

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Mark Raskopf <markraskopf@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 5:33 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: Opposition to the 7-eleven in Darien

Hi Jeremy - I'm writing to express opposition to a convenience store at the Dutchess site that's really nothing more than an excuse for drivers on I-95 to get off the highway, gas up and use the toilet, and get back on the highway.

I don't see this as an investment in Darien, I see it as an opportunistic move by a landowner that will lower the quality of life in our town.

Right now, we have a food establishment that I've frequented innumerable times in the past 18 years with my wife and kids. It's been a great place to sit and talk, have breakfast, lunch or whatever. To replace this with something that really offers nothing to town residents seems a little illogical (we certainly don't need more gas stations... I have never once waited for a gas pump in 18 years).

My fear is that 7-eleven will bring in late-night folks. Let them keep driving on I-95 but why would anyone want to open Darien up to that kind of traffic? And the potential safety risks that come along with 24-hour convenience stores? I don't like it at all. Thoughtful zoning is supposed to make life better, not to erode the quality of life.

Thank you for your attention!

Sincerely,
Mark Raskopf
60 Andrews Drive
(essentially a lifelong Darien resident, and Darien homeowner since 2002)
917-658-5395

From: Victoria Bolton <victoria.bolton@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 6:03 PM
To: Doneit, Fred; Ginsberg, Jeremy; Chris Bolton
Subject: Special Permit Application #314 (7-Eleven)

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the zoning application concerning the proposed 7-Eleven at 306 Boston Post Rd in Darien.

Our neighborhood abuts the proposed site. As a result, we would be directly impacted by the increased traffic, noise, and pollution such an establishment undoubtedly would create.

We question the desire to amend the town's zoning regulations for the benefit of one property owner. Should the town wish to amend zoning to allow for frontages such as the one proposed it should be a broader discussion among the entire community, given a change in this particular instance will inevitably draw retailers of similar variety across the rest of the town.

In our view, the addition of such a facility would not benefit the town of Darien in any meaningful way. One of the lovely things about this community is that it does not have large, ugly chain stores. There are already plenty of local gas stations along the Post Road. The I-95 Service Station is close by and provides 24-hour amenities for those who need them. The proposed establishment will simply divert traffic from a site designed for that type of business to an area ill-suited to accommodate the traffic, while at the same time introducing the potential for higher crime rates.

Please deny this application and keep Darien safe, quiet, and clean!

Sincerely,

Victoria & Chris Bolton
14 Point O Woods Rd S., Darien

From: DarienPZC
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 6:04 PM
To: Amy Souchuns
Cc: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: FW: comment for the Commission

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert Parr [mailto:rfparr@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 5:52 PM
To: DarienPZC <darienpzc@darienct.gov>; Stevenson, Jayme <jstevenson@darienct.gov>; Martin, David <dmartin@darienct.gov>; McNamara, Christa <cmcnamara@darienct.gov>; Neumannn, Sarah <sneumann@darienct.gov>
Subject: comment for the Commission

Hi—I'm a long time town resident, and not the letter writing type, as I work in NYC and have plenty on my plate. However, I had to at least write a note to register my opposition to the proposal to build a 7-11 on the Post Road at the site presently occupied by Dutchess restaurant.

I'm not a close by neighbor, and this will have no direct impact on me. To be clear, my thoughts are not formed by a NIMBY attitude, but rather by common sense.

I am perplexed how this outsized, gas station/food enterprise can be appropriate for this location. Its clearly not from a need standpoint, as there are multiple restaurants across the street, a Mobile station, with multiple pumps, and snacks within visual site of the location (Mobile is right of exit 13). There are more gas stations on the Post road within a mile or so in both directions. On 95 there are two rest areas (on both north and south bound sides), with massive gas station infrastructure within a mile of the proposed 7-11.

A major consideration should be that the Mobile station enjoys more direct, and safer access from 95. It is directly off the Exit 13 ramp. This proposed 7-11 requires turning onto the Post Road, and then ANOTHER turn, ACROSS TRAFFIC (in a heavily trafficked area), to approach this proposed 7-11. This traffic pattern alone should clearly be of concern to our town officials.

