

THE CALL

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Ordinance Introduced To Save Seven Oaks Shopping Center And Leon's Thriftway

By Eric L. Wesson

City Councilman Troy Nash, 3rd District-at-Large, introduced legislation Thursday that would allow commercial property, the Seven Oaks Shopping center, to remain in tact on 39th and Kennshington.

The ordinance paves the way to save the redevelopment project of the Seven Oaks Apartment Complex and Leon's Grocery store.

"This has been a long journey, but today I can assure you that we will move forward because we came together to bring about a positive change. This is an example of what can happen when neighborhood residents, community leaders and activists come to the table to listen

to one another, seek understanding and work collectively to see positive change occur," said Nash.

With the passage of this ordinance, the redevelopment project can be built from the ground up by again going through the City's bidding process for new development projects. Those interested will have an opportunity to submit proposals for the purchase and redevelopment of the area and community leaders will have a say in what happens to the area that houses the complex and the shopping center.

Some months ago, the Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance (KCNA) had submitted a bid to build 108 moderate income houses in that area. Their plan required that the

shopping center, which contains the oldest African American owned supermarket in the country, be demolished.

Ms. Marilyn Simmons was able to get some 3,000-plus signatures from residents in the area who did not want the shopping center torn down. Ms. Simmons submitted those signatures to City Councilwoman Sandra McFadden Weaver.

The lists of names was lost, but Councilwoman McFadden Weaver and Councilman Nash were able to get the naming of a developer, KCNA, blocked at a planning meeting.

The project has been up in the air until the ordinance was introduced on Thursday.