
Planning Commission
1500 Chapline Street, Suite 305
Wheeling, WV 26003
304-234-3701

Dear Mr. Connelly,

In accordance with your solicitation of public comments at the August 12, 2019 meeting of the Planning Commission, I would like to share my assessment of information recently submitted by The Thrasher Group on behalf of GC&P Development, LLC (Applicant) regarding proposed development of a "mixed use village" and attendant change to the City of Wheeling's Comprehensive Plan. The information is referenced as "Exhibit 11, Geotechnical Summary" on the Planning Commission's website. The document contains photos of prominent sandstone layers outcropping on the south side of the ridge bounded by Woodsdale and Waddles Run, three core logs from holes drilled along the spine of the ridge, and brief explanatory verbiage regarding excavation of shallow test pits at various places on the ridge.

Some statements in the document seem at variance with information previously provided by the Applicant. Specifically, at the August 12, 2019 meeting of the Planning Commission, the Applicant stated that a total of 9,000,000 cubic yards of material would be disturbed, with 2,000,000 cubic yards re-purposed for use on-site for grading and the remaining 7,000,000 cubic yards removed off site. However, the recent "Geotechnical Summary" states that only 15% of disturbed material will be removed from the site. This statement is essentially the exact opposite of the previously stated position, and should be clarified. Additionally, the "Geotechnical Summary" states that the average elevation of the development pad will be 950 feet above sea level (fasl), which is in agreement with "Map 29" of the Applicant's submitted information, but that map presents a different footprint than other exhibits in the application index such that it is not altogether clear whether the current proposal might be implemented on a pad with a larger footprint at lower elevation. Again, any discrepancy between previous and current proposals should be rectified.

There are three broad issues that the Applicant should be expected to provide geotechnical information for, discussed separately below.

Slope Stability

Perhaps the most pertinent issue to residents of the Woodsdale neighborhood from a geotechnical point of view is in regard to the south-facing slope of the ridge, that side which lies above homes along Edgwood Street. Many residents have described increased water inflow in recent years, during a time frame that appears to correspond to the initiation of timbering on the ridge top. Increased water runoff, soil creep, and earth movements are common expected consequences of the removal of vegetation from steep slopes as discussed previously in my correspondence of August 19, 2019 and

detailed in the document attached to that correspondence entitled "Slope Stability of the Ridge."

The Applicant's "Geotechnical Summary" references only relatively shallow excavation pits of the type that might be dug with a backhoe, but does not reference the thickness of regolith to bedrock, does not provide water infiltration tests (commonly known as "perc" or percolation tests), does not provide the results of compaction tests, Atterburg Limit tests, provide a determination of clay content, or provide results of shear strength results. Indeed, it is not clear that any such standard geotechnical characterizations were ever performed. These tests are critical to assessing the potential for soil creep and water runoff. Nor does the Applicant provide any description of mitigation measures detailing how down-slope property owners will be protected from water or earth movements associated with their excavation activities.

Highwall Stability

This issue not only affects adjacent property owners on the south slope of the ridge, but can also be expected to affect any future tenants at the Applicant's proposed site. The Applicant's promotional video and related maps, such as Map 29, indicate that excavation of the ridge will result in a highwall of variable height, dependent on where the Applicant's property boundary intersects the topographic surface of the ridge. The highwall will result from removal of the ridge top to a horizontal plane intersecting the Applicant's property boundary, and then step down toward the north from that property boundary as excavation of the heart of the ridge proceeds.

The promotional video and reference information such as Map 29 indicate that the highwall will be steep, perhaps nearly vertical. However, no effort at actual design has been submitted. While some may assume that rock is hard and strong, the economies of scale require that highwalls be constructed according to an engineered design because when considering the entire rock mass, the presence of adversely oriented fractures can allow failure of large volumes of material. This could not only result in the loss of land by property owners on the south side of the ridge, but could represent a hazard to potential structures or residents of the Applicant's proposed development scheme.

Although the Applicant has included photos of sandstone outcrop near the top of the ridge, referenced at the 1,000 ft, 1,050 ft, and 1,100 ft elevations, this is not useful information in a geotechnical sense. In brief summary, the Applicant has provided no information regarding joint orientations, shear strength test results, compressive strengths of rock strata, stereonet failure analyses, permeability estimates, or bench designs. It appears that highwall placement and angle was simply chosen so as to maximize the surface of the development pad. It should be noted that the foregoing information is simply the basic geotechnical data required to design a highwall, and that its mere collection does not constitute due diligence or the completion of a design. It is merely the basis for developing a responsible design that must represent a permanent structure that will protect all property occupants adjacent to it from time-dependent deterioration. The highwall must therefore remain stable for as long as people live in its shadow, both on the north and south side of the ridge. Considering that Woodsdale has existed for nearly 100 years, the prospect of the Applicant's highwall remaining stable for at least that long must be considered.

Pittsburgh Seam Mines

Previous mining in the Pittsburgh Seam, referenced in my correspondence of August 19, 2019 and September 24, 2019, and described in detail in my previously attached document entitled "Mine Subsidence," comprises two separate issues.

First, the Applicant's Phase 1 proposal is expected to intersect the Pittsburgh Seam. As previously described, the western end of the ridge was mined by the Hutchinson Mine, which could contain impounded mine water conceivably estimated in the millions of gallons. The potential impact of releasing this volume of mine water has been described in previous correspondence. The Applicant appears to be wholly unaware of the presence of old mines, and has made no effort to assess the possibility of releasing acid mine drainage from an impounded mine pool. The surface water sampling referenced by the Applicant has no bearing on this potential. The Applicant makes no reference to efforts to determine the width and viability of the hydraulic barrier to the mine pool, and offers no information as to the pattern of coal extraction that could affect barrier width around the margin of the Hutchinson Mine.

Second, the subsidence potential in the Pittsburgh-Wheeling Coal Co.'s Edgewood Mine is an issue that is more likely to adversely affect the Applicant's proposed "mixed use village" and its occupants than residents of Woodsdale, although there is a possibility that subsidence could also affect the stability of the Applicant's resulting highwall by increasing fracture apertures within the rock mass and thereby cause destabilization. Subsidence potential is discussed here essentially because it would be wasted effort to have so drastically affected the Woodsdale neighborhood by proposed development activity only to find that the resulting development was not fit for occupation later. The Applicant's presentation of three core hole logs offers no information about the nature of previous mining in the Pittsburgh Seam because they do not penetrate to that depth, and bottom a minimum of 137 feet above the Pittsburgh Seam. Thin coal seams that are intercepted may be the Waynesburg and Sewickley Seams, which are too thin to mine by underground methods in the Wheeling area. In order to determine subsidence potential in the Pittsburgh Seam, an extensive program of drilling would be necessary to detect mine voids, or conversely to confirm that full convergence has occurred such that there is no longer any old mine in existence. Although ground penetrating radar or electrical resistivity methods have found some success in identifying old mine voids, they generally require drilling for validation. Considering that panels composed of 25-foot-wide rooms flanked by 10-foot-wide fenders were projected to exist across the entire property, this would be an extensive, perhaps prohibitive assessment effort. As described in Appendix 3 (Illustrated Effects of Mine Subsidence), and Appendices 4-5 in the document "Previous Mining and Mine Subsidence Potential" previously attached to correspondence of August 19, 2019, mitigation of mine subsidence is a costly and involved process of such magnitude that it commonly requires state intervention.

In short, the Applicant's "Geotechnical Summary" document (Exhibit 11) does not offer even the most rudimentary data, geotechnical or otherwise, in support of any of the enumerated challenging aspects of their proposed development scheme. Without such data, the currently submitted proposal has little more meaning than that of conceptual cartoons of what might be possible. As with previous correspondence, I urge the Planning Commission to not change the current Comprehensive Plan designation for the ridge bounded by Woodsdale and Waddles Run. Review of Exhibit 11 makes it abundantly clear that the Applicant is not currently in a position to successfully cope with the numerous geotechnical challenges attendant to responsible development of the ridge.

Sincerely,
Sandin E. Phillipson, Ph.D.
Geologist

Tom Connelly

From: Mary Jane Dever <devermjane@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2019 2:01 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: GC&P project

If GC&P should abort their project at any stage of the project, will they be legally required and so documented to reclamation of the land. I hope this project will not get past rezoning stage; but if it should, please have some legally - documented means to require this company to repair and reclaim the land— (perhaps an appropriate returnable security deposit of sorts to the City of Wheeling before approval of project). Just in case this company declares bankruptcy to avoid reclaiming hilltop mining damage. Thank you, Just my humble concern, Mary Jane Dever, 1269 National Road #24, Wheeling, WV

Sent from my iPad

Tom Connelly

From: Ed Jepson <edjepson@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2019 8:45 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: GC&P Public Meeting

Tom:

I attended tonight's meeting. The presentation consisted, in my opinion, a lot of "photos" and drawings of what could exist on Woodsdale Hill if only GC&P was allowed to mine it first. They did have an abundance of proposals for roads, drainage, buildings etc. but not one specific entity, including GC&P Development, that was interested in erecting so much of one building on the site. They also had no commitment to pay for the widened road or pedestrian walkways. They forgot to list utilities that will have to be relocated at various sites along Rt 88. Please encourage the Planning Commission and City Council to NOT change the existing Comprehensive Plan to allow what appears to be a cleverly disguised mining operation.

Thank You,

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Ed Jepson
2 Hazlett Court
Wheeling, WV
edjepson@gmail.com

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Tom Connelly

From: James Wood <aquaticmind@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2019 1:22 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Cc: Wendy Scatterday
Subject: I live in Woodsdale and I am very concerned about the negative impacts of the proposed CG&P development

To whom it may concern,

Please do not change the zoning of the Coin property in Woodsdale. The master plan was designed with a holistic approach to development and changing the zoning will undermine future growth in Wheeling.

After watching the video about the GC&P I'm very concerned about the amount of air pollution, noise pollution, water pollution, light pollution, increased traffic, flooding, and propensity for landslides, and overall decrease in the quality of life that people living near the development will experience.

I'm also concerned that the project appears to be first and foremost a mining operation, and with a mine in Woodsdale will come all the health concerns of living near a mine (dust and air pollution, big trucks and mining equipment, noise pollution, vibrations from mining that can damage buildings foundations, altered hydrology that increases the surface water table and increasing flooding down slope (i.e. in the Woodsdale neighborhood), light pollution from when construction work continues after dark. A mine is not reasonable within the city limits and so close to residential properties.