What should concern ALL residents is the fact that his project directly impinges on the quiet enjoyment of neighbors along the Post Road (both business and residential), as well as the residents of the Birch Road neighborhood. Each of them have my sympathy, and I agree with their concerns.

More broadly, this dense project, attracting high volumes of traffic, operating with very extended hours, does zero for the town of Darien. It will be an eyesore, cause dangerous traffic problem galore, and is simply unneeded in the location. If the business ultimately fails, Darien will be left with visual wound that will not be easily healed.

I know you deal with proposals, and whether they fit within regulations. In this case it also requires variances. Not a single accomodation should be granted. I'd rather see the town increase the tax rate, buy the proptery, and knock down Dutchess, leaving the ground fallow than allow this proposed development to proceed.

There have to be other oppotunities for redevelopment which don't create the damaging impact this monstrosity will impose.

From: Jennifer <cipp@optonline.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 8:39 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Anderson, Don; Shreders, Robert; DarienZBA; Huffard, Kim; Cunningham, Kevin; Stevenson, Jayme; Hayes, Brent
Cc: Michael Cippoletti
Subject: Opposition to the 7-Eleven proposal

Dear Darien Town officials,

We are writing to express our opposition to the 7-Eleven proposal to replace the current Duchess restaurant with a 24 hour multi-pump gas station, convenience store and fast food restaurant. Our opposition is primarily on the grounds of safety, traffic, and overall impact on our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood (Birch Road, Point O'Woods, Richmond Drive, and the surrounding streets) lies very close to Exit 13 on 95. While convenient, it also means that our area is heavily impacted by any traffic issue related to 95. When an accident, construction, holiday period, or any other issue occurs, the resulting traffic created by people avoiding 95 creates significant traffic and delays moving north or south on the Post Road. A 7-Eleven would only exacerbate the situation.

Even on a typical day, traffic on this very small part of the Post Road can be difficult and dangerous. A few scenarios that already exist without the 7-Eleven and would be made much worse by the 7-Eleven proposal.:

- Southbound 95 traffic off Exit 13 that continues south on Post Road must cross a very narrow break in the median to make a left turn. There is only room for two cars side by side, and often the sight lines are obstructed for the car on the left. Cars waiting to cross the northbound lane of Post Road and make the left turn have to wait in the exit ramp.
- Turning left on Post Road to exit Birch Road is already difficult and often dangerous, as many cars heading northbound on Post Road go around cars waiting to turn left onto Birch and do not see the cars exiting Birch.
- Cars heading south on Post Road similarly must go around cars waiting to turn left into Duchess, and it is easy to encounter cars coming from Birch, the gym at the end of Birch, or the shopping center on the other side of Birch.

The proposal to change existing zoning laws in Darien and allow 7-Eleven to operate 24 hours a day is of great concern. 24 hour locations are subject to loitering, crime, and as such, pose a greater burden on our police services. Our neighborhood is already prone to break-ins because of our proximity to 95. The 24 hour presence of 7-Eleven has the potential to make us more of a target. In addition, it's not clear why the two 24 hour rest stops along our stretch of 95 are not enough to meet the needs of any driver. Why would we need more?

Noise pollution is another concern of ours. If you stand anywhere in our neighborhood, at nearly any time of day, on almost any day of the year, you can hear cars and trucks on 95. While we understand that this is a natural consequence of our proximity to the highway, it seems in the best interest of the residents and the town of Darien to mitigate any additional noise created by trucks, cars, and gasoline deliveries to the proposed 7-Eleven location.

Lastly, the residents of the neighborhood view the adjacent section of the Post Road as fully part of the neighborhood. Our kids ride their bikes and walk along the sidewalks lining the Post Road to go to the Darien Diner, Chipotle, and the other restaurants and stores in the area. The bit of freedom they enjoy by being close enough to walk into town is a positive element, but one that would be made vastly more dangerous by the 7-Eleven proposal.

