

**DATE:** November 17, 2020

**FROM:** Dave Vernal, BP Vernal Svc Station  
498 Post Rd., Darien, CT 06820

**TO:** Town of Darien, Planning & Zoning Commission

**RE:** Business Site Plan Application #128-B, Special Permit Application #314  
7-Eleven, Inc. 306 Post Rd.

I'm not sure the town of Darien is fully aware of the impact of the proposed 7-Eleven gas/convenience store to be built at 306 Post Red. I am assuming 7-Eleven, Inc. will spend the better part of three million dollars building it in an area that currently has low-volume gas usage. Therefore, I assume the plan is to attract as much business from I95 as they can, but who knows what else will come as a result?

What is the expected fuel volume for that location? Will they supply diesel fuel? They would have to sell a minimum of 200,000 gallons of gas/month to support that kind of an investment. And since the average fill-up is 10 gallons, that's 2,000 cars/month minimum, not including store traffic. It will be a traffic nightmare.

For example, if they post diesel 30 cents cheaper than I95 locations, how much additional traffic, including tractor trailers, will exit to save a \$100? And how many customers will get lost getting back on the highway, possibly hitting the bridge in town (as we all know, it does happen). Not to mention the increase in transient visitors to Darien, at a time when the police are already reporting a car theft a night.

I have owned the BP Station at 498 Post Road since 1997, and am well aware of how much gas volume there is in the area, and it isn't close to 200,000 gallons/month.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Dave Vernal

## Ginsberg, Jeremy

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**From:** Corinne Leuffer <cleuffer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 11:08 AM  
**To:** Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Cc:** Scott Leuffer  
**Subject:** Opposition: Proposed 24-hour 7-Eleven gas station/convenience store at Post Road  
Duchess site

Dear Sir,

I hope this email finds you healthy and safe during the pandemic. I am writing to you this morning to express my strong opposition to the proposed 24-hour 7-Eleven gas station/convenience store at the Post Road Duchess site.

My family and I have just moved to Darien after 13 years of living in New York City and amongst many of the wonderful qualities about Darien, we fell in love with the small-town, low-traffic feel. We love the idea that our two young boys (3.5 and 2) can ride their bikes and scooters on many of Darien's streets without feeling unsafe from fast paced traffic. We love the idea that they can feel part of a neighborhood and community by walking to neighbors houses without the stress of cars flying by.

We also love that our boys school is only a short drive away, one in which takes us down Birch Road and onto Post Road. We love that this drive takes us about 5 minutes. Our primary concern is that the with addition of a commercial gas station/convenient store will come a large increase in traffic volume and therefore traffic accidents. The safety of our family and neighbors is of the utmost importance to us and we truly feel that the addition of this on Post Road is a threat to that safety. It is already extremely difficult to make both right and left hand turns off of Birch Road with the existing traffic. Creating a destination for more cars and patrons will only make this more unsafe and treacherous from a traffic perspective.

Please help us preserve our community and help keep our families and neighbors safe by opposing this proposal.

Thank you,  
Corinne Leuffer  
5 Point O Woods Rd. South

## Ginsberg, Jeremy

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**From:** Harriet Riegel <riegels123@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 4:38 PM  
**To:** Doneit, Fred; Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Subject:** 7 eleven

**Categories:** Zoning Permits

I am writing to say that as a Darien resident I am completely against a 7 eleven going where duchess currently is. The last thing our town needs is another multi pump gas station to compete with those already in town, a grocery store to compete with those already in town, a store that is going to be open 24-7 that will bring in more traffic and congestion to an already extremely busy area, and a store that offers nothing new to what the town already has. Support our local stores, that is my motto! I am opposed to this project. It will negatively impact our town. I see no benefits; this project will be a detriment to our town.

Harriet S Riegel

## Ginsberg, Jeremy

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**From:** Myles Ridder <mylesridder@optonline.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 9:12 PM  
**To:** Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Subject:** 7 Eleven

Dear Mr. Ginsberg:

We strongly object to the plans to have a 7 Eleven convenience store and gas station placed at the current site of Duchess Restaurant. Here are our reasons.

### **Traffic and Safety**

We have lived on Birch Road for nearly 23 years and raised 6 children here. Birch Road is a special place with many families and young children. Unfortunately, the street is also a pass through for residents of towns north of the Merritt Parkway who speed on their way to and from stores on Route 1. Attempts to slow the traffic include a three way stop at the intersection of Point of Woods and Birch Road, in addition to two speed bumps. Without sidewalks, parents must be vigilant to keep our children protected from speeding cars.