Other specific concerns about the proposed plan include how many additional cars and trucks will be associated with the residential, commercial and mining development (delivery trucks, garbage trucks, maintenance trucks, mining trucks) will there be on the road? How much particulate air pollution will that create? When thermal inversions occur, will air pollution be trapped in the Woodsdale neighborhood? How much light pollution will occur when the commercial development is in operation?

Given the location on the top of the hill, will the sound of every motorcycle and piece of construction equipment starting up and every garbage backing up truck ring out loudly though the valley? I think the answer is YES. Sound pollution decrease the quality of life of the people who are affected by it and negatively impacts property values.

During construction, how long will every resident in the valley have to hear the beep beep beep of every truck and bulldozer backing up. I suspect it will be years and years of sound pollution just in the construction phase, decreasing the value residents homes and decreasing our quality of life. Early mornings, late nights, and even at night with the mining and residential components of the plan.

The reality is we should expect to have 100 year floods almost yearly. The video and blue prints do not seem to include the stream nor do they have estimates for the size of sediment catch basins. Are the stormwater catch basins large enough to store the runoff from a 100 year flood, much less that of a hurricane which could produce a "thousand year flood event" which will likely happen ever few years. Increasingly we are seeing that hurricanes are producing MORE flooding.

This plan flies in the face of current zoning and and makes Wheeling and Woodsdale more susceptible to the impacts of climate change.

Many cities are working hard to minimize the impacts of climate change on their communities and one of the most important things these communities are doing is working to preserve forests land on steep slopes and on hillsides **BECAUSE** of the large impact these steep hillside sites have on controlling flooding downstream.

When steep hillsides are developed flooding gets worse downhill.

This proposed development will leave Woodsdale and all of Wheeling more susceptible to flood damage, this will drive people and business away from Wheeling.

How will the additional flooding impact Woodsale and all properties downstream, including increased flooding on National Road and though the river corridor downtown.

The video is simply pie in the sky and seems very divorced for the realities of the impact that a development of this type will have on the community around it and everyone downstream of the development. This is an inappropriate location for this type of development. Please put the community first and prevent this poorly planned development.

Overall this development will drive people away from Wheeling, and the Woodsdale neighborhood. It will surely encourage me to move away. The best use for that land is for the city to find a way to make it into a new city park with forested trails and recreational activities, similar to Grandview in Moundsville. A new park will help flood management, increase property values and quality of life for residents of Wheeling, and help combat the impacts of climate change.

Below are a few links of recent articles about how communities are dealing with flood management and climate change.

<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/08/768373866/how-climate-change-and-flash-flooding-is-affecting-communities-across-the-countr>

<https://www.npr.org/2019/07/25/744203716/small-towns-fear-they-are-unprepared-for-future-climate-driven-flooding>

<https://www.iflscience.com/environment/some-parts-of-the-us-will-see-100-year-floods-annually-according-to-new-flood-maps/>

<https://www.npr.org/2019/05/08/720737285/when-1-in-100-year-floods-happen-often-what-should-you-call-them>

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/100-year-flood-climate-change_n_59a6eaa3e4b084581a14ea14

How some communities are preparing for climate change.

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/27/us/ellcott-city-maryland-flooding/index.html>

In conclusion please do not change the zoning in the master plan, the property was zoned conservation and low density residential for very important reasons. To change the zoning would betray the Wheeling Community and harm the entire, especially the Woodsdale community.

Sincerely
James Wood
Resident of 121 Edgwood St, Wheeling WV, 26003

Tom Connelly

From: Shari Brown <shariproof@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2019 5:37 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: Woodsdale development

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I understand you are the point person to whom I may address my concerns regarding the Woodsdale Hill project proposed by GC&P Development. I live at 5 Lorraine Terrace, Wheeling, a short dead-end street (off Edgewood Street) which backs up directly against the hill. I've seen firsthand the mudslides that come down our street following heavy rains, so that is one of my most personal concerns, especially if we lose the forests that hold the hillside in place. Another personal concern is that my church, C3, backs up against the north side of the hill. According to the development plan, water runoff is to be directed to the north side. So that worries me.

If such a development were to take place, I foresee issues with light, noise, and air pollution in the Woodsdale area. They are inevitable, if you think about it, and not desirable for a residential area. The conservation development designation given to this area in Envision Wheeling's 2014 planning effort is a good and future-sighted one. Please don't change it.

We all need green spaces in our lives. That is not a business/growth issue -- it is an aesthetic, spiritual, emotional one, one that should not be ignored. It was a travesty to see what was done to that hillside initially; I called it a "rape" of the hill because that's what it looked/felt like. It "hurt" people's hearts to see it. I don't know the motives of these developers, but I must say I question them. I am aware that logging was done on this land without a permit at one point. I am aware that an injunction has been brought against one of the owners. I'm just not sure I trust them with Wheeling's best interests.

I am concerned as well with mine subsidence and ground instability issues -- would we be faced with acid mine drainage released in the process of developing this area? What would it look like to remove 9 million cubic yards of material from this site? How long would this take and what kind of damage impact would it cause?

I am saddened by the probability of the demise of this historic neighborhood.

I also foresee traffic issues on Bethany Pike, even with the widening of lanes (and who will be paying for all this?). Location-wise, it seems to me that this development is 1) too far from the interstate to be accessed easily and 2) not recognizing the full negative impact on the areas/streets/neighborhoods along the route to the development from the interstate.

I do definitely believe in growth and development for Wheeling, but I don't like this plan. I don't believe it promotes the "health, safety, convenience and welfare of Wheeling citizens." My hope, for sure, is that Wheeling's Planning Commission will continue to rebuild the downtown. We do have a future there and, in my opinion, it is the core of a rebuilding and growth plan at the present time.

So, in conclusion, I thank you for "listening" to my concerns and pray you will give them your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Shari Brown

5 Lorraine Terrace

Wheeling, WV 26003

304-243-8907

304-639-4547

shariproof@comcast.net

Tom Connelly

From: Mary Ellen Cassidy <maryellencassidy1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2019 11:03 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: Comments on the Woodsdale Hillside Proposal
Attachments: Letter to Planning Commission 10-16-2019.docx

Hello Mr. Connelly,

Attached are my comments related to the proposal to change the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use designation for Woodsdale Hill.

Unless otherwise stated, these are my opinions and not those of any other individual or group.

Thank you for the opportunity to email our comments and for sharing these comments with other members of the Planning Commission.

Sincerely,
Mary Ellen Cassidy
39 Hamilton Ave, Wheeling, WV 26003

October 16, 2019

Dear Mr. Connelly and City of Wheeling Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly encourage you to **oppose the proposal** to change the Woodsdale Hillside Land Use Designation from Conservation use to Commercial Use.

Below, please find the following-

- Statements (Cut/Pasted) from Mr. Hooper's letter of July 29, 2019 addressed to Mr. Connelly, followed by my comments
- Summary of Risks and Benefits

Applicant Statements Followed by My Comments

Developable land is a very scarce commodity in Wheeling, West Virginia. Wherever it is feasible to find or create developable ground, the City should encourage development to preserve the health and vitality of the City, as well as to keep the City fiscally sound. Because land is such a scarce commodity, it is important that it be used well and to its full potential.

Developable land is available in and around the city of Wheeling and, in particular, in Downtown, South and Center Wheeling, along with county parcels. I agree with the developer that the City should encourage development to preserve the HEALTH and VITALITY of the City. I believe both the health and vitality of the City would be better served by keeping the Woodsdale Hillside as Conservation use.

As the result, the Applicant is proposing to develop the property as the City's only Mixed Use Village (See Map 6). As such and as more fully detailed below, the Site would consist of a lower pad area, consisting of approximately 4 acres, and an upper pad consisting of approximately 50 - 55 acres upon would include commercial, residential, office, educational and institutional uses all in one comprehensive and fully accessible development.

Although the Developer repeatedly claims this development is the City's only Mixed use Village, in fact, there are many Mixed Use Communities already in Wheeling, the Woodsdale/Edgewood Community being one of them. We have an organically developed, walkable community that includes shops, grocery stores, offices, medical facilities, educational institutions, exercise facilities and more.

A very succinct way to describe the Development is that the Applicant proposes a *Mixed Use Village* that will be based on a plan organized around a walkable and environmentally friendly neighborhood, that is community oriented rather than super-regional in scale, where

I am uncertain how the developer is using the phrase, "environmentally friendly neighborhood". I see nothing in the plan that supports LEED or energy saving buildings, locally sourced/recyclable materials, mass transit access, permeable parking lots, runoff catchments on streets... Walkable is also questionable since the housing units may be in walkable distance, but the expansion of 88 and the promo of the development as an asset to the "City of Wheeling", along with plans for additional traffic control indicates significantly increased numbers of cars and delivery trucks, etc. So, several factors need addressed before calling this development "environmentally friendly". Should the developer end up building some residential homes without taking down the hill, I would be happy to provide names of local and regional specialists in environmental design for residential developments.

An important part of the Development is the improvement of traffic flow and safety along WV Route 88. As the result, the proposed entrance to the Development includes material improvement which we reference as the *Oglebay Corridor Improvement Project* which will make a safer and pedestrian friendly road that is certainly more visually appealing than the roads current state. This part of WV Route 88 is a federal turnpike located within City limits. The

I would like the Planning Commission to consider by what measure would increased car and truck traffic in a school zone and neighborhood be an improvement? I'm also not sure how a sidewalk extension on 88 would be an improvement to the Oglebay Corridor, or if a traffic light at the bottom of the development will cause more traffic backup than it will cure. I believe the traffic study, which I haven't seen yet could tell us more.

The Applicant is further proposing that the City grant a Special Area District "Conceptual" Site Plan approval of the Mixed Use Village, which would defer any additional site plan submittal requirements, such as impact studies, which are only germane once specific users have been identified for the development at the time of submittal for final Site Plan approval.

This request to defer additional site plan submittal requirements, like impact studies, seems like a high risk for both the developer and the community. I'm not sure here if the developer is saying they really have no idea of what actually will be going in the development so there's no need for impact studies until the Final Plan? If so, how are we to evaluate the development's worth and impact if even they don't know exactly what is going in up there.

