

Townhall

(Continued from Page 1) developer meeting the proposal's requirements, including the grocery store size of at least 14,000 sq. ft.

Laurich sought Council approval, but the vote was tabled until after the June 5 election for the Ward 5 representative who will replace longtime Councilman Lawrence Weekly, who resigned earlier this year to accept appointment to a Clark County Commission seat. Williams said she wanted to hand the grocery development decision over to the newly elected councilperson. June 20 is the earliest any vote on Laurich's or any other developer's proposal would happen.

"The community needs their own elected rep to speak for them on this issue," Williams said.

During the Town Hall, developers pitched their plans directly to the community.

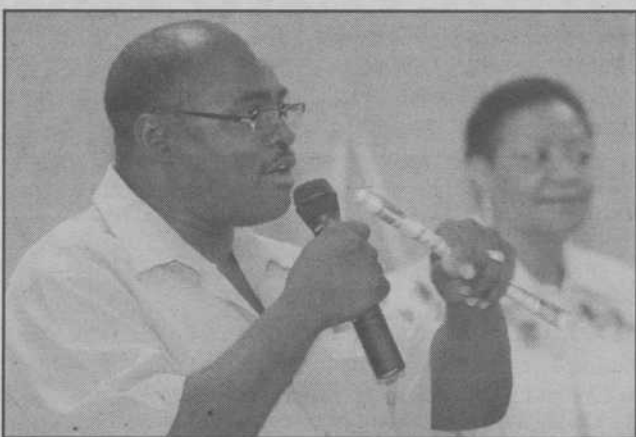
Using maps, diagrams and renderings, the high-end of the gamut was a grocery store and shopping center of 70,000 sq. ft., offered by Laurich's Hank Gordon to a smaller one offered by representative Leni Skaar, representative for Bradshaw & Associates, a land use consulting company, representing the diverse, large international retailer Tesco.

Gordon said, "We have our funding."

Tesco's proposal would incorporate a Walgreens. Skaar said their anchor would be 27,000 sq. ft., adding, "We will also bring in a Starbucks or Duncan Donuts."

M. Berlanga, owner-manager of Mario's Westside Market, proposed an expansion of their store, which has been located across the street from the 10-acre Enterprise Park site for the past 15 years.

While City of Las Vegas



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Jessie Bush earnestly expresses himself during a town hall meeting to address quality-of-life issues in West Las Vegas.

officials lauded the proposals, no one principal has been selected.

Hannah Brown of the Urban Chamber of Las Vegas presided, along with Williams, and meeting attendees asked specific questions from the microphone.

Many residents asked about the next steps in the long-running grocery search. The final decision will be made by the incoming Ward 5 race winner and body of the City Council.

Vying for the Ward 5 seat are Ricki Barlow, who worked as Weekly's liaison for many years, and Stacie Truesdell, political newcomer and corporate attorney, who are locked in a run-off competition to be decided by voters June 5.

On another issue, John Edmond, developer of nearby Edmond Town Center, has a separate problem. It is in his shopping center where the closed Vons still sits empty.

Although Vons is still paying rent, reportedly about \$11,000 per month, Edmonds is negotiating with Save-A-Lot grocery to locate in about 19,000 sq. ft., along with Metro's Gang Crimes Bureau to share the remaining space.

Tom Altadonna, Save-A-Lot's rep, said, "We have been looking at this for two years. We have given

Edmond a Letter of Intent, but we are a way off yet."

Another issue of concern on the agenda is the widening of Martin Luther King from Alta to Carey. The prime issue is about properties that will be ousted by-right-of-way along the boulevard and how value will be assessed, which was posed by Judge Karen Bennett.

Jorge Cervantes of the City of Las Vegas Public Works spoke to assure the assembly that area properties would receive fair market values. Cervantes reiterated that the City would properly assess the property values.

When it came time for citizen participation, some of the questions were pointed.

