

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Elaine Pizzarelli <epizz@me.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 7:08 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Cc: Joseph Pizzarelli
Subject: Writing in opposition to 7-ELEVEN in Darien

Dear Mr. Ginsberg,

I have lived on Richmond Drive, a stone's throw from the current Duchess site, since 2005. Since that time, we have frequently complained about the traffic patterns and congestion down at that end of town.

I would like to go on record with my vehement opposition to the 7-ELEVEN plan that is before P&Z now.

Adding a 24/7 gas station/convenience store to the town of Darien will add to safety concerns that already exist with its close proximity to the I95 on/off ramps. Not to mention there's ALREADY a Mobil station across the street. It is never busy, and I cannot see the need for this type of business in our small town. The Mobil station across the street is open 6am-11pm. If travelers need gas and services outside of these hours, they can go to the Southbound I95 rest stop.

Adding cars to that stretch of road, where it is already heavy and confusing, with lanes merging, solid yellow lines, and the like, will only exacerbate the roadway confusion that already exists.

For cars exiting 95 southbound, they will need to make a left in front of the Mobil station. They will have to enter the one lane that heads on route 1 toward town. Where there used to be a dotted white lane, there is now a dedicated lane for the 95 ON ramp, and anyone wanting to continue on Rt. 1 must navigate the one lane of cars coming from the Richmond Drive direction. It is a traffic nightmare currently, because those cars exiting 95 south and crossing the median there do not realize that they don't have the right of way to enter the lane that is meant for thru traffic.

More important, currently, cars traveling on Rt. 1 southbound trying to make a left into the existing Duchess parking lot must cross a solid yellow line and it is dangerous!

Exiting the Duchess parking lot and turning left is extremely dangerous as well. It's the exact same idea as Trader Joe's- they aren't allowed to turn left on to route 1. With even more traffic exiting the Duchess lot, there will be many more accidents down there.

I'd like to address safety. Why does Darien need a gas station that operates 24/7? Do we really want to encourage MORE transient traffic to come through town? Especially in the middle of the night? The car vandalism is already horrible! Also, if my memory serves, there was an attempted car jacking at the Mobil station across the street, and there are many car chases that seem to involve that 95 on ramp. Wasn't there one just last week?

The ABSOLUTE last thing Darien needs is a large, lit, 24/7 convenience store that attracts undesirable activities.

In addition, if people need gas that badly that they need to stop and get off the highway, there's an ACTUAL rest stop a mile down on I95. There is a rest stop on the northbound side right in Darien as well. Isn't that enough?

Also, the 7-ELEVEN at 257 Reef Road in Fairfield actually shuttered its business in April 2020. Do we truly want to have a business like that come to town and possibly then CLOSE? We would be left with no option but to continue to welcome establishments like this in that location. Not to mention if you allow the requested variances to our zoning laws. We would be STUCK!

<https://patch.com/connecticut/darien/darien-gas-station-robbed-gunpoint-cops-say>

<https://patch.com/connecticut/darien/darien-pd-investigates-attempted-vehicle-theft-gas-station>

The concerns in this article also apply to the application in Darien.

<https://connecticut.news12.com/centerport-opponents-to-proposed-7eleven-not-too-convenient-40080712>

To quote from the Variance and Gas Station Location Approval Application Narrative/Item K dated 8/12/20:

In addition to these criteria, the zoning of the Property - Service Business - also demonstrates that the Property is suitable for this type of use. The facility achieves the intent and purpose of the zone: "to provide, in appropriate areas, for certain types of business uses which serve a community need or convenience." A gas station is certainly a community need and convenience and its location on a state road adjacent to Interstate 95 make it an ideal location for this use.

As far as a COMMUNITY NEED: I think all Darienites would agree that we have enough gas stations in town! Within walking distance to the current Duchess location, there's a BP near Trader Joes, a Mobil across the street, and the gas pumps down at the Darien Car Clinic. Furthermore, there are the multiple gas stations along route one toward Stamford, not to mention the gas stations in Noroton Heights and in Norwalk!

CLEARLY there IS NOT a NEED for more gas pumps.

As far as CONVENIENCE, there is NO ADDITIONAL NEED for Darien to provide convenience for travelers on I95 who need gas or a rest stop. As stated above, there is an actual rest stop just a mile south on I95.