The Applicant has spent considerable time and resources to investigate the feasibility of such a project and design development use that would be mutually beneficial to the Applicant, the citizens of the City of Wheeling, and the City itself. Feasibility studies were obtained and reviewed. Geotechnical analysis by Gustavson Associates, LLC and all necessary core drillings were obtained. That analysis established the stability of the Site and confirmed the viability of the Site to support the Development. Those items are available upon request. Grading Plans and Drainage Plans were thereafter obtained as the Development evolved (from The Thrasher Group, Inc., and Hamilton Associates, Inc., respectively). Those plans are shown as Maps 22, 29-32, 36, 39-41, 56-58, 60-67.

With the collaboration of local and regional experts in reviewing the developer's current core drillings, water results and mine study, in addition to my own experience in working with sites in southern and central WV, the current tests results do not, in fact, establish the stability of the Site nor confirm viability of the Site to support the Development. Details provided below.

Maps 42, 43 and 45 show the evolution of the Development. Map 49 was the culmination of the original retail/commercial concept following discussions with City representatives. It was decided to avoid another outlet or retail mall with a sea of asphalt. It was determined by the Applicant that the Wheeling area was destined for a Mixed Use Development.

I do not have enough information right now for an accurate surface area calculation of lots and asphalt, but from the pictures provided by the developer, parking lots seem to occupy a large surface area and, to me, looks very much like a "sea of asphalt."

Other noted concerns of the City leaders were also considered and heeded. At the City's request, the revised Development and related plans that comprise this Mixed Use Village, and which have been presented to the City as a part of this Application, were reviewed by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways (WVDOT) and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP). Based on those reviews, favorable feasibility letters were provided by the WVDOT and WVDEP to City of Wheeling, City Manager, Robert Herron. See Exhibits 6 and 7.

I believe implications that the DOH and DEP "favor" the feasibility of the development. If you read the referenced letters, they simply acknowledge what has been presented to them and do not seem to come down on either side as favorable or "non-favorable".

grading and drainage plans at the Maps referenced above. These first two pads of Phase One will provide new and beneficial businesses to the area, establish the commitment and bona fides of the Applicant to the Development, and provide revenue to the Applicant through rental income and the City through job creation, ad valorem property taxes, B&O taxes and sales taxes.

Without knowing what businesses are there, does the community simply have to take it on faith that the businesses will be beneficial and long term? How does such an unknown result in establishing "bona fides" for the Applicant?

From the plan, it seems most jobs will be retail or restaurant based. From my observations, the stores and restaurants already in Wheeling are always looking to hire. I would be interested in knowing what kind of long term jobs the developer is talking about and again, how they can provide data when they cannot tell the public exactly what is going in? If the plans do not provide good, long term jobs, then we are looking at empty buildings and financial burdens down the line. I would also suggest that there be an honest assessment of the success of current and future projections of mall retail stores regionally before building malls, including mall boutique shops.

It should be noted that so long as the Sites remain idle and undeveloped it does not contribute revenue to the City, nor is it required to manage storm water in a very large watershed. However, once construction and grading of the Development begins, the

I contend that the Site is far from idle and undeveloped. It provides air quality control by its forested tree filtering capacity, trapping particulates and absorbing carbon dioxide and harmful gases, controls waterflow and soil erosion through root structures, evapotranspiration and heavy rain interception, dampens noise and bright light levels, provides a moderating microclimate for the immediate vicinity, and increased property value for nearby neighbors. (I can provide basic hydrogeology science and property value studies if requested.)

Forested hillsides are essentially green infrastructure that provide hundreds of thousands of dollars in significant health and safety benefits.

preliminary and more grading of the site, map of shows the pre and post construction drainage area maps of mitigated acreage. Again, it is important to note that the Development, and the accompanying requirement to actively manage storm water from the property, represent an opportunity to provide storm water management in an area where none previously existed, or is required to exist.

The plan is a day late and dollar short here. Stormwater management should have been a top priority before the unpermitted timbering started. Many members of the community would like to see stormwater and erosion/runoff mitigation start right now. Deforestation and accompanying new or reworked logging roads have already impacted the slope stability. Saying removing a forested hillside to control stormwater after deforestation and damage has already begun is backwards at best. If someone broke my leg, I would want surgery and rehabilitation, not an amputation.

improvements resulting from this portion of the Project would include a traffic light at the main entrance to the Development, crossing signals, deceleration and acceleration lanes; ADA compliant sidewalks, and the general beautification of the area along the main entrance to the Development. Because this part of Route 88 is a federal turnpike, the Oglebay Corridor Improvement project should be completed by the State with financial assistance and/or grants from the federal government and not by the Applicant; however the listed improvements are relevant, necessary to and a vital part of this Application. As stated above the Development, including the Oglebay Corridor Improvement Project have been reviewed by the WVDOH, which review resulted in the feasibility letter sent to the City Manager. (see Exhibit 6).

Is Rt 88 really a federal turnpike?

I would like to request that the Planning Commission consider some type of arrangement where we, the citizens, do not have to pay for studies, roads, or other accessories for an open quarry mining operation followed by an expansive mall complex.

There are currently two alternative entrances to the Development located along the western and northern property lines. Map 22 and 22A depict alternative western entrances, dependent upon future acquisition of lots currently owned by third parties. Map 15 is a visualization of the northern entrance after completion.

So, without future acquisitions, all car and truck traffic will come and go only via Rt. 88?

It cannot be questioned that the proposed northern entrance, a part of Phase One, would greatly enhance the approach to Oglebay Park and would complement the previous

I believe it can and is being questioned. Do more traffic jams and malls enhance a public park?

proposed layout for the development and is based on a main main pad of approximately 35 acres and lower pad from Phase One of approximately 4 acres. It is a true Mixed Use Village that includes elements of retail, office, institutional, hospitality, and residential uses. It is unique to the Wheeling area and is a desired configuration. There is simply no other land currently available that would accommodate such a unique and timely development.

To repeat, Woodsdale is already a mixed use community with shops (gift shops, hair salons, bakeries, grocery, medical, offices, exercise facilities..., all within walking distance of my house, so this mall complex is not a unique find. Other areas of Wheeling have similar walkable, mixed use communities.

The Development is Consistent with the Six Initiatives of the Plan

It is our position that the Development and requested modification of the Land Use Map as proposed herein is consistent with the six Initiatives set forth in the Plan. The remainder of this transmittal letter will address each of these initiatives in turn.

Initiative #1 – Wheeling will be modern and sustainable

In the Plan, this first initiative is given the highest priority and is used as the basis / justification for 13 of the stated 29 Implementation Strategies.

The implementation strategies that seek to promote this Initiative fall into three categories:

- Land use;
- Green living; and,
- Technology.

In the Plan, great emphasis is placed on encouraging "a sustainable mix of future land uses." Referring to the Future Land Use Map as a "guide for future development" that "does not legally regulate how land is used," it is recommended that the best use of a tract of land be determined by "the character of the surrounding area as well as individual conditions of the site including, but not limited to the existing use of the site, natural topography, presence of flood hazard areas, traffic, surrounding use, and similar conditions."

I agree that the best use of a tract of land should be determined by "the character of the surrounding area (homes and small businesses with historic character), natural topography (30 degree slopes that are not suited to development, and as is, already provide services to mitigate what would be more extreme flooding without the forested hillside.)

The Site is currently vacant land. But it is one of the larger vacant tracts remaining within the City. In accordance with Implementation Strategy 15, utilization of vacant lots (page 79 of the Plan), it is to the City's benefit to permit the Development to move forward. The increase in value and placement of new retail and other businesses in the Development will generate much higher tax and other revenues than as vacant land. The City will benefit by job creation, utility fees, ad valorem property taxes, B&O taxes, hotel taxes and sales taxes. This increase in revenue to the City will help fund many of the other Implementation Strategies in the Plan, including the establishment of a land reuse agency (page 67), the promotion of entrepreneurial efforts in the downtown (page 69), the development of a housing market survey (page 70), and expanding access to technology (page 71), as well as other financial needs and opportunities, all of which are vital to the growth of Wheeling into a modern and sustainable community.

I agree with statements already provided by authors of the Comprehensive Plan that clarify that the Plan were not referring to forested hillsides when using the term, "vacant" lots. Rather the reference was to abandoned lands, brownfields and nuisance type spaces. Also, even under informal definitions, the hillside is occupied by a mature forest that provides many services to the community as outlined above and is far from vacant.

The Site is not currently suited for development. As was discussed above, preparation of the site for construction will be undertaken in multiple phases. While at first blush the idea of the construction necessary to create the Site may seem to run counter to any concept of emphasizing "green spaces," the opposite is actually the case. If developed to its best and highest use, the Site will feature several miles of biking and hiking/nature trails, including a bike trail through the Development toward and hopefully connecting to Oglebay Park. This would certainly be encouraged in the Plan.

Environmental Engineers would be hard put to certify taking down a forested hillside to develop stores, parking lots and institutional buildings... as a green space. This development is pretty much represents the opposite of creating a green space. It is destroying a green space for concrete and asphalt.

The Development envisions that approximately 450 trees will be planted as a green perimeter around and throughout the Development in a matured arboretum design. This more than replaces any trees removed from the Site. This green strategy is intentional and is in keeping with the Plan's emphasis on expanding the trail system (page 84) and green infrastructure (page 72).

450 newly planted trees around a development will in no way replace an entire forested hillside ecosystem any more than positioning a few bases, fencing, outfields and scoreboards throughout different sections of acreage would create a ball park. The forested hillside is a complex network system, not simply an additive of trees.

Preparation of the Site should also mitigate any possible flooding issues long affecting the Woodsdale - Edgewood area. As already discussed, preparation of the Site will include grading away from the Woodsdale - Edgewood area, forcing water runoff north and into retention ponds constructed for that purpose. Depending on final site plan approval, water collected may well be used as the water supply for fountains built at the entrance. It is the intent of the Applicant to have such water features as a part of the Development. This would also provide storm water management and any required utility extensions to help alleviate any adverse impact on and provide a positive impact for the Woodsdale - Edgewood area.

I am concerned about this bold claim. It runs counter to our expert projections (provided below). Also, if in fact, the developer was competent at projecting water flow levels and directions, why wasn't some sort of effective infrastructure put in place before timbering? Also, to repeat, causing the hillside slope to become less stable, and then curing it by taking it down is backwards at best.