Jessie Bush spoke out strongly against the cops moving into Vons.

"Putting Metro into a grocery store, how does that look?"

He accused the City of having "hidden agendas." Bush said, "We need positive things in our community."

Alejandro Alvarez proposed an idea for the area development. "We need tourists." He is proposing an ethnic-themed area, perhaps Latin-oriented, similar to Chinatown or a Little Italy to bring tourist dollars and interest to the Historic Westside.

Championing Mario's Westside Market, ACORN

members — the spearhead community organization of past rallies, meetings and demonstrations on the grocery store issue — spoke on the current grocery store status.

Veronica Dunn Jones, area resident and community representative for ACORN, said, "Mario's has signed, sealed and delivered. We support him. He [Berlanga] will pay health benefits."

The local chapter of ACORN or Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, the largest national advocacy organization for low- and moderate-income families, has promoted its demands from the start that jobs be filled by workers from the immediate area and that higher than minimum wages be paid with benefits.

There were about six ACORN representatives, among the approximate 100 residents attending, that uniformly stated support for Berlanga's bid to build his new store.

Mario's management said it has partnered with Agora Realty and Management Inc., represented by Cary Lefton.

After the meeting,

Berlanga said, "I will present my proposal to the Office of Business Development" for approval. "I feel good. I got

the support I needed when I needed it. I'm optimistic."

Parker Philpot contributed to this article.

Sharpton: Romney faith not a problem

BOSTON (AP) - The Rev. Al Sharpton, who recently urged that radio host Don Imus be fired for making a racially insensitive remark, said in a debate that "those of us who believe in God" will defeat Republican Mitt Romney for the White House. But Sharpton denied he was questioning the Mormon's own belief in God.

Rather, the New York Democrat said he was contrasting himself with Christopher Hitchens, the atheist author he was debating at the time.

"As for the one Mormon running for office, those who really believe in God will defeat him anyways, so don't worry about that; that's a temporary situation," Sharpton said Monday during a debate with Hitchens at the New York Public Library's Beaux-Arts headquarters.

The comment was first reported Tuesday in a blog on The New York Times website.

The Romney campaign, which has been wary of campaign trail criticism of Romney's faith, jumped on the Sharpton comment. If elected, Romney would be the first Mormon to serve as president.

"It is terribly disheartening and disappointing to hear Reverend Sharpton offer such appalling comments about a fellow American's faith," said Romney spokesperson Kevin Madden. "America is a nation of many faiths and common values, and bigotry toward anyone because of their beliefs is unacceptable."

Romney himself said Monday during an appearance (See Sharpton, Page 5)

Barlow

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Turner said there is a question of Barlow's legal residence at the time he filed for the Ward 5 seat, alleging that he changed his North Las Vegas address to one in the ward just two days prior to filing. By law, a candidate must be a resident of the ward for which he or she is running no less than 30 days prior to filing.

According to the Las Vegas City Clerk, the issue of Barlow's address at the time of filing is on review.

At the time Barlow was appointed, following approval by the City Council, to sit on the Clark County Library Board in 2002, according to Interim City Clerk Betty Bridges, he lived in North Las Vegas and was

not a Las Vegas resident as required for the position. Bridges said of Barlow's address: "It was a mistake and nobody caught it." The address is under review, according to the clerk.

Also announced at the conference is the political opposition website at www.theproblemwithricki.com, posted by Gary Gray, campaign consultant for Truesdell, who was reportedly out of town and unavailable for comment.

No one from the City of Las Vegas attended, nor did the communications office issue any statement on the residency and legal matters.

Barlow did not return phone calls and other requests for interview.

Royal Street Theater

MOTOWN

Showtime 10p -2a Fridays

Appearing May 11

FOXXY 4 U with Mary Williams



CHAZZ
To Appear May 18



SHO TYME
To Appear May 25

\$5 Cover Charge with 2 drink min. per guest



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