Please consider the safety of all residents and unequivocally deny 7-ELEVEN's application that is before you.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Pizzarelli
13 Richmond Drive

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Joan Gioiella <gioiella.joan@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 9:29 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: 7-11 Proposal

Hello,

I am just hearing about the proposed 7-11 at the Dutches property and would like to voice my disapproval of the application for the below reasons:

1. As you may or may not recall, this location was the site of the murder of a Darien policeman, Officer Kenneth Bateman in 1981. My point is that the murderer has never been found and this may be due to the easy access to the thruway from this location.
2. I have been a longtime resident of Darien and feel that this would not only impact the traffic but also take away from the charm and small town character of Darien that we as residents have all come to love.

Thank you.

Joan Gioiella
15 Lighthouse Way
Darien, CT

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: david sealy <davidsealy80@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 9:38 AM
To: jstevenson@directct.gov; Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: please help stop the 7/eleven on post rd

Jaymie and Jeremy,

My name is David Sealy, I live on sylvan rd and would like to express my objection to the proposed 7/eleven on post road. Beyond the obvious concerns of traffic etc, I just dont think darien needs a 24 hour operation meant to service 95 travelers and not darien residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dave Sealy

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Stevenson, Jayme
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 1:01 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Olvany, Stephen
Subject: Fwd: 7-11 Proposal Re-zoning

Begin forwarded message:

From: Amy Gregorius <amygregorius@gmail.com>
Date: November 12, 2020 at 5:23:57 AM EST
Subject: 7-11 Proposal Re-zoning

Hi All -

First and foremost I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy this year.

It's been brought to my attention that the Dutchess near the on ramp of I-95 has been sold to a 7-11. I am pro-business and respect everyone's choice to build their own business.

However, I purchased a home in this town for one reason only and that is for safety. The town is further away from the city from where I work and would rather sit the extra time on the train to be safe. Additionally, I am unable to get a pass to park close to the train station so I walk home. Many times in the dark and alone.

That being said, this year was different as I have been working from home due to the pandemic. I got to experience more of the day to day events in this town. One being protests down Post Road. Some call them peaceful but I personally did not. I live close to the road and it would take just one person to shatter my window and steal from me/harm me. This fear was fueled by vandalism and stolen cars in my complex. I have purchased many cameras inside/outside my home since.

This leads to my question why would we need a 7-11? There are 2 gas stations already off the highway. There is a welcome center off exit 13. It appears the market is already saturated with gas stations and small convenient stores.

My fear is this would invite people to come to our town otherwise won't. Especially late at night. This would add another layer of daily worry and fear.

I worry for my safety. I live here only for this reason. Once that is taken I don't feel there is any difference between here and the surrounding towns except a longer train ride.

Please vote NO.

Wishing you all a healthy holiday season.

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Stevenson, Jayme
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 1:02 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Olvany, Stephen
Subject: Fwd: Vote No 7-11

Begin forwarded message:

From: sueu <sueu@aol.com>
Date: November 11, 2020 at 3:26:44 PM EST
To: "Stevenson, Jayme" <jstevenson@darienct.gov>
Subject: Vote No 7-11

I object to the proposed 7-11 in Darien for the following reasons:

Rest Stop look and feel : Opposed to a rest-stop type convenience store with 12 gas bays. I am not sure why we would even consider this given the current stress on local business , and the number of gas stations already in town.

Crime - these stores are notorious magnets for crime, drugs, hang outs, none of which are advantageous to Darien . Do we really need more of this?

Character- is the plan to completely change the character of this town?

I have been In Darien since 1990.

The town has managed to develop and grow while maintaining a focus on local business , absence of fast food, minimal chain stores. This project will only benefit One party and that is 7-11.

Increased traffic, bright lights, noise and gasoline/oil pollution (Goodwives River)
Needs no explanation.

I did a quick google of 7-11 In Fairfield County . The results all led to larger cities , not one town similar to Darien. Why is this even a consideration?

Thank you,
Susan Ranney
10 Ward Lane

Sent from my iPhone

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Maria Banke <mariabanke@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 3:52 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Cc: jstevenson@darien.gov
Subject: 7-Eleven Proposal to replace Duchess on the Post Road

Dear Director of the Planning and Zoning Commission – Town of Darien,

I have been a Darien resident for 35 years, having left NYC, to raise my child in this beautiful, safe, and tranquil small town. I currently reside at Villager Pond, and I am requesting that P&Z **deny** the application from 7-Eleven to replace Duchess on our main street at 306 Post Road.