We strongly urge you to vote NO on this proposal and protect our section of town. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Jennifer and Michael Cippoletti
29 Point O Woods Rd

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Paige C. Kyle <paigecorbin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 9:52 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: 7/11

Hi,

I am writing to express my concern for plans for a 7/11 in Darien.

What I am most worried about is the potential crime it will bring to Darien. We do not need that in our small town and 7/11s are proven to bring crime due to the 24 hour piece.

I also think we need to support small businesses and we do not need a 7/11 encroaching on our town and causing traffic delay. 2020 has already been bad enough. Don't bring this eyesore to our town.

Thank you.

Best,
Paige Kyle

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: jel-jr@linebergerco.com
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 10:43 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: Duchess/&-Eleven Location

Dear Planning & Zoning Commission,

As a long-time resident of Darien and a close neighbor to the proposed project (7-Eleven to supersede Duchess), I wanted to voice my concerns and tell you that I strongly oppose the initiative.

Among all the traffic, safety and security concerns which you are or will be aware of- all of which it is self-evident -there is no need for a commercial establishment of this nature, no desire amongst the neighbors for this location and the downside to the neighborhood is severe. Also, by extension the potential downside to property values and taxes can't be good for Darien.

Across the street there is a late hour Mobile/Variety store serving the needs of the community and travelers which offers food/snacks and 8 gas and at least 2 diesel pumps. In addition, there is a major I 95 fuel and food plaza just minutes down I95 (a few miles). Just up the road (Post Rd and I 95) in Norwalk there are many fuel/food options.

I have had personal experience previously living near a variety shop converted to a 7- Eleven. This is far too transient a location to permit such a project which will undermine the essence of the small town ambiance /neighborhood and draw unnecessary transience/ potential crime to our community. Moreover, as said, there are other near locations currently providing similar and equivalent service.

Kind Regards, Jamie

James E. Lineberger, Jr.

Maywood Road

Darien, CT 06820

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Stevenson, Jayme
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 11:01 AM
To: Corinne Leuffer
Cc: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Olvany, Stephen
Subject: RE: Opposition: Proposed 24-hour 7-Eleven gas station/convenience store at Post Road
Duchess site

Good morning Corinne,

Thank you for emailing me your thoughts. I will be sure this email is entered into the PZ Commission record for the 7-11 application.

Stay well,
Jayme

Jayme Stevenson
First Selectman, Town of Darien
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820
p. 203.656.7338 | f. 203.656.7389
jstevenson@darienct.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Corinne Leuffer <cleuffer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 9:48 AM
To: Corinne Leuffer <cleuffer@gmail.com>
Subject: Opposition: Proposed 24-hour 7-Eleven gas station/convenience store at Post Road Duchess site

Good morning,

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 a way, 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

From: Stevenson, Jayme
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 11:02 AM
To: Sonia O'Connor
Cc: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Olvany, Stephen
Subject: RE: Opposition to Proposed Development of 7 Eleven

Good Morning Sonia,

Thank you for taking time to write to me. I will be sure your comments are entered into the PZ Commission record for the 7-11 application.

Stay well,
Jayme



Jayme Stevenson
First Selectman, Town of Darien
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820
p. 203.656.7338 | f. 203.656.7389
jstevenson@darienct.gov

From: Sonia O'Connor <scoconnor2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 8:41 AM
To: Stevenson, Jayme <jstevenson@darienct.gov>
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Development of 7 Eleven

First Selectwoman Stevenson,

My name is Sonia O'Connor. I live on Birch Road with my husband and three boys. We have lived here for over 11 years. It is a wonderful street and neighborhood with lots of families and young children. You will always find kids playing at their neighbors homes across the street, or down the street, or in their own driveway or front yard. I am writing to express our considerable opposition to the proposed 7 Eleven gas station development on the Post Road.