I suspect there are very few engineers/hydrogeologists who would advise taking down forested hillsides and replacing them with brick, mortar, concrete and asphalt as a remedy to flooding events. Similar to - If someone breaks my leg, I seek medical help and rehabilitation, not an amputation.

The Site has been included in the Plan as part of the Woodsdale Edgewood Historic District. However, it is not included in the federally designated historic district. While the majority of the adjacent properties to the south are zoned residential, nearly all of the adjacent properties in other directions and on the same elevation are commercial. Nevertheless, even after the Site has been fully developed as envisioned, it will have little or no negative impact on the surrounding residential areas. The Development will, at most, develop only 68% of the property. In addition to the arboretum design of the Development, the remaining 32% (all located around the outer boundaries) will be preserved in its current condition as mature growth forest with the added benefit of hiking and biking trails making use of the many logging roads that have existed on the property since the at least the turn of the 20th century.

Simply, look at the developers pictures of an expanded mall and parking lots with some homes and institutional buildings peppered in. I believe, without a doubt, that taking down the forested hillside, quarrying aggregate or limestone and then putting in this rather extravagant, but no less, basically a strip mall, with increased traffic and in-your-face commercial endeavor will absolutely change the feel of an historic community and have both cultural and physical negative impacts.

While a focus on historic areas is laudable, in order to retain and/or attract younger residents, (page 68), there must be a willingness to also embrace change. This involves (a) urban living options, and (b) increased and easily accessible restaurants and retail shops. There is, throughout the Plan, a discussion of maintaining a focus on the historic downtown area. Much of the attraction of larger cities is the abundance of choice in all things: types of housing (historic/modern, houses/apartments, standalone/mixed use); retail establishments; restaurants (local sourced/chains). Many of these types of housing, retail establishments and restaurants discussed would not fit within the aesthetics of the historic downtown area. They would, however, fit within the aesthetics of the Development with absolutely no impact on the downtown because the Development will not compete with the downtown in any of these areas. On the contrary, one could argue that the Development will alleviate the pressures on the downtown to adapt to a more modern aesthetic.

I believe these types of buildings would fit very well in Downtown Wheeling, South Wheeling and/or Center Wheeling with creative design features that incorporate the best of the historic period with the best of the current modern design features. If the Developer is talking about a more futuristic, ultra-modern design, I believe a cluster of such homes that are affordable and energy efficient would fit nicely on their property along Warden's Run or in other areas of the City.

Initiative #2 – Wheeling will have a diverse economy

This we believe is a key component of the potential for success of the Plan. Unfortunately, nearly all of the Implementation Strategies proposed within this Initiative will cost money to implement. They are establishing a land reuse agency (page 67), promoting entrepreneurial efforts (page 69), developing a housing market study (70), expanding access to technology (page 71), focusing on priority development areas (page 75), focusing on local businesses (page 81), continuing with the on-trac program (page 83), and modernizing the downtown streetscape (page 85). If developed to its highest and best use, the increase in tax and

other revenue to the City resulting from the Development would go a long way toward funding all of these goals. No analogous source of potential income is currently known or anticipated.

Whereas, the Developer is offering funding to the Planning Commission if they approve this project, I agree that the Community has no similar potential income to offer the Planning Commission if they reject the plan, but we do pay local taxes, residential and commercial, and are willing to work with the City to help raise funding needed.

buildings that do not have currently have fiber optics or other related infrastructure.” The Plan does acknowledge, however, that “Upgrading communications infrastructure could also give the city an edge in really promoting high-tech businesses in the region with a primary benefit of setting Wheeling apart from other areas of West Virginia.” The Development will be fully “wired” to accommodate current technological and communications means and provides new options and opportunities for those purposes. In short, the Development is intended to foster the growth of the technological environment in Wheeling and provide an inviting environment for that purpose.

I would think that The Plan has something more high-tech in mind for promoting high-technology in the City than the simple goal of having a Development fully wired. Also, the meeting rooms and classrooms of WLU at the Highlands are fully wired, as well as other meeting rooms throughout the City that offer top notch communications platforms.

The discussion of the second Initiative, Wheeling will have a Diverse Economy, contains the following statement on page 42 of the Plan:

Wheeling has since evolved into a major medical and educational hub. These industries are fairly stable because there is always a demand for the services. The plan identifies strategies that relate to expanding on the success of these industries to benefit the institutions and the community as a whole.

As designed, there is ample room in the Development to accommodate medical and education uses.

There are already facilities available for housing medical and educational hubs, such as OVMC and other downtown buildings, as well as facilities at the Highlands, and other educational institutions that are undergoing significant transitions. So, Wheeling is not hurting for available space for medical buildings.

Initiative #3 – Wheeling will have strong Community Partnerships

The Applicant intends to be a good citizen of Wheeling. The proposed entrance to the Development is an immediate upgrade to the area and will enhance the Oglebay corridor, increasing that vital part of Wheeling's attraction to future businesses and residents. The Applicant is committed to the long term success of the Development and in developing strong and long-lasting community ties. The Applicant wants to be part of the future growth and success of Wheeling as envisioned by the Plan. The Development itself is based on a green arboretum aesthetic for the same reasons. One of the proposed biking trails will run through the Development toward and hopefully to Oglebay Park. To that end, Applicant will work closely with Oglebay to accomplish that goal. Additionally, as seen on Map 68, oil & gas wells are inching closer to the vicinity of the Site. Southwestern Energy (SWN) has been active in this regard. Applicant intends to work with and cooperate with SWN and others in the oil & gas industry to assist and help facilitate the needs of the industry to the economic benefit of the Wheeling.

Please refer to my statements above re: this being a “green” Development. I will leave it to the Planning Commission to interpret how the Developer will be working with SWN O&G industry to assist and facilitate the needs of the industry.....

Initiative #4 – Wheeling will invest in its neighborhoods

The emphasis within this initiative is on the need for new and different types of housing, including affordable homes, high-end housing, mixed use and townhomes. If developed as proposed, the Development will include 88 residential lots that include town homes, residential over commercial uses, and even assisted living opportunities. It should be mentioned again that offering a variety of housing options is absolutely vital if young people are to be encouraged to remain in or move to Wheeling. Mixed Use developments are in high demand and there are none in Wheeling. People want to minimize their carbon footprint. The ability to live, work and play in the same area is the key to the Development as a Mixed Use Village.

People who want to minimize their carbon footprints don't take down forested hillsides, mine a quarry in a neighborhood, increase traffic and create poor air quality, nor do they build extensive strip malls and parking lots, especially when those features are already available in the neighborhood.

Initiative #5 – Wheeling will invest in its Infrastructure

Much of the city's infrastructure system is significantly older than in most modern cities. This will require additional costs for repair and upgrade far into the future and should be addressed through coordination of infrastructure activities to upgrade infrastructure where it will address ongoing service problems. As with Initiative # 2 above, many of the Implementation Strategies that fall within this Initiative will cost money to implement and, once again, we believe the City should be mindful of the fact that the tax and other revenues generated by the Development will by necessity be much higher if it is developed as proposed rather than if it remains simply vacant land.

Again, I believe the public would like to see a detailed balance sheet showing money coming in and going out. Let's include the cost benefits of the hillside to the health and safety of the community..

requested will go a long way toward assisting Wheeling in promotion of the assets of the area and in its evolution into a more modern, attractive and sustainable community.

As mentioned above, I believe that the quarry, increased traffic, compromised air quality, additional noise and light, taking down a forested hillside to build an extended mall complex and parking lots does not fit the definition of "sustainable" either scientifically or economically.

Initiative #6 – Wheeling will embrace its quality of life

Wheeling is unique in its population, history, and topography. This combination of attractive features creates an opportunity for the City to position itself as a healthy and desirable alternative to life in larger cities such as Pittsburgh, while maintaining many of the more desirable qualities. The Development will do nothing to detract from those qualities. On the contrary, it will enhance the quality of life in Wheeling by expanding access to those aspects of life generally available only in larger cities while doing nothing to detract from the unique features and quality of life in Wheeling.

The Development will be a walkable village with a combination of retail, office, hospitality, educational, institutional and residential construction. Based on final approved plans, it will be located on upper and lower pads covering approximately 60 acres within an existing Site of 110 acres, surrounded by old growth forest and enhanced by new green spaces that will not detract from the aesthetic of the vicinity. The old growth forest will include several miles of nature and biking trails and will serve as a nature preserve with spectacular views of the surrounding area.

Not certain that quarries and an extended shopping mall and houses qualities as "big city". As far as "green spaces", see comments above.

Conclusion

The Applicant is well aware that this Development is not without controversy. It represents a project unlike anything in Wheeling. Nevertheless, in keeping with the overall goals of the Plan, it is Applicant's position that the Development represents a proposal that fulfills the spirit of the Plan unlike any project currently being considered or contemplated. Page 40 of the Plan includes the following statement in regard to the need to change the perception of Wheeling:

"Some locals perceive that Wheeling is stuck in its past and continues to do things because 'that is the way it always has been done.' These perceptions can be overcome if the city and its regional partners work together to promote the assets of the area and the fact that the city is continuing to evolve into a modern and sustainable community."

While there will always be "NIMBY's (Not In My back Yard), Wheeling must look forward to meeting the goals and expectation of the Plan and the City's future success. Change is inevitable, sometimes good and sometime bad. The Development provides positive change that is mutually beneficial. Approval of the Development as

I agree that we should partner to help the City evolve into a modern and sustainable community. I disagree with the Developer on what is considered modern and sustainable. I do not see how a quarry, large mall, and parking lot complex is modern. In fact, I believe shopping malls are having tough times now, even ones with boutique shops. I also believe that the younger generation do not view malls as progressive or modern, and are great at recognizing greenwashing when they see it, knowing that sticking a "sustainable" and "green" label on a development is far from real evidence, and that true sustainable and green developments seek evidence based credentials from certified professionals in that field.

Risks and Benefits

The following list of Potential Risks is based upon the findings of expert consultants who have both visited the site and who are credentialed and highly respected professionals in the fields of hydrology, geohydrology, and abandoned mines.

The final reports of these expert assessments will be provided by Patrick Cassidy, who is representing Woodsdale United Steering Committee on this issue.