Being so close to my home, a 7-Eleven raises safety concerns for me and my family. Just Google 7-11 Crime in CT this is the result: https://www.google.com/search?q=7-11+crime+ct&rlz=1C1CHBF_enUS785US785&ei=50OuX4TIH4mz5NoPuqG9wAo&start=0&sa=N&ved=2ahUKEwiEyvbmpYDtAhWJGVkFHbpQD6g4ChDy0wN6BAgLEDQ&biw=1920&bih=937

What you find are numerous occurrences of random and senseless acts of violence like robberies, hostage situations, shootings, and murders. Not to mention further endangerment to our community caused by the increased traffic and influx of commercial vehicles ALL HOURS of the day.

I truly believe that a **7-Eleven will negatively impact our Darien quality of life and the character of our town**. It not only will affect the aesthetics of our town, but for myself and other residents living close by, it will also impact our emotional health and well-being.

Now, more than ever, we need to support locally owned, independent merchants in our small town. A 7-Eleven franchise does not conform to the Darien Town culture.

Thank You,
Maria Banke
24 Ward Lane
Darien, CT 06820



CHRISTOPHER PAGLIARO
ARCHITECTS

November 13, 2020

Mr. Stephen Olvany, Chairman
DARIEN PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
c/o Department of Planning & Zoning
TOWN OF DARIEN
2 Renshaw Road, Room-211
Darien, Connecticut 06820

RE: COZR #4-2020 / Special Permit Application #314
Proposed 7-Eleven
306 Post Road
Darien, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It is unique for me to be writing the PZC to opine about a proposed development as I am usually before you as a presenter. I am merely a tenant at Darien Crossing (aka the "Fletcher Building") located at 320 Post Road, and I am certain that I am even permitted to express an opinion. Nevertheless, I wish to offer the following comments about the proposed 7-Eleven as I do believe my place of business is impacted by the application. I have watched all of the applicant's presentations to the PZC with great interest.

As you may know, with Roger Bartels, I have been practicing architecture in this area for over twenty years – including a vast number of projects in Darien. In October 2019, I relocated my firm to 320 Post Road, investing quite a bit into an exciting complex that appealed to me because of its energetic renovation, and now proudly call Darien "home" to my thriving business. I chose Darien because I have long been an admirer of the town, its community, and its land use leadership, which I believe to be exemplary.

I have several concerns about the proposed 7-Eleven, which span from the experience within and from my office space, as well as the safety and security of my office:

My office space occupies the northeast corner of the second floor of the three-story building at 320 Post Road. Specifically, it is a corner space that has continuous ribbon windows for the entirety of the Post Road and Duchess elevations. This space was appealing for that very reason, and in fact, the office was designed to bisect the north and east fenestration – a 45-degree design that celebrates the expanse of glass. In short, the very corner of my office not only overlooks the subject property – it is in the exact location that 7-Eleven is proposing locate their food mart/chicken facility. Whereas I understand that the neighboring property does not require a side yard setback, I am having a difficult time accepting that a property that has zero neighbors on three side somehow felt the need to locate its building right up against the one neighbor that it does have. More frustrating is that fact that the building is located at exactly the tightest and closest spot to my office building. I believe this to be self-centered bad planning and inconsiderate of its one neighbor. Having followed the hearings, I am aware that the PZC inquired as to why the proposed facility was not rotated 90-degrees (thus having the building located toward I-95), but do not understand why the option of flipping the proposed development a full 180-degrees has not been asked. Would it not be more neighborly to have the building's "rear" facing the on-ramp to I-95? Making matters worse is that the proposed building location has a mechanical platform on its pitched roof that will not only face directly into my office but generate mechanical noises (and smells?) just outside my window. I am not fooled by the Disney-esque "Colonial" architecture that is being presented, and am reminded of the old saying, "doctors bury their mistakes; architects place plants". It is not stretch to understand the reality that dumpster lids stay open, and delivery palates are stacked along the back of a building. Those are the elements that I – along with all of the Darien Crossing tenants with northeast exposure – will be facing.

