

Retail Development/Referendum Rezone

Business Challenge/Environment

A multinational leading retailer proposed a 47,000-SF store on a key parcel requiring rezoning via referendum. The community by-laws allowed for a costly and lengthy appeal if 20% of the abutters (based on percentage of property ownership) rejected the measure. One opposing resident controlled 18% of the abutting property. We needed to first prevent the opposition from gaining control of an additional 2%, and then win the ballot referendum on zoning.

Outcome

We successfully prevented the 20 percent voting block from coalescing. The community passed the re-zoning measure, and our client's store opened.

Our Approach

We worked discreetly to:

- Conduct an extensive door-to-door campaign targeting project abutters.
- Build strong personal relationships with key residents and engage them in a mutual gains-based dialogue.
- Identify and maintain a strong and diverse base of community-wide support.
- Educate residents on community benefits and build and maintain an active grassroots support network.
- Get out the vote on referendum day.

CASE STUDY