



Photo by: JAY NOLAN  
David McKelvie points to a map of a proposed Wal-Mart Supercenter in Temple Terrace. Jim Porter, an attorney representing Wal-Mart, answered questions before a meeting at Lightfoot Recreation Center.

## Wal-Mart Plans Draw Concerns

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TEMPLE - TERRACE Traffic, increased crime and a changing way of life topped the list of concerns voiced by Hillsborough County residents during a meeting Thursday night about a proposed Wal-Mart Supercenter.

About 60 people attended the meeting at the Lightfoot Recreation Center, where Wal-Mart representatives listened to concerns and answered questions about the 24-hour store that, if built, could be open by July 2007.

"The biggest thing for us tonight is to make sure we're listening and that we incorporate what we're hearing," Wal-Mart spokesman Eric Brewer said.

Wal-Mart's efforts to build other stores in the Tampa Bay area have met with mixed results in recent years. A lawsuit brought by opponents in Tarpon Springs is pending, plans for a Gandy Boulevard store in St. Petersburg failed after vocal opposition and an Ybor City store is on hold because another developer bought the property Wal-Mart was targeting.

Construction plans on stores to open next year in Wimauma and Sun City Center have gone more smoothly.

The company's latest plans are to purchase about 34 acres to build a store in a largely rural neighborhood along Temple Terrace Highway near Harney Road. The store would have a Tire Lube Express, a separate liquor store and a drive-in garden center. A private owner, the Doris Harvey Trust, would sell Wal-Mart most of the land and retain control of up to four out parcels near the store that could be home to a bank, two restaurants and a gas station. A rezoning application hearing is set for Oct. 17 in Tampa.

Whether Wal-Mart will be a good neighbor was of concern to Pam Tallent, whose family's property abuts the proposed building site.

"I've lived in this area for over 25 years and I've always known it would be developed," she said. When asked whether she supports the store, Tallent said, "That's what I hope to find out tonight."

Barb Beers, who lives in Terrace Oaks, said the proposed location is within walking distance of her house. She expressed concerns about how much crime comes with a 24-hour store and also asked whether the store would contribute to traffic congestion.

"At first when we heard about it, we were excited," she said. "Then we found out that it's going to be so close to our house. Now, it's scary to think about."

When she heard about the proposed store, Joanne Olvey, of Temple Terrace, said she also was excited and she's looking forward to having a new place to shop.

"If you want to buy a birthday present, where do you shop in Temple Terrace, unless somebody wants a candle or a book?" she said. "I'm all for a Wal-Mart here."

The Temple Terrace City Council is expected to discuss the store at 7 p.m. Tuesday at city hall, 11250 N. 56th St. Residents' comments are welcomed, City Manager Kim Leinbach said.

The store would be outside city limits, but the county government staff has asked the city to weigh in.