Further, I employ several young architects and support staff, including young women. One of the appealing assets of Darien Crossing was the safety the Darien community offers, especially since much of my staff often works late hours. After several decades in a neighboring community, our relocation strategically sought to place the business in an area that offered a much higher level of personal safety to its employees. This is something that too often deterred potential employees at my previous location. The very fact that 7-Eleven carries a reputation of a facility that attracts loitering, the location will have greatly increased usage from travelers on-and-off I-95, and intends to be a 24/7 operation, causes me great concern for my young staff members late into the evenings. Our own parking is semi-below grade and visually shielded from Post Road, and our outdoor parking lot is spread out, thus requiring a walk to

vehicles. Although there are several gas stations in town, I am confident that they are locally owned and operated, and therefore carry a protocol that goes beyond "corporate safety policies" that are merely policies that cover the 7-Eleven corporation, and are maintained in a manner that is far short of a local business owner with actual ties to a community.

With this, I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 7-Eleven development at 306 Post Road. I am not certain how such an application may be denied, but I am certain that the site development plan could be much more responsible to its only neighbor, and that this type of facility is not the gateway to Darien that the community or the POCD envisioned, and not the type of usage that is consistent with the social and safety character of the Town of Darien.

Thank you for your care and consideration. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CP", followed by a period.

Christopher Pagliaro
320 Post Road, Suite-160
Darien, CT 06820
Cell: (203) 838-5517



Christopher Pagliaro
CHRISTOPHER PAGLIARO ARCHITECTS
320 Post Road, Suite 160
Darien, Connecticut 06820
T: 203.838.5517
C: 203.803.6302
www.christopherpagliaroarchitects.com

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Christopher Pagliaro <cpagliaro@pagliaroarchitects.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 6:52 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: 7-Eleven Comments
Attachments: Pagliaro . 7-Eleven . docx.pdf

Jeremy,

Attached is a letter that I wish to submit to the PZC in opposition of the 7-Eleven application. To be perfectly honest, I have never spoken against any land use application (outside of my position as a commissioner on Wilton PZC), and as a renting tenant at 320 Post Road, I am honestly not even sure I am permitted to speak for or against a land use application in a town that I do not live in. If that is the case, please just let me know and feel free to delete all of this, and accept my apologies for taking your time.

I may be missing something that is zoning-related, but I simply cannot understand why they feel the need to tuck their building into the tightest possible point to the northeast corner of 320 Post Road. The three other property lines are wide open. It is obvious that the Post Road line is impossible, and I am aware that they addressed the PZC about a 90-degree turn, but I cannot recall having heard the question about relocating the building to the 95 entrance ramp side. No matter, I am not alone within the Darien Crossing community about the safety concerns of employees.

Below is a photo from my personal office (the remainder of the space wraps the corner along the common property line). They are proposing to place their building right at that tree!

Thank you,
Chris

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Elaine Pizzarelli <epizz@me.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 7:08 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Cc: Joseph Pizzarelli
Subject: Writing in opposition to 7-ELEVEN in Darien

Dear Mr. Ginsberg,

I have lived on Richmond Drive, a stone's throw from the current Duchess site, since 2005. Since that time, we have frequently complained about the traffic patterns and congestion down at that end of town.

I would like to go on record with my vehement opposition to the 7-ELEVEN plan that is before P&Z now.

Adding a 24/7 gas station/convenience store to the town of Darien will add to safety concerns that already exist with its close proximity to the I95 on/off ramps. Not to mention there's ALREADY a Mobil station across the street. It is never busy, and I cannot see the need for this type of business in our small town. The Mobil station across the street is open 6am-11pm. If travelers need gas and services outside of these hours, they can go to the Southbound I95 rest stop.

Adding cars to that stretch of road, where it is already heavy and confusing, with lanes merging, solid yellow lines, and the like, will only exacerbate the roadway confusion that already exists.

For cars exiting 95 southbound, they will need to make a left in front of the Mobil station. They will have to enter the one lane that heads on route 1 toward town. Where there used to be a dotted white lane, there is now a dedicated lane for the 95 ON ramp, and anyone wanting to continue on Rt. 1 must navigate the one lane of cars coming from the Richmond Drive direction. It is a traffic nightmare currently, because those cars exiting 95 south and crossing the median there do not realize that they don't have the right of way to enter the lane that is meant for thru traffic.

More important, currently, cars traveling on Rt. 1 southbound trying to make a left into the existing Duchess parking lot must cross a solid yellow line and it is dangerous!

