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# Plano Road name change is withdrawn following vocal opposition

The 30 or so people who gathered at Lake Highlands United Methodist Church to discuss whether to change Plano Road to Lake Highlands Drive were given an unusual amount of power by a public official Wednesday night.

Councilman Adam McGough launched the night by saying, “If this room decides you don’t want the name to change, or you only want it to change to 635, or you want it changed the whole way, then I’ll do that.”

The room was not shy about expressing opinions. The vast majority were opposed to the idea, citing the cost to businesses along the corridor that would have to pay to have everything from signage to stationery changed, not to mention the customer confusion that it could create. One neighbor, who owns a business on what was Kingsley Road when it was changed to Walnut Hill Lane in 2005, said street name changes cause havoc for employers for years.

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“We still feel this change, and it’s been a decade,” she said. “It’s really important for customers to know where we are.”

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One of two sole speakers in favor of the idea, L Street Neighborhood Association President Ed Penton, said it would bring “neighborhood cohesion” and “help us identify [Lake Highlands] in this vast metroplex.” But he was a minority voice in a meeting of business owners who pointed out that there are only six residential homes on the street, so this is an issue that would impact businesses most directly.

One speaker said he was so mad about the proposal, he planned to vote against next week’s bond election to prove a point. “The city spends money on frivolous things when it could be fixing potholes,” he said to a round of applause. McGough said it would cost the city \$15,000 to replace all the street signs, while the Texas Department of Transportation would pay \$60,000 for changes on its end.

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When it was time to vote, just three people supported the idea of a name change while to other two dozen or so were against it.

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“I’m sorry to have wasted time,” McGough said. “My plan will be to move forward with withdrawing the application [to change the name].”

Even though the plan was voted down by the plan commission, the issue was still headed to city council before this week’s meeting changed McGough’s mind. He said the idea initially came from neighborhood groups who wanted to better brand the area, and got its legs in his AllinD10 meetings.

“[The idea] got almost unanimous support in those rooms,” McGough said, adding that an online poll showed 249 favored the idea. But that was not the case Wednesday, when the crowd was almost entirely united in its displeasure with the proposal.

“It would cost [businesses] money, and it’s always, always about money,” said one person.

At the end of the meeting, McGough hoped to find common ground to support any effort to enhance the neighborhood’s profile. He said he is working with the city’s office of economic development to bring “way finding signs” to the area, and invited the room to take part in those discussions.



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