Two constants during our time on Birch Road have been increasing traffic and speeding cars. We, and other residents, have repeatedly expressed our concerns about speeding cars to you and the Darien Police Department. We already have two speeds humps to address speeding issues but were still in correspondence with Capt. Robert Shreders this past September about adding more. Unfortunately, state regulations do not permit additional speed humps. As our street is a cut through between the Post Road and Brookside Avenue, the issue of vehicular traffic is nothing new. Traffic apps, such as Waze and Google maps, have added to the trip counts on Birch Road by identifying it as a cut through between 95 and the Merritt Parkway - when 95 is backed up there is a parade of cars coming onto Birch Road from the Post Road. The addition of a 7 Eleven would no doubt increase the number of cars on our street. Similarly, the addition of a 7 Eleven would make turning onto the Post Road from

Birch Road more difficult and hazardous. Cars heading west on the Post Road already often behave like it is a two land road, making a left turn onto the Post Road from Birch Road a treacherous proposition. With an increased number of cars making a left into the proposed 7 Eleven there is likely to be cars passing them on their right, exacerbating this problem.

In addition to traffic and speeding cars, the Birch Road neighborhood has experienced several incidences of car break ins. In conversations with police the proximity of the neighborhood to I-95 was noted as a key reason why the area is an attractive target for crimes like this. Needless to say, 7-Eleven's own admissions about the frequency and nature of the crime issues their 24 hour stores face was alarming in this context. The proposed development will bring more crime to a neighborhood that was already an attractive target.

7 Eleven would in no way benefit the town or its citizens. There are existing service stations on I-95 and other gas stations in town. No more are needed.

Furthermore, the proposed development site is not zoned to permit all the uses 7 Eleven is requesting. Variances, changes in regulations and prior stances would have to be made. These regulations have been in place to protect the town of Darien and should be upheld. My neighborhood with its close proximity to the site will be adversely affected if approved.

In conclusion, the proposed development of the 7 Eleven, 24 hour gas station/convenience store would be a **detriment** to our neighborhood and town. For the safety and well-being of all our residents, please oppose the development of 7 Eleven.

Kindly,
Sonia O'Connor
(646)498-7921

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Rob Levinson <rob.levinson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 11:09 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; DarienPZC; DarienZBA; Stevenson, Jayme; Anderson, Don
Subject: Reject 7-11 Amendment and Permit

Dear Planning & Zoning Commissioners,

We are writing to request the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) to reject all zoning amendments requested by 7-Eleven for its proposal at 306 Boston Post Road and to reject the special permit application for the same.

The 7-Eleven ("7-11") proposal has multiple fatal flaws that render it (a) unworkable with Darien's local zoning regulations and (b) inconsistent with Darien's Plan of Conservation and Development. Furthermore, 7-11's own traffic analysis demonstrates the material negative impact this project would have on the local community. PZC should not provide any amendments to facilitate this project and should not approve a permit for this redundant business proposal.

7-Eleven's Changes to Darien Regulations

7-Eleven is requesting that PZC amend Darien's local regulations to pave the way for its detrimental effects. None of the amendments address any need in our town's economy. Worse, these amendments increase policy risk for businesses in Darien.

Darien's economy supports multiple gas stations with and without convenience stores and multiple quick-service restaurants. All of these businesses operate successfully without any of the changes proposed by 7-11. It is undeniable that the changes requested solely by 7-11 do not provide for any benefit except to 7-11. These changes will cause material harm to residents and existing businesses which don't need this special treatment.

The proposed changes to Sections 210, 755, 904 and 1056 conspire to alter the playing field for the many gas stations and quick-service restaurants successfully and competitively operating in town. These changes would "move the goalposts" against current tax-paying businesses so that many will go out of business. In exchange for the future blight of abandoned gas stations along Post Road, Darien will receive no change in services already provided.

Yet Darien remains clearly "open for business" as evidenced by all the new and diverse development in the immediate vicinity of Duchess: two fitness studios, a family restaurant, new corporate tenants, and a gourmet-to-go company. These represent national franchises, state oriented chains and local businesses. None required such special treatment and all appear to be thriving.