Exiting the Duchess parking lot and turning left is extremely dangerous as well. It's the exact same idea as Trader Joe's- they aren't allowed to turn left on to route 1. With even more traffic exiting the Duchess lot, there will be many more accidents down there.

I'd like to address safety. Why does Darien need a gas station that operates 24/7? Do we really want to encourage MORE transient traffic to come through town? Especially in the middle of the night? The car vandalism is already horrible! Also, if my memory serves, there was an attempted car jacking at the Mobil station across the street, and there are many car chases that seem to involve that 95 on ramp. Wasn't there one just last week?

The ABSOLUTE last thing Darien needs is a large, lit, 24/7 convenience store that attracts undesirable activities.

In addition, if people need gas that badly that they need to stop and get off the highway, there's an ACTUAL rest stop a mile down on I95. There is a rest stop on the northbound side right in Darien as well. Isn't that enough?

Also, the 7-ELEVEN at 257 Reef Road in Fairfield actually shuttered its business in April 2020. Do we truly want to have a business like that come to town and possibly then CLOSE? We would be left with no option but to continue to welcome establishments like this in that location. Not to mention if you allow the requested variances to our zoning laws. We would be STUCK!

<https://patch.com/connecticut/darien/darien-gas-station-robbed-gunpoint-cops-say>

<https://patch.com/connecticut/darien/darien-pd-investigates-attempted-vehicle-theft-gas-station>

The concerns in this article also apply to the application in Darien.

<https://connecticut.news12.com/centerport-opponents-to-proposed-7eleven-not-too-convenient-40080712>

To quote from the Variance and Gas Station Location Approval Application Narrative/Item K dated 8/12/20:

In addition to these criteria, the zoning of the Property - Service Business - also demonstrates that the Property is suitable for this type of use. The facility achieves the intent and purpose of the zone: "to provide, in appropriate areas, for certain types of business uses which serve a community need or convenience." A gas station is certainly a community need and convenience and its location on a state road adjacent to Interstate 95 make it an ideal location for this use.

As far as a COMMUNITY NEED: I think all Darienites would agree that we have enough gas stations in town! Within walking distance to the current Duchess location, there's a BP near Trader Joes, a Mobil across the street, and the gas pumps down at the Darien Car Clinic. Furthermore, there are the multiple gas stations along route one toward Stamford, not to mention the gas stations in Noroton Heights and in Norwalk!

CLEARLY there IS NOT a NEED for more gas pumps.

As far as CONVENIENCE, there is NO ADDITIONAL NEED for Darien to provide convenience for travelers on I95 who need gas or a rest stop. As stated above, there is an actual rest stop just a mile south on I95.

Please consider the safety of all residents and unequivocally deny 7-ELEVEN's application that is before you.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Pizzarelli
13 Richmond Drive

Doneit, Fred

From: Kim Westcott <kimpwestcott@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 2:23 PM
To: DarienPZC
Subject: 7-Eleven Proposal

Dear Planning and Zoning Commissioners,

We write to ask that you do whatever you can to preserve the small town nature of Darien, and guard against increasing urbanization. It's a delicate balance and yours is not an easy job.

Specifically we write against the proposed 7-Eleven project. We listened to Tuesday night's (11/10/20) hearing and sense the commission is rightly focusing on the traffic impacts. The proposal is an over reach for the site, with a 12 pump request etc. With two massive gas stations and food courts on either side of I-95 within a mile, which services thruway traffic, what is the need? Plus, we have two locally run right-sized gas stations in Vernal's and Mobil on the Post Road within a 1/2 mile. Again, what is the need for this massive installation?

7-Eleven is no doubt well-funded and used to fighting to put up their cookie cutter, neon facaded installations wherever they feel they can profit. Must we accommodate this blight?

Adding a 24-hour quick turnover business and its traffic to Darien's Post Road stretch is not desirable nor is our infrastructure able to handle it. At a minimum we should require right turn only out of the 7-Eleven into eastbound traffic. Keep the highway traffic on the highway. No semi's idling or sitting overnight.

Please preserve the eastern end of the Post Road, as we do the central and western parts. Once these sites get developed and fail, we are left with the mess. Thank you for your dedication and vigilance to maintaining Darien as a desirable family-friendly town.

Sincerely,
Kim and Jeff Westcott
2 Maywood Road
Darien, CT