Potential Risks associated with Acceptance of this Proposal include, but are not limited to:

- Slope instability and land movement
- Steep vertical Highwall instability and rock falls
- Mine Subsidence
- Acid Mine Water outflow
- Increased car and truck traffic in a small town neighborhood and school zone area
- Increased flooding, runoff, erosion, landslide impacting the health and safety of the community
- Compromised air quality due to loss of forest and gain of traffic
- Loss of the historic and residential neighborhood character
- Loss of security of property structures and property value
- Disregard for the intent and application of the Comprehensive Plan as a vehicle for defining the enduring true values and character of our City.

Potential Benefits associated with the Acceptance of the Proposal include:

- A large supermall/home cluster complex that is completely out of scale with its surroundings.
- A Medical and Educational facility (Wheeling already has empty OVMC and facilities at WLU Highlands, as well as University Buildings currently in transition)
- A Theater (Wheeling already has 2)
- Specialty Retail Stores (Wheeling has specialty stores in Woodsdale, Center Wheeling North Wheeling...Mall Retail Stores do not seem to be the wave of the future)
- On-site Quarrying and accompanying activities and traffic
- Expanded Rt 88 narrowing into two lanes at Oglebay intersections

The Developer has purchased or inherited a track of land categorized as Conservation Use (due, at least in part, to its steep slope and flooding potential), and now devised a plan and intention for developing the land for a quarry and expansive mall complex. I would encourage all future Commercial Developers who intend to quarry or build large commercial developments to spend a little more time before purchasing tracks of land that are designated as Conservation Use, and, instead, to find areas that are already commercial or suited to zoning changes.

Missing Test Results - I strongly encourage the Planning Commission to request additional critical test results and studies related to slope stability, potential mind subsidence/ acid mine water outflow, and highwall stability. I would be happy to provide more information related to standard tests and best practices upon request.

Additional Expert Findings related to the impact of unpermitted timbering on the hillside along with potential impacts of taking down the hillside, quarrying and development will be provided by Dr. Nicholas Zegre, Associate Professor of Forest Hydrology and Director of the West Virginia University Mountain Hydrology Laboratory as the reports are finalized.

Thank you for your invitation to comment and share Community's Concerns and Questions.

Mary Ellen Cassidy

Mary Ellen Cassidy
39 Hamilton Avenue
Wheeling, West Virginia

Tom Connelly

From: Don Gruber <dmgruber3923@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2019 9:15 AM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: Gc&p development

Mr Connelly my name is Don Gruber I live at 116 long vue acres. With my wife Carol owe are very concerned with the traffic that will certainly be a problem. The mile or so from sheets to the proposed entrance to this project. They absolutely need to redesign there entrance to the woodsdale side of the project. We already have the garbage trucks using 88 to gc&p as there main road. Then add the lights c'mon really. God bless D Gruber

Tom Connelly

From: PAT CHRISTOPHER <cmarcie39@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2019 11:43 AM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: Wholesale hill

I can't believe that the tearing down of a hill is even being considered. Oh loudly a few will reap profits while the rest of us suffer passer quality of life. Go to Kansas no bills and build there.

Tom Connelly

From: Ann <awcoleman@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2019 12:28 PM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: Woodsdale Hill
Attachments: IMG_0317.MOV

From Ann Coleman – 2 Springhaven Road, Woodsdale, Wheeling.

I also own property at 8 Woodlawn Court, 3 Campbell Terrace, 11 Campbell Terrace , 8 Campbell Terrace, and 148, 150 and 152 Edgwood Street and 13 Springhaven Road.

I care about my Woodsdale and invest in property because I know I will take care of the condition of homes in my lifelong neighborhood.

I have lived under “Woodsdale Hill” my entire life and ,as a child ,I ran the hill which only had one path starting at Stratford Road and traversing in an easterly direction. The “old logging trails” referred to in the applicant’s paperwork were not found in our years of playing there.

I am writing to you today because of the changes I have noticed since GCP Development (or a sole owner) got involved with the hill and because of the **damages I have already incurred**. My parents purchased 8 Woodlawn Court in 1955 . Until 2011, they did not ever experience runoff or waves of mud coming down the hill. I was taking care of them in their elder years and so I was there daily. Their property was dry when local flooding occurred in 1996 and again in 2004. When the illegal logging on the hill continued, *water stated to come down and also waves of mud – see attached photos and videos*. There were multiple instances of this – the water would gush over the rock walls in the back yard – *fill up the basement window wells, come through the windows on the backside of the house and out the garage door on the front side of the house*. Since my mother was bed- bound with a stroke and on oxygen – this was frightening and I even called the fire department . I did not know if we would lose power or if the house was stable. That garage door had to be replaced due to this and I am currently seeking a water retention plan from landscape architects that I cannot afford. At this time the house is surrounded by nearly 30 sandbags and I had to have water sensors installed in the basement that call me at work if flooding occurs.

When there is a rainstorm, you will find me driving the length of Edgwood Street and unclogging drains behind Campbell Terrace and cleaning out the clay half pipes that traverse the hill at 8 Woodlawn Court. The intensity and speed and volume of water and mud coming down the hill is frightening. I have suffered flooding of 28 inches in my own basement on Springhaven. Many of my neighbors are ready to abandon Woodsdale especially if we are to be downhill from this construction. They feel they city does not have their back, which is why they chose to live in the city limits. Existing neighborhoods should not be put in danger –(and at 3 am when I am fighting mud, rocks, and logs alone in the dark – it is danger) to satisfy the development desires of people who do not reside in that neighborhood.

Since the injunction stopped logging- the runoff has ended. I have also had to install backflow preventers, and sump pumps at my other properties at my own expense. 8 Woodlawn Court is my childhood home and I have plans to return there IF I can make it safe from mudslides and flooding. I leave in fear of rainstorms and in fear that you will allow my historic neighborhood to be destroyed by the callous disregard of a wayward developer with no regard for the long term residents that live below his land. He has not owned this land since 1955 and has not put the care and concern into our neighborhood over time that we ,as residents, have.

I would ask the developer what remedies homeowners have in Woodsdale for the damage and expenses we have **already** suffered . And going forward, what financial solutions will be provided to us for structural damage from 5

years of drilling or blasting , hvac and garage door and window replacement when mud rocks and logs come down, and water retention planning so that we are not climbing muddy hillsides in the dark to try to hold back the hill - as I have had to do. These recent years with the injunction have been a blessing. Please do not allow the comprehensive plan to be changed to accommodate this development .

My properties are available for individual tours if you have interest. This constant threat has already driven down property values. To quote one of my co-workers – “With all of the expense you are putting into protecting your property , you could live in Oakmont Hills”. The reputation of a once strong neighborhood is sinking - like the height of the hill behind it.

Thank you for your support and concern. I have never felt more strongly about an issue in Wheeling.

Ann Coleman
awcoleman@comcast.net
304-242-1022

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Tom Connelly

From: Pollock, Jondavid <JPollock@wheelinghospital.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2019 10:46 AM
To: Tom Connelly
Subject: brick and mortar is dying
Attachments: store closings.pdf

Tom;

I'd like to include these two recent articles regarding the "death" of brick and mortar retailing in America. This speaks directly to the futility of opening an almost destined-to-fail retail project in Woodsdale, as proposed by the GC&P Development Project of Mr. Coyne and his associate. One of the articles I read suggested that there is no "retail apocalypse" coming but rather brick and mortar stores are being strategically placed in densely populated communities where shoppers still get out to shop and buy. I think it's a safe bet to state that ours is not a densely populated community. I appreciate your attention to this issue and including it in the file I hope is considered by the appropriate City and County council members. Best, Jondavid Pollock

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These Chains Have Announced a Ton of Store Closings in 2019

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MORTGAGES & LOANS

Home Values Heating Up in Washington



Doug Whiteman

10.16.2019

Advertisement



Correspondence Set 6 - p. 101+

The retail landscape is
looking bleaker and
bleaker.



BY DOUG

WHITEMAN • 10.10.2019 14:00
MANAGING MONEY > GENERAL INTEREST

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If you keep noticing more going-out-of-business sales, there's a startling reason: Forever 21, Walgreens, Dressbarn, GameStop, Gap and other chains have already announced over 8,500 store closings in 2019 -- way more than we saw during all of 2018.

That's according to Coresight Research, which predicts the number could hit 12,000 by the end of the year. You think that's bad? As online shopping continues to grow, *another 75,000 stores* could be lost by 2026, says investment bank UBS.

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Senior Dating

These chains are shutting down the most U.S. stores this year, counting down to the retailer turning out the lights at the largest number of locations. When you hit the liquidation sales, take along your cash-back credit card for additional savings.

44. Macy's



Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock
Macy's is making strategic store closings.

Stores closing in 2019: 4

At Macy's, it's practically a tradition that an announcement of store closings comes as soon as the holiday season ends. But this time, Macy's got an early jump on things.

The company revealed last November that a department store in suburban New York would close in early 2019. Later, a few more shut down.

Chief Financial Officer Paula Price told analysts during a conference call that a total of four stores had closed by mid-May, versus 12 that went out of business in 2018. She pointed out that the company also is opening new stores.

Analyst Neil Sauders with Global Data Retail says Macy's needs to keep losing locations "where the return on investment is not viable."

43. Nordstrom

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Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock
Nordstrom is shutting down a few of its department stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 6

Nordstrom — the upscale retailer with a reputation for superstar customer service — has been battling for business as shoppers embrace cheap fashion chains and e-commerce sites.

The company has been pouring money into its Nordstrom Rack discount stores and making room for online order pickup areas in its department stores. But those efforts haven't been enough.

With its profits falling, Nordstrom closed three stores early in the year, and it recently shuttered three more. The latest closings included a Nordstrom that had been in business in a suburban Seattle mall for nearly 60 years.

But the company continues to open new stores, including a New York City flagship that will span *seven floors*.

42. Target

MoneyWise

Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock
Even Target is closing stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 6

Even popular and trendy Target finds itself with money-losing stores that it needs to shake loose.

The company said it would close a half-dozen by February, in what has become an annual event. The chain shuttered 13 in February 2018, and a dozen a year earlier.

But don't worry, Target fans — you'll still have plenty of places to use your REDcard credit card. The

retailer continues to grow and evolve.

The discount retailer says it's opening 30 new, smaller locations each year, plus it plans to remodel 300 of its larger locations in 2020 by giving them new lighting and flooring, better toy departments, and spiffed-up grocery sections.

