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September 7, 2023

City of Westwood
Attn: Planning Commission
4700 Rainbow Blvd.
Westwood, KS 66205

Subject: Support for Karbank's redevelopment of Joe Dennis Park

Dear Commission Members,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing as a proud resident of Westwood to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed Joe Dennis Park and the redevelopment of the old Westwood View Elementary School site. Having moved to Westwood in July of 2020, my family and I were immediately drawn to the town's unique walkability, vibrant atmosphere, and exceptional amenities. The remarkable character of our town is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the residents, staff, and elected officials who have contributed to its evolution over the years. I am grateful for your collective efforts that have shaped Westwood into the welcoming community we now call home.

Change and progress, as I understand, come with their fair share of challenges, including criticism and resistance. I commend your dedication to steering our town towards a brighter future despite these hurdles. It is within this context that I find myself excited to share my thoughts and aspirations for the evolution of Joe Dennis Park and the former Westwood View Elementary School site.

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude for the remarkable transparency and open communication that has characterized the planning process thus far. Your timely and detailed responses to my inquiries, coupled with proactive updates through emails, mailings, and postings, exemplify the engagement between our government and its citizens. This level of transparency fosters trust and unity within our community.

Addressing the concerns of those who oppose the project due to potential impacts on property values and quality of life, I propose a different perspective. Access to amenities and retail establishments enrich the desirability of residential areas, as my own family's decision to reside here exemplifies. The blend of convenience and recreational opportunities inherent in such projects contributes positively to our daily lives. I also would like to note that in the September 5th article covering this conversation, I did not feel that the new park, which is a part of the project, received adequate coverage. The loss of Dennis Park as it currently exists was covered in detail, but the fact that a new, larger, more appropriately sized park for

the surrounding community seemed to be glossed over. This new park is one of the most appealing aspects of the proposed development for my family and me.

Furthermore, I recognize the project's potential to enhance the city's financial stability through increased tax revenue, a prospect I wholeheartedly support. As a parent to two young children, aged 3 and 6, I am excited about the prospect of new amenities tailored to families. This offers us an opportunity to actively engage in the planning and programming of a park that will be enjoyed for generations.

My vision for Westwood encompasses vibrancy and variety. I envision a mix of retail establishments, including restaurants and recreational venues that seamlessly combine sports with indoor and outdoor dining spaces for people of all ages. Moreover, I hope to see provisions for hosting community events, such as KC Symphony in the Park, public book readings, and neighborhood-friendly music shows.

Density is an essential aspect of modern urban planning, and I am in favor of this aspect within the proposed project. However, I also advocate for the inclusion of a residential component. Residents living within the project would foster a sense of community and continuity that transient users may not provide. I understand that the developer's expertise may not lie in residential projects, and I suggest exploring potential partnerships with those who can contribute in this regard.

In light of the unique dynamic in our small-city setting, particularly with the consideration of planning and rezoning notifications, I kindly request that the perspective of residency be taken into account. The impact of this project on tax-paying citizens differs from its impact on non-citizens, and I encourage this differentiation in the decision-making process.

As a devoted resident invested in the long-term prosperity of Westwood, I offer my heartfelt support for the Joe Dennis Park and Westwood View Elementary School project. I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to the growth and enhancement of our community. Thank you for your time, dedication, and consideration of my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Trenton Dandel