The intersection of Birch Road and Route 1 is already a hazard. A 24 hour convenience store and gas station will certainly add significant traffic and will increase the likelihood of multiple accidents.

The 7 Eleven business model relies on a large volume of customers 24 hours per day. The safety of our neighborhood will be significantly compromised due to the increased traffic.

### **Local Businesses Negatively Affected**

Two local businesses would be negatively impacted. The Mobil Gas Station and convenience store has made positive efforts to engage our neighborhood. They have been good citizens. Vernals BP Station is a family business serving Darien for decades. These establishments need our support, not more competition.

### **Out of Town Character for Darien**

A 7 Eleven convenience store and gas station would be detrimental to the character of Darien. Large national brands do not fit with the small town feel of Darien.

### **Pollution - Sight, Noise, Environmental**

Additional signage will be an eye sore. Cars with engines running will create more pollution. Patrons will create additional noise, especially on warm nights.

### **24 Hour Operation**

Drivers will descend upon our neighborhood at all hours. Darien does not need to be open for business 24 hours a day.

Darien residents do not need another gas station and food store in an already congested area.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Pam and Myles Ridder  
53 Birch Road

## Ginsberg, Jeremy

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**From:** Harriet Riegel <riegels123@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 4:38 PM  
**To:** Doneit, Fred; Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Subject:** 7 eleven

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Harriet S Riegel

**Ginsberg, Jeremy**

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**From:** michelle imbrogno <michelleimbrogno@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 3:07 PM  
**To:** Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Subject:** 7-11 at duchess location

Hi not sure what to say but this is not good for anyone in the town - the traffic pattern over there is already so bad and there will be more cars coming into the post road.

**Michelle Imbrogno Miller**  
**917.991.7112**

## Ginsberg, Jeremy

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**From:** Justin Tobe <justin.tobe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 4:21 PM  
**To:** Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Cc:** Nikki O  
**Subject:** Letter re: development of the Duchess to a 7-11

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing to voice our strong opposition to plans to convert the Duchess on Post Rd. to a 7-11.

As residents of Darien, our foremost concerns are around the safety risks that this conversion promotes, be it crime and otherwise.

We know firsthand as residents of Darien living on the West Norwalk side of town how dangerous the traffic patterns are in and around the Duchess location; this is a 2 lane road, 1 lane in each direction, and the idea of having cars turning left into the fitness center and left into the 7-11 at the same time, blocking traffic, with cars then trying to pass on the right hand side of both lanes, with numerous bikers and others forms of non-motorized traffic, strikes us as creating a situation of when, not if, someone incurs serious injury (or something worse). Anyone who has traveled this route knows that traffic going south regularly backs up from Brookside all the way back to the Duchess area, if not further. They also understand the chaotic patterns for northbound travelers going towards I-95 or Norwalk. A report commissioned by the potential buyer / developer that is based on a number of generic assumptions / inputs is not adequate in analytics, nor unbiased in approach, to determine project safety / feasibility; some may go so far as to characterize is as self-serving. We are confident anyone who has traveled the area can speak this. We would encourage P&Z to critique this report and view it with an adequate level of skepticism.

We also have significant other concerns around safety, namely the operation of a 24 hour gas station / convenience store that is located directly off of I-95. As was stated by someone far better equipped to comment on the situation than we are: crime / armed robbery becomes a question of when, not if.

And the question then becomes, why? Why would the town grant significant variances, many of which we understand have never been granted, and other businesses have been specifically denied (such as 24 hour operation, restaurant / dining without adequate square footage, etc.)? It seems highly unlikely it is a function of a dearth of gas stations (we have never waited at a pump on Post Rd. to fill our tank), convenience stores or food options (of which there are dozens within a mile, many at the point where Post Rd has 2 lanes in each direction). And, even more puzzling, we as a community and those passing through on I-95 in either direction have already been afforded the luxury of 2 easy on easy off highway mega-centers that provide both a significant number of gas pumps and an array of food options. The existing highway stops strike us as a logical and eloquent solution for providing myriad services in a way that is safe for motorists and our community. Why create additional congestion and real safety risk when the potential conveniences being added already exist?

It would also logically follow that the local ordinances, for which said project seeks variances, were put in place by the town for both thoughtful and logical reasons. At a minimum, if 7-11 seeks to do business within the confines of our town, they should do so in a way that abides by the ordinances we have importantly put in place, regardless of how that hinders their underlying economics, or find other locales from which to conduct their business.