41. Kohl's

Advertisement

MoneyWise

photohyphm / Shutterstock
Kohl's is closing a few stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 8

Kohl's has been in better shape than those department stores you find at the big enclosed

malls. Experts say shoppers think Kohl's stores in strip shopping centers are less of a hassle than going to the mall.

Even so, the 2018 holiday shopping at Kohl's wasn't quite as good as expected, leading the company to shut down four money-losing stores early this year. The company later announced that it was shutting down all four of its Off/Aisle discount stores.

But the chain said the closings would be balanced out by the opening of four new stores, though they'll be smaller than the typical Kohl's.

To get more shoppers in the door, Kohl's recently started accepting Amazon returns at all of its department stores.

40. Lord & Taylor

MoneyWise

Tahaa / Shutterstock
Lord & Taylor stores will be disappearing
from more suburban malls.

Stores closing in 2019: 9

America's oldest department store company (dating back to 1826) closed its iconic flagship store on New York's Fifth Ave. before the end of 2018, and Lord & Taylor planned to put several more of its department stores out of business this year.

The New York store had stood for more than a century and was the first department store to put animated displays in its store windows at Christmas time.

The chain's other locations are mostly found in malls.

Meanwhile, L&T is hoping its survival will come via a unique new partnership with Walmart: A Lord & Taylor site is now found

within Walmart's website and offers shoppers 125 upscale brands.

39. Topshop

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Tupungato / Shutterstock
Topshop is closing all of its U.S. stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 11

The British fast-fashion chain Topshop got a star-studded welcome when it invaded America in 2009, with celebrities including rapper Jay-Z and supermodel Kate Moss celebrating the opening of the first U.S. store in New York.

Now, after just 10 years, Topshop has already made an exit. It

wound down all 11 of its Topshop and Topman stores in the U.S., in cities that also include Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, Miami and San Diego.

The chain's parent company filed for bankruptcy, blaming "challenging retail headwinds, changing consumer habits and ever-increasing online competition."

But it's not a complete goodbye for the brand's fans in the U.S., because they can still buy the company's threads online and at Nordstrom stores.

38. Barneys New York

MoneyWise

rbfmr / Shutterstock
Barneys has filed for bankruptcy.

Stores closing in 2019: 15

Barneys — a luxury department store company known for its over-the-top catalogs and elaborate holiday window displays — has filed for bankruptcy and is closing most of its stores.

In a statement, the chain says it has taken a pounding from high rents and "the challenging retail environment."

Barneys will continue to operate its iconic locations in New York, where the company got its start in 1923. Barney Pressman began by opening a discount clothing store using the slogan, "No Bunk, No Junk, No Imitations."

It seems some shoppers have been confused about the fate of the New York stores, so Barneys created a tongue-in-cheek window display declaring "Not Closed" and "Barneys Til I Die."

37. Walmart

Advertisement

MoneyWise

fotomak / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: 18

None other than retail giant Walmart is scaling back in 2019. As the company shuts down locations here and there, hundreds of laid-off employees are hanging up their vests.

Walmart has avoided making any formal announcements about closings. To arrive at the total, you have to add numbers from industry reports and individual local media accounts.

The 18 include: 10 of Walmart's Neighborhood Market grocery stores; full-size discount stores in Louisiana, New Hampshire, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia;

and smaller "Walmart on Campus" locations at Arizona State University and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Most recently, Walmart announced the closing of its only store in Minnesota's capital, St. Paul. "Retail is changing rapidly," a Walmart spokeswoman said, when asked about the decision by the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

36. J. Crew

MoneyWise

JHVEPhoto / Shutterstock
J. Crew has been quietly closing more stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 20

Many malls are dying off, which is a serious problem for chains that rely on them — like fading J. Crew.

After quietly ending the run of a handful of U.S. locations early in

the year, executives told analysts during a late May conference call that the plan for 2019 is to shut down a total of about 20 J. Crews, including outlet stores.

Recent closings have included "Liquor Store," a man cave-ish men's store that the company operated for more than 10 years in New York's lower Manhattan.

About the only thing going right for J. Crew is its Madewell chain of denim and accessories stores for women. That brand is so hot that J. Crew plans is spinning it off through an initial public offering.

35. Southeastern Grocers

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Felix Mizloznikov / Shutterstock
Winn-Dixie owner Southeastern Grocers is closing more stores a year after the company emerged from bankruptcy.

Stores closing in 2019: 22

You may not know the Southeastern Grocers name, though if you live in the Southern U.S. you've seen the company's supermarkets.

Winn-Dixie, Bi-Lo and Harveys are institutions across the region, but grocery shoppers have been gravitating away to big-box stores such as Walmart and Costco — and to Amazon.

Southeastern Grocers has shut down more than two-dozen stores, less than a year after the company went through a bankruptcy and closed nearly 100 of its locations.

Lately, there's been more bad news: In August, the grocery store chain agreed to pay \$4.5 million to settle allegations that leaks of coolant from its store

refrigerators were so serious they violated the Clean Air Act.

34. J.C. Penney

MoneyWise

Chris Allan / Shutterstock
JC Penney is in trouble -- and is closing stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 27

J.C. Penney has many things in common with Sears: Both were founded around the beginning of the 20th century, both are fixtures in U.S. shopping malls, both used to have major catalog businesses.

And now Penney is fighting for its life, just like Sears.

Right after a bad holiday sales season, Penney's stock dropped below \$1 for the first time ever. More recently, the company said it would close 18 department

stores in 2019 and nine of its separate furniture stores.

In its battle for shoppers, JCP is introducing stores within its stores: shops specializing in shirts, jackets, vests and other gear for camping and other outdoorsy activities.

33. Christopher & Banks

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Mike Mozart / Flickr
Christopher & Banks plans to close as many as 40 stores.

Stores closing in 2019: The first of up to 40

A lot of things haven't been going right for the women's clothing

retailer Christopher & Banks, which has decided to close between 30 and 40 of its more than 450 stores over the next two and a half years.

Executives say the company — which was founded by a guy named Gil (Braun) as Braun's Fashions in the 1950s — wound up with more spring and summer clothing than it could sell in 2018. Then, shipping delays made it tough to put new merchandise on the racks.

In 2019, C&B has continued to lose money as its sales keep declining.

But the CEO has been upbeat, telling analysts that the chain is making progress.

32. Abercrombie & Fitch

MoneyWise

Northfoto / Shutterstock
Abercrombie has lost its sizzle.

Stores closing in 2019: Up to 40

With America's malls in trouble, Abercrombie — known for its ripped jeans and shredded models — saw its business go from smokin' hot to ice cold in recent years.

The fashion retailer for younger shoppers is mounting a comeback through downsizing, and in more ways than one.

Executives announced that as many as 40 Abercrombie stores would go out of business this year, including some large-scale flagship stores. Other existing locations will shrink in size, and 40 smallish new stores are planned.

But the trade fight is hurting the retailer's turnaround efforts. Abercrombie gets some of its clothing from China, so it says

tariffs are likely to have a "direct adverse impact" on profits.

31. Francesca's

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Helen89 / Shutterstock
Francesca's is closing 30 to 40 of its women's clothing stores.

Stores closing in 2019: Up to 40

Francesca's is a women's clothing and accessories chain that's having trouble getting shoppers in the door. "Foot traffic" into the stores is down, and so are sales.

CEO Steve Lawrence has promised analysts more excitement(!) to pull people in, including "more disruptive window displays and visual

effects." But the company has stopped remodeling its stores, and is closing 30 to 40 of them in 2019.

Francesca's wants to do more business online, but its e-commerce sales have been relatively modest so far.

The company's sales and stock price have been showing some improvement, but that hasn't stopped speculation that Francesca's may not be special enough to survive and could be headed toward bankruptcy.

30. Z Gallerie

MoneyWise

designs by Jack / Shutterstock
Z Gallerie filed for bankruptcy and is closing stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 44

The upscale furniture store Z Gallerie is one of several retailers

to file for bankruptcy in 2019, though the chain is hoping to stay in business now that it has a new owner.

But in March, the retailer announced it was closing 17 stores, and it recently decided to shutter 27 more. That leaves just 34 to carry on.

In the bankruptcy filing, Z Gallerie said it bungled with e-commerce, an expansion and a pricey distribution center, Bloomberg reported.

Here's a tip for saving even more when you hit a furniture liquidation sale: Use a cash-back credit card that offers bonus rewards for furniture purchases.

29. The Children's Place

Advertisement

MoneyWise

JHVEPhoto / Shutterstock
The Children's Place wants to close 300 stores by 2020.

Stores closing in 2019: Up to 45

If you're used to taking your kids to The Children's Place to get them clothes for back-to-school, be warned that your store might be gone by the next school-shopping season.

For the past few years the retailer has been working toward a goal of closing 300 stores by 2020.

Executives told Wall Street analysts in early March that 40 to 45 locations would be shuttered in 2019, and another 45 would close next year.

The Children's Place has been trying to get its arithmetic right: It's trimming its store count and giving its website more attention, to boost profits. The chain

recently started letting customers shop online and have the stuff shipped to one of its stores.

28. CVS

MoneyWise

Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock
CVS is closing stores, including the world's largest.

Stores closing in 2019: 46

Pharmacy giant CVS Health caught the store-closing bug and shut down nearly 50 of its locations in April.

The company says the stores, in 16 states spread across the U.S., were "underperforming." They represented just a teensy percentage of the roughly 9,600 CVS drugstores nationwide.

The cuts included the world's largest CVS, a 64,000-square-foot monster of a store in Springfield,

Missouri. The typical CVS is under 13,000 square feet.

CVS is now making over hundreds of its stores as "HealthHUBs," to capitalize on its takeover of the health insurer Aetna. The remodeled pharmacies have larger in-store clinics and sell more medical equipment, such as machines that help with sleep apnea.

27. Lowe's

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: 51

Home improvement retailer
Lowe's has been taking a

hacksaw to part of its business. It planned to cut 20 stores in the U.S. and 31 in Canada in early 2019.

Lowe's still has more than 2,000 locations between the two countries. CEO Marvin Ellison said in a statement that the downsizing is just part of "building a stronger business."

The company says most of the closings involved Lowe's stores that were operating within 10 miles of another location.