7-11 says in its application that "the last substantive revision to Section 1056 was undertaken over 30 years ago". Why hasn't Darien's PZC modified these regulations in over 30 years? Because our town has not and does not need to! Darien has a thriving service sector without any of these changes.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Darien Zoning

Darien's Zoning Regulations Section 750 describes the town's Service Business Zone:

Background and Purposes. This zone is intended to provide, in appropriate areas, for certain types of business uses which service a community need or convenience. It is the intention of these Regulations to protect and preserve existing SB districts for the continued provision of such services in a manner which will not be detrimental to the surrounding residential areas.

Within 0.5 miles in each direction of Exit 13, there are 6 gas stations along Post Road. Most of these have convenience stores included. Therefore, the proposed 7-11 is not servicing any community need or convenience. It is redundant and harmful to longstanding, competitive businesses.

As importantly and as evidenced on this PZC public record by the local outcry of impacted residents, the proposed 7-11 will be detrimental to the surrounding residential area. There is not one voice of public support for this plan. Instead, you are hearing a collective shriek as residents estimate the negative impact from a 24-hour, traffic nightmare.

It is crystal clear that Section 750 of Darien's Zoning Regulations does not provide for this proposal.

Darien Plan of Conservation & Development

This 7-11 proposal is not consistent with Darien's 2016 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD). Importantly, the POCD directs PZC as the designated Leader for the following business development policies among others:

- Keep future commercial development with the existing small-town New England character of Darien
- Encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings and structures
- Enhance the function of the roadway through access management in business areas
- Seek to limit business impacts and intrusions on adjacent residential properties and streets

As one reads thru our town's long-term goals, this 7-11 proposal is almost a perfect example of what the PZC should not be supporting. No aspect of this proposal conforms to PZC's own POCD.

Traffic Impact

The 7-11 project will draw hundreds of incremental vehicles off I-95 every day further congesting intersections near Birch Road. This additional traffic will exacerbate existing hazardous road conditions along Boston Post Road.

Digging into the details, 7-11's own traffic estimates show that trips to and from the Duchess site will more than double. Virtually all of this incremental traffic will come from and return to I-95 in effect creating a 3rd Darien rest stop along I-95. Remember that these are the best possible projections to support this plan. Actual numbers are likely to be far worse.

Furthermore, the 7-11 analysis shows that the project cannot handle peak hour traffic from its opening day. The revised Capacity Analysis Summary dated 11/3/20 shows average delay for exiting vehicles of nearly 4 minutes and the driveway will be at 119% of capacity. One can only imagine how nasty our traffic congestion will be if these estimates are too low.

How could PZC approve a project knowing that on day 1 it will face fixed operating constraints?

Safety

Darien Police Department data showed that there have been 77 motor vehicle accidents in the vicinity of the Duchess site over the past 3 years. Furthermore, before Trader Joe's adopted a right turn only exit, motor vehicle accidents at that driveway seemingly occurred almost every week. The increase in traffic from the 7-11 project will lead directly to more accidents along Post Road. This safety risk will hinder the ability for other businesses to thrive and attract customers.

Darien's Captain Shreders also commented that any 24-hour convenience store with easy access to I-95 will be a target for crime at some point. This risk will force the Darien Police Department to dedicate more resources to the 7-11 vicinity at the expense of other current operations in town. 7-11's own proposed layout exacerbates this risk because the only windows open out to the I-95 on-ramp. This defeats 7-11's own safety plan by neutering its "fishbowl effect" which is supposed to reduce this risk. 7-11 can't claim it has a strategy to mitigate potential crime and then design a building which directly thwarts that supposed strategy!

PZC needs to solicit the Darien Police Department's view on required resources as a result of this project and how that will affect its ability to maintain current operations around town.

Community

Qualitatively, you are hearing the collective scream of Darien stakeholders on this record. Residents, tenants and business owners have voiced only opposition across numerous factors. Darien already has plenty of gas stations near Exit 13 and we have access to established and enormously successful fried chicken restaurants at Chick-Fil-A and Popeye's.

The PZC record here clearly demonstrates there is no public support from