

vate interests. We think this may have happened with the Dominick's store, since no other stores have been invited. Other communities, including Greektown, Near North, Bucktown, and Rogers Park, have in recent years found themselves almost forcibly saddled with a huge Dominick's store, often with the support of city officials, often in opposition to and to the detriment of residents and nearby businesses.

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

We can make our objections known to Dominick's, our city officials, and Edmar owners. We can tell Ald. Flores to oppose the crucial zoning change in City Council, without which Dominick's cannot break ground. We can contact other grocers whom we would like to see in our neighborhoods, and inform them of the fact that they have been excluded from discussions. *Most of all, we can demand the involvement we deserve.* But it starts with us as individuals.

### TELL EDMAR MANAGEMENT TO DO THE RIGHT THING

*Write or call Edmar management.* Since they intend to lease the land, they continue to have a responsibility to our community. Tell Edmar to continue its longtime support of our community by considering more carefully its motives

and the consequences of its actions.

### TELL OUR CITY OFFICIALS TO DO THE RIGHT THING

We pay our taxes so that city officials will keep our interests in mind. So far, we are unsure of where Aldermen Flores, Ocasio, Burnett, and Matlak stand on this issue. We have seen city planners hard at work, so we can only assume that the aldermen are in support of it. Why are they not taking the pulse of the community? Where is our voice, for the money we are paying? *Contact your alderman.*

### TELL DOMINICK'S TO DO THE RIGHT THING

*Write or call Dominick's.* If Dominick's wants to be a good neighbor, they must consider the neighborhoods they are moving into. Some neighborhoods are adversely affected by their entry. If Dominick's cannot study a neighborhood and its socioeconomic makeup more thoroughly and fairly, and cannot adapt to its diversity and sensitivity to large-scale change, they should consider not moving in. You might also call your favorite grocer to find out why they were not included in any discussions.

Finally, please contact your community organizations to ask them to raise this issue with their members. Time is short!

# What's standing in the way of a huge new Dominick's at Chicago and Damen?



*It may be just you and me.*

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### WHAT'S GOING ON?

The Edmar grocery, at 2019 W. Chicago, is expected to close within the next few months, probably to be replaced by a much larger, much more expensive Dominick's.

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Edmar Groceries, Ed Olezyk ..... (773) 545-3176  
**1st Ward Alderman Manny Flores** ..... (773) 278-0101  
26th Ward Alderman Billy Ocasio ..... (773) 276-4269  
35th Ward Alderman Ted Matlak ..... (773) 384-3011  
27th Ward Alderman Walter Burnett ..... (312) 432-1995  
Dominick's (M. Mallon) ..... (630) 891-5719

Casey Sanchez, "¿Podrían Abrir Dominick's en West Town?" *Extra*, Oct. 17, 2002, p. 1

City of Chicago Web site, Foodbasket pricing, Oct. 2002.

On-site comparison shopping Oct. 9 using this list found Dominick's to be 46% higher than Edmar

Dominick's and Edmar sale sheets, Sept.-Nov., 2002  
Leah Pietrusiak, "Dominick's Replaces Edmar Foods?" *Citylink*, Oct. 11, 2002, p. 1  
Telephone conversations with Ald. Granato, Sept. 12, 2002, and Tony Ingraffia, Tony's Finer Foods, Oct. 7, 2002  
William Wendt and Ricardo Cabeza, "Behind Goldblatt's, a real landmark is quietly demolished." *West Town Free Press*, April 1999, p. 1

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH THAT?

A few businesses, residents, and shoppers are aware of these plans. But most people in the community have not been notified, and we are told that discussions have been going on for at least three years! This change will affect our community in many important ways. Many feel that citizens should be involved even in initial discussions when a community-scale grocer is to be replaced by a large luxury chain, particularly in an area underserved by supermarkets.

For three years, agents for Dominick's and the city have spent hundreds of thousands behind closed doors planning intricate

details of the takeover, without even the participation of next-door neighbors.

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*We found a bag of groceries at the Dominick's to cost 46% more than at Edmar.*

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While the new Chamber of Commerce has been working to encourage business support for the deal, nearby residents have not been included in the process. Dominick's officials are pretending to be open about this, but it is clear that they have already decided what to do and can execute the final steps of their plan with a few strokes of a pen. In 2002, Ald. Granato claimed an open process but made statements which contradicted those of others. Obviously, these mysterious proceedings must be brought into the open in a series of widely announced and well-attended public meetings.

Furthermore, many people are not aware of Dominick's pricing, which is among the highest in the city. *Extra* newspaper found significantly higher prices at Dominick's. We have conducted some independent tests which support this, including one which

found a bag of groceries at the Dominick's to cost 46% more than Edmar for a given week! Tens of thousands of seniors and others on a budget cannot afford to spend nearly \$30 at a Dominick's when they were spending only \$20 at Edmar. For a family of four which normally shops at Edmar, Butera, Aldi, and Cub, this can add up to more than \$100 extra per month!



Few consumers are aware of such a large price disparity, because of the rapid weekly price shuffling and confusing advertised specials that make Dominick's pricing appear to be competitive. In reality, the pricing has been found to be consistently much higher. In addition, many object to having to use a Fresh Values card to obtain any discounts and must

pay the highest prices in the city if they do not. Most grocers have never had to rely on a card program. Finally, many of Dominick's discount prices are effective only for the first three days of a sale week, or are based on two-for-one specials which small families cannot use; some consumers are confused by this, often receiving no discount when they believe they have.

## HOW HAS ALL OF THIS HAPPENED?

After 40 years of service to the community, Edmar management has decided to retire

and close their store. They also own or control most of the rest of the block on Chicago Avenue. Through a process that is still not understood in any detail, *Dominick's, supported by city officials, has been involved in closed-door discussions to transfer possession of the property, a change that could happen within the next few months.*

Although Dominick's claimed they would begin a public process through a limited series of meetings among a few community groups, this will be too little, too late. Any discussion held at the meetings so far has been kept narrowly focused, on such details as the architec-

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*Community discussion so far has been limited to such details as the types of shrubbery to adorn the parking lot.*

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ture of the store, traffic patterns, and the types of shrubbery to adorn the parking lot. Furthermore, while citizens

already pay extraordinary taxes for the right to be represented fairly in the community process, thousands do not belong to these community groups. Therefore, the process of community involvement often excludes those with limited time and resources.

The Department of Planning and Development, a city agency, involves itself in private development plans, helping to create the big picture, to find development partners, and to expedite city-related paperwork and procedures through the downtown bureaucracy. Sometimes their involvement goes too far, amounting to our tax dollars going to preferential treatment for certain pri-