In August, Lowe's told thousands of employees that they were getting the axe. The retailer decided to stop hiring its own workers to clean the stores and assemble grills and other products, and instead use outside businesses to handle that stuff.

26. Kmart

MoneyWise

Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock
Nearly 50 more Kmart's are closing.

Stores closing in 2019: More than 53

Target, Kmart and Walmart opened their first stores in the same year (1962) and were once known as the "big three" discount retailers. But soon, there might be only two left standing.

Kmart appears to be spiraling toward its death. The chain's troubled parent company Sears Holdings closed over 150 Kmart stores in 2018 and has been shutting down more in 2019.

Fifty-three is the official number of Kmart closings announced by the company in 2019, but in late summer scores more stores were quietly told they'd be going out of business, too, before the end of

the year. An exact number has been hard to pin down.

Back in 2000, Kmart was everywhere: Some 2,200 stores dotted the U.S. and its territories. Fewer than 200 remain.

25. Victoria's Secret

Advertisement

MoneyWise

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Stores closing in 2019: 53

It's Victoria's Not-So-Secret: Consumers no longer get all steamed up over the lingerie brand, so it has gone from hot to not.

The chain has failed to keep up changing tastes. Analysts say that instead of the skimpy styles at Victoria's Secret, women are more interested in underwear that's comfortable and made for all body types.

The retailer planned to close more than 50 of its stores in 2019. That's more than three times the number that shut down in a more typical year, according to Bloomberg.

Executives said recently that Victoria's Secret would stop offering so many discounts, because customers had become hooked on them. J.C. Penney also tried to cut back on price cuts — and shoppers revolted.

24. Party City

MoneyWise

BobNoah / Shutterstock
The party's over at 45 Party City locations.

Stores closing in 2019: 55

The tough climate for retailers can be a real party pooper.

Just ask Party City, which is closing about 6% of its roughly 900 party supply stores. In May, the company said it would shut down 45 locations, but it later upped the number by 10.

In a typical year, Party City closes only 10 to 15 of its stores — total.

The chain says it needs to scale back so it can keep the party going at its most profitable locations. A shortage of helium for balloons hurt business earlier in the year, but Party City said in a later news release that it had "secured additional helium supply."

23. Office Depot

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Kit Leong / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: 59

These days, Pam from *The Office* might very well go on Amazon to order Post-its, toner and other *very important stuff* for Dunder Mifflin, instead of heading off to the nearest office supply store in Scranton.

And that's no joke for Office Depot. As it fights for customers and for its survival, the company has been forced to keep closing money-losing stores.

In a May filing with federal regulators, the retailer said it's shuttering about 60 of its Office Depot and OfficeMax stores this year, in the final wave of a three-year plan to close about 300 locations.

So customers won't leave its stores discouraged by long waits for print and copy services, Office Depot has started letting them reserve a spot in line by using the chain's app.

22. Bed Bath & Beyond

MoneyWise

dennizn / Shutterstock
Bed Bath & Beyond is closing 40 stores, maybe more.

Stores closing in 2019: 60

Bed Bath & Beyond shoppers will have fewer and fewer places to use the company's ubiquitous coupons to buy bedding, kitchen gadgets and the latest as-seen-on-TV products that no household should be without.

In April, the home furnishings retailer said it would shut down 40 of its stores in 2019. But

months later, the struggling chain boosted the number by 20.

BB&B also intended to open around 15 new stores this year.

And, to help drum up some holiday season buzz, the company is changing things up by doing a "rapid refresh" at 160 existing stores. That's just a fraction of the roughly 1,000 Bed Bath & Beyonds in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Canada.

21. Destination Maternity

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Thomson200 / Wikimedia Commons
Destination Maternity is expecting to close 280 stores over four years.

Stores closing in 2019: Up to 67

No surprise here: Many expectant moms would rather shop from the comfort of home than trudge to the mall.

So, Destination Maternity — which also operates Motherhood Maternity and A Pea in the Pod stores — has been struggling to compete against online retailers. Sales have been dropping.

The company has announced it's closing up to 280 stores over the next four years, including as many as 67 during its 2019 fiscal year, which started in July. The retailer wants to sell more of its maternity clothes online.

Destination Maternity may put itself up for sale. "While we continue to believe we have a compelling business and remain focused on delivering long-term profitable growth, challenges persist and more needs to be done," Chief Financial Officer Dave Helkey said, in a statement.

20. Sears

MoneyWise

Autumn Sky Photography / Shutterstock
Sears keeps shrinking by closing more stores.

Stores closing in 2019: More than 93

Things are still looking grim for Sears, which closed a slew of its department stores in 2018 and filed for bankruptcy.

It has followed up with bunches and bunches more closings in 2019, which have cut stores including the Sears at the largest shopping center in the U.S., Minnesota's Mall of America.

A hedge fund led by the retailer's former CEO bought Sears Holdings in February in hopes of saving hundreds of Sears and Kmart stores. But a new announcement in August

targeted more than 20 additional Sears locations for closure — bringing the year's official count to 93.

Then, in later weeks, other Sears stores quietly launched liquidation sales. The exact number has been unclear.

19. Performance Bicycle

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Tom Woodward / Flickr
Performance Bicycle has gone out of business.

Stores closing in 2019: 102

What was once America's largest chain of bicycle stores has come to the end of the road.

In early 2019, the operator of Performance Bicycle shops in 20 states from coast to coast held liquidation sales at all of its more than 100 locations.

Parent company Advanced Sports Enterprises filed for bankruptcy protection in mid-November and then hit the brakes on the Performance chain, which started as a bike catalog business in 1981.

Executives said the company was wallowing in debt and grappling with higher costs due to tariffs imposed in the ongoing trade war. Performance Bicycle isn't gone completely: It's still selling bikes and accessories online.

18. Pier 1 Imports

MoneyWise

Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: More than 140

Pier 1 is in trouble as deep as those quirky, bowl-shaped papasan chairs the home furnishings retailer is known for.

The chain said it closed out 2018 with a dismal holiday shopping season that saw sales drop 13.7% from a year earlier. Business has been just as bad in 2019.

Time may be running out like the wick on a Pier 1 scented candle: Industry observers say the company could be headed toward bankruptcy.

To keep its ship afloat, Pier 1 is ready to close more than 140 stores, interim CEO Cheryl Bachelder told The Dallas Morning News. The final number will be lower if landlords cut the company some slack.

17. Signet Jewelers

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Ken Wolter / Shutterstock
Signet is the parent company of Jared: The Galleria of Jewelry and several other jewelry chains.

Stores closing in 2019: 150

Signet is the world's largest jewelry retailer, the giant company behind many of the major chains that sell the sparkly stuff, including Kay Jewelers, Jared The Galleria of Jewelry, and Zales.

The company had a not-so-dazzling 2018 holiday sales season and says it's closing 150 stores as part of a three-year plan to lose 13% of its more than 3,500 locations around the globe.

Signet is most eager to pull out of dying malls. It says it's shifting to

more "off-mall" locations, including stores that stand alone.

Plus, the company has been putting more of a gleam on its e-commerce business. In a recent three-month period, Signet's online sales were up about 10% from a year earlier.

16. LifeWay Christian Stores

MoneyWise

Lori Martin / Shutterstock
Lifeway Christian Stores found it didn't have a prayer.

Stores closing in 2019: 170

Even a chain of religious stores doesn't have a prayer in the current retail environment.

LifeWay Christian Stores has announced that it's shutting down its entire chain of religious

bookstores across 30 states, from Pennsylvania to California.

The company says sales and foot traffic have been declining at its brick-and-mortar locations.

Lifeway says it reaches five times more people online, so it will shift even more resources into its digital business.

Still, LifeWay CEO Ben Mandrell told Christianity Today that internet retailing has its limits: "There's a need in every community for people to go and peruse and browse Christian books. It's not the same to peek inside online."

15. Forever 21

Advertisement

MoneyWise

March Marcho / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: Up to 178

Teens have loved Forever 21, one of the giants in the "fast-fashion" business. The chain's often massive stores offer low-price clothing that changes rapidly to keep up with style trends.

But as young shoppers question whether Forever 21's disposable clothing is good for the planet, the retailer has been forced to climb onto the bankruptcy bandwagon.

"This does NOT mean that we are going out of business," Forever 21 says, in a statement to its customers. "On the contrary, filing for bankruptcy protection is a deliberate and decisive step to put us on a successful track for the future."

"Forever" could soon come to an end for nearly 350 stores

worldwide, nearly 200 of which will be closing in the U.S. That's more than a third of the total.

14. GameStop

MoneyWise

Helen89 / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: Up to 200

Videogames have become more of a thing you download, less of a thing you go to a store to buy — and that's a big problem for GameStop and its more than 5,700 locations in 14 countries.

After the company announced widening losses and a 14.3% drop in sales during the May-through-July quarter, executives told analysts on a conference call that 180 to 200 stores would close by the end of the year.

And, GameStop Chief Financial Officer James Bell warned of a "much larger tranche of closures over the coming 12 to 24 months."

GameStop traces its roots back to Babbage's, a small seller of educational software that opened in Dallas in 1984. The retailer has gone through several ownership changes and has had its current name since 2000.

13. Walgreens

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Jonathan Weiss / Shutterstock
Walgreens has prescribed hundreds of store closings.

Stores closing in 2019: 200

CVS isn't the only pharmacy giant that's taking a dose of downsizing. Walgreens announced it's shutting down about 200 of its U.S. stores.

In a statement to media outlets, Walgreens said the closings amount to fewer than 3% of the chain's nearly 9,600 locations in the U.S. The company told federal regulators in a filing that the goal is to achieve "increased cost efficiencies."

Walgreens previously indicated that it's under financial pressure because of low generic drug prices, Reuters reported.

The chain is trying new ways to lure customers into its stores. For example, there's now an arrangement that lets Urban Outfitters' online shoppers pick up their orders at Walgreens locations.

12. Things Remembered

MoneyWise

JHVEPhoto / Shutterstock
Things Remembered has largely been forgotten.

Stores closing in 2019: More than 200

Things Remembered is a store where you can get practically anything engraved, embroidered and personalized: jewelry, key chains, bathrobes, oven mitts, door knockers, hip flasks, piggy banks, paperweights, and so on and so on.

But consumers haven't been giving Things Remembered a whole lot of thought, it seems. The retailer filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in early February.