Nikki & Justin Tobe

**Ginsberg, Jeremy**

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**From:** Jennifer Zanin <zaninjennifer@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 11:28 AM  
**To:** Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Subject:** Opposed to 7-11

As a resident of the town of Darien for the past 20+ years, I wanted to express my opposition for the proposed 7-11. Increased traffic and crime would be an issue. As well as the fact that another gas station is not needed.

Regards,  
Jennifer Zanin

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone



**Ginsberg, Jeremy**

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**From:** David Soskin <dsoskin11@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 11:45 AM  
**To:** Ginsberg, Jeremy  
**Subject:** Seven eleven proposal

I am very concerned that the proposed 7 11 would be a traffic nightmare and safety issue aside from the negative impact on restaurants and gas stations in the neighborhood. This is exactly what Darien does not need. I urge you to reject this proposal.

David H Soskin  
Ten Dellwood Rd.

## Ginsberg, Jeremy

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**From:** wendy jack <wendjack1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 11:07 AM  
**To:** Stevenson, Jayme; Ginsberg, Jeremy; DarienPZC  
**Cc:** Frank Piazza  
**Subject:** 7-11

We are writing to express our disapproval of the plan to install a 24 hour 7-11 on the Duchess site and ask that you not approve the conversion.

We live on West Ave and worked hard with the Darien Police Department for over a year to install signage and speed traps to mitigate 24 hour traffic through Darien when there was construction on 95. You cannot imagine the volume of cars and trucks traveling all night through the town. People couldn't sleep, houses shook as 18 wheelers sped by at 2 and 3 in the morning. It is incredibly disruptive! We already have a bottle neck through town during rush hour as well.

In addition, it is naive to think that crime would not increase. As far as we are aware, nothing in Darien is open 24 hours and the fact that crime mitigation is a significant topic in the discussion should be a red flag in and of itself!

Please do not turn our suburban community into a thorough fare!!!

Sincerely,  
Wendy and Frank Piazza

Wendy Jack Piazza  
*Define Yourself*  
203-536-0144

November 17, 2020

1 Circle Road  
Darien, CT 06820

Mr. Stephen Olvany  
Chairman, Planning and Zoning Commission  
Darien Town Hall  
2 Renshaw Road  
Darien, CT 06820

Dear Mr. Olvany and the Commission:

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposal by 7-Eleven to erect a 24-hour, 7-days per week, 12-bay gas station and convenience store complex on the site of the Duchess Restaurant at 306 Boston Post Road, for the following reasons:

1. Traffic Safety Issue #1 – vehicles traveling south on Route 1, some from I-95 expecting a quick off and on gas refill, will need to take a left near the Darien Diner to enter 7-Eleven lot. With the heavy traffic normally experienced in this area, this will create significant traffic safety issues.
2. Traffic Safety Issue #2 – vehicles trying to take left out of 7-Eleven (and we know some will even if a sign is posted prohibiting it) will create additional traffic safety issues.
3. Local Business Snub – Internationally-owned and Dallas, Texas-based 7-Eleven will take business away from locally-owned Darien retail establishments and service stations (e.g., Vernal's gas station less than ½ mile to the west of the proposed 7-Eleven). With small businesses suffering in particular during the pandemic, now is not the time to place a large, well-financed competitor near these locally-owned businesses.
4. Personal Safety – 7-Eleven plans to operate the facility 24 hours per day, undoubtedly because the company expects business from I-95 travelers during the late night hours. (Local traffic on the Post Road is relatively light from 10 pm to early morning, which is why many of the traffic lights on Route 1 in town switch to blinking lights during that time.) The introduction of additional transient travelers off the highway during the late night hours can reasonably be assumed to result in additional crime. There is a large residential area just across Route 1 on Birch Road and neighboring roads, as well as the Villager Pond community less than ½ mile to the west, from the proposed 7-Eleven site. Darien has experienced a significant number of late night vehicle break-ins across town. An all-night retail/gas station facility can only make this problem worse.
5. Need – There are already three gas stations near the proposed 7-Eleven site. It is not clear that there is need for any more gas pumps in the area, never mind twelve more pumps. There is also a 24-hour full food and fuel service center less than 3 miles further south on I-95 for late night travelers to access.

6. Aesthetics – Many of us moved to Darien because of its non-commercial small-town characteristics. The addition of a large gas station complex open 24 hours per day, with attendant bright lights and related noise throughout the night, is not consistent with the town's attractive attributes. The addition of this complex would have a lasting, perhaps permanent, negative impact on the quality of life in Darien.

In light of the above, I strongly recommend that the Planning & Zoning Commission deny the application to redevelop the site at 306 Boston Post Road as proposed by 7-Eleven.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Michael E. Klehm