The chain this year closed more than half its roughly 400 stores. It sold others, along with its online and mail-order businesses, to

Enesco, a maker of Disney figurines and other collectibles.

Things Remembered is using technology to avoid becoming a forgotten retail relic: The shops now have "personalization bars" where customers can use iPads to design unique, personalized gifts.

II. Avenue

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Rosemarie Mosteller / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: 222

The plus-size women's clothing retailer Avenue Stores is another chain that will be gone from the

retail map entirely by the time 2019 is done.

The chain — which started out as Sizes Unlimited in 1983 — decided to shut down all of its stores in 33 states, according to a news release from the liquidator.

Avenue had been looking for a buyer and had warned employees that if it couldn't find one, it would have to shut down, the New York Post reported.

Women who wear larger sizes are frustrated to see Avenue go, says Marcy Cruz, blog editor for *PLUS Model Magazine*. "Many brands feel like women over a size 24 are not shopping," Cruz told New York's Newsday.

10. Gap

MoneyWise

lentamart / Shutterstock*)
Shoppers have fallen out of the Gap

Stores closing in 2019: The first of up to 230

At one time, the Gap was the coolest store at the mall, the place where you'd stock up on T-shirts, khakis, sweats and jeans that just looked *so right*.

But that was a long time ago. Nowadays, younger shoppers wouldn't think of falling into the Gap but instead find trendier and more affordable clothing at Target or "fast-fashion" chains such as H&M.

So, Gap plans to close around 230 stores over two years. But don't feel too badly for parent company Gap Inc., because its Old Navy chain is doing so well that it's being spun off as a separate business.

The plan is to add a jaw-dropping 800 new Old Navy stores in North America, by opening 75 each year for the next several years.

9. Chico's

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Susan Montgomery / Shutterstock
Chico's wants to shut down at least 250 stores over four years.

Stores closing in 2019: The first of at least 250

Chico's can't beat Amazon, so it's joining 'em: The retailer is now selling its women's clothing and accessories on the online superstore, and on QVC, too.

Meantime, Chico's says it will close at least 250 of U.S. stores over the next three years, though mostly after 2019. Executives say they want the retailer to have more of a digital presence, less of an old-fashioned physical one.

The closings will include not only Chico's locations but also some of

the company's White House Black Market and Soma stores.

Chico's has a surprising backstory: The chain started in 1983 as Chico's Folk Art Specialties, a shop selling Mexican folk art and sweaters on Sanibel Island, Florida. The owners named the place after a friend's pet parrot, Chico.

8. Charming Charlie

MoneyWise

Susan Montgomery / Shutterstock

Stores closing in 2019: 261

The charm wore off for this seller of colorful handbags, fashionable sunglasses, flashy jewelry and other women's accessories and clothing.

Charming Charlie filed for bankruptcy for the second time in less than two years, and this time it was fatal. In the summer of 2019, the retailer closed all of its stores in 38 states and put itself out of business.

In the new bankruptcy filing, the company said its costs — including "onerous leases" on its stores — just became too much to handle.

But we may not have seen the end of Charming Charlie.

Founder Charlie Chanaratsopon hopes to bring the company back to life and paid \$1.1 million for the chain's name (well, it is *his* name, after all), mailing list and other intellectual property.

7. Shopko

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Ken Wolter / Shutterstock
Shopko is closing about two-thirds of its locations.

Stores closing in 2019: 363

A steady drip of store closings from the regional discount chain Shopko turned into a flood following the company's bankruptcy filing in January. Eventually, the retailer decided to shut down **all** of its stores by mid-June.

That was after executives tried but failed to find someone to buy the company and keep as many as 120 stores open.

Shopko got its start in Green Bay, Wisconsin in 1962; it promised to offer customers "quality, service and low prices." The retailer made its name by going into smaller markets in the Midwest, the West and the Pacific

Northwest that other chains ignored.

The problem is that Amazon is in all of those places now.

6. Family Dollar

MoneyWise

Tupungato / Shutterstock
Close to 400 Family Dollar stores may close in 2019.

Stores closing in 2019: 390

Dollar stores had been bucking (pun intended) some of the trends squeezing other retailers, but now they're having difficulty, too.

As a result, up to 390 Family Dollar locations will shut down this year, and another 200 will be turned into Dollar Tree stores. Dollar Tree bought Family Dollar in 2015.

In a news release announcing the closings, Dollar Tree CEO Gary Philbin mentioned tariffs on imported goods as one of the challenges facing the company.

The company is updating another 1,000 Family Dollar stores — by adding coolers and freezers to hold more food products, giving customers additional beauty and household items to choose from, and offering stuff that's sold for \$1 at Dollar Tree.

5. Charlotte Russe

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Kristi Blokhin / Shutterstock
Women's clothing retailer Charlotte Russe is shutting down close to 100 stores.

Stores closing in 2019: 512

Charlotte Russe — a women's clothing chain that has been around since the mid-1970s — filed for bankruptcy in February and initially said it would close about one-fifth of its more than 500 locations.

But the retailer's website later announced that all stores would be shutting down. The bankruptcy filing said the chain's sales had suffered a "dramatic decrease."

Charlotte Russe borrowed its name from a French dessert, and a new owner is trying to give shoppers another helping.

Toronto-based YM Inc. bought the brand in late March and reopened a few stores over the summer. The goal is to put 100 of them back in business, according to a tweet from the Charlotte Russe Twitter account.

4. Fred's

MoneyWise

Michael Rivera / Wikimedia Commons

Stores closing in 2019: 557

Fred's is yet another merchant that will be gone from the retail map entirely when 2019 draws to a close.

The ailing chain had about 560 discount stores and pharmacies at the start of the year — and then came wave after wave of closings. But they weren't enough to save the business.

So, Fred's filed for bankruptcy in early September and said it would shut down its remaining locations in the Southeast and Midwest.

Fred's had hoped to become a giant in the drugstore business. When Walgreens and Rite Aid were trying to combine last year, Fred's offered to buy hundreds of

stores that might have been left out of the deal. But the Walgreens-Rite Aid merger never happened.

3. Dressbarn

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Rosemarie Mosteller / Shutterstock
The entire Dressbarn chain is going out of business.

Stores closing in 2019: 650

After almost 60 years in business, women's clothing retailer Dressbarn is hanging it up.

Parent company Ascena Retail Group has decided to put the entire chain out of business and focus on its more profitable stores for women and girls.

Ascena's other brands include Ann Taylor, Loft and Justice.

You see them in practically every mall and strip shopping center — but many of the customers are at home, shopping online. So, Ascena has been doing some Marie Kondo-style tidying in its closet. Early in 2019, it sold its Maurices chain.

Dressbarn got its start in Stamford, Connecticut, in the early 1960s. Executives say it was founded by a couple "who recognized the need of women who were entering the workforce for a convenient one-stop shop where they could find fashion at a value."

2. Gymboree

MoneyWise

Helen89 / Shutterstock
Kids clothing retailer Gymboree has been getting beaten up.

Stores closing in 2019: 800

Gymboree was playing a game of retail dodgeball — and lost.

The chain that sold clothing for kids and babies came out of bankruptcy in 2017, but in January 2019 the retailer filed all over again and announced it was shutting down all of its roughly 800 Gymboree and Crazy 8 stores.

The company was no match for competitors including Amazon, Walmart, Target and The Children's Place — which has been closing stores of its own but has come out stronger.

And now, The Children's Place is planning to bring back its former rival, sort of. The Children's Place bought the Gymboree name and says it will sell Gymboree clothing at 200 Children's Place stores starting in early 2020.

1. Payless ShoeSource

Advertisement

MoneyWise

Shawn Hill / Shutterstock
Payless is going out of business.

Stores closing in 2019: 2,100

For generations, Payless was America's go-to for cheap footwear.

In the very early days of the company, it advertised with the exuberant jingle, "Man alive! Two for five!" — meaning you could get two pairs of shoes for just \$5.

But even Payless has had trouble competing against the deep discounts online and at stores like T.J. Maxx. So, the chain announced it was closing its last 2,100 stores in the U.S. and

Puerto Rico and would go out of business.

Payless had filed for bankruptcy protection in 2017. At the time, the chain was all over the map: It had more than 4,400 locations in over 30 countries.

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RETAIL INDUSTRY ▶ FAQs

Why Retail Companies Are Closing Stores

BY **BARBARA FARFAN**  Updated August 05, 2019

Traditional U.S. retailers are on course to close more stores than they did in 2017, when major retail chains closed a record 8,139 stores. Through July 5, 2019, large U.S. retail chains announced 7,062 store closures, according to [Coresight Research](#). That compares with 5,864 store closings for all of 2018.



If the pace continues, major retailers could shutter as many as 12,000 stores by year-end, Coresight forecasts. In that case, the number of closures would come close to doubling the 6,163 that occurred in 2008, the only full calendar year in the Great Recession.

Online Competition

Part of the explanation for retail chains' difficulties since 2017—what some have called the "retail apocalypse"—is the continuing trend of Americans making purchases online. Consumers enjoy the freedom of shopping on their computer or phone and avoiding trips to a store that may not have had what they were looking for anyway.

As of the first quarter of 2019, e-commerce purchases accounted for 10.2 percent of all retail sales, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. That percentage has risen steadily since 2000.

Amazon.com, the largest U.S. e-commerce company, had about 103 million paying subscribers to its Amazon Prime service in March 2019. That figure represents about 80 percent of U.S. households.

The Decline of Malls

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located in traditional shopping malls.

Furthermore, people of all ages—but especially younger people—are increasingly shifting their spending preferences from things to experiences. They want shopping excursions to be fun rather than just a search for consumer goods. That's why malls that offer diversions like roller coasters or aquariums have outperformed their retail-only peers.

Private-Equity Debt

Yet another reason for store closings is the leveraged buyouts of retail companies by private-equity firms that saddle the retailers with tremendous amounts of debt.

For example, Gymboree Group, which sold children's clothing in stores with the names Gymboree, Gymboree Outlet, Janie and Jack, and Crazy 8, first filed for bankruptcy in June 2017, almost seven years after Bain Capital purchased it in a deal that involved \$1 billion in debt. Gymboree emerged from bankruptcy after turning control of the company over to its creditors and closing 375 stores. The company filed for bankruptcy again in January 2019, when it said it would close its remaining stores.

Quarterly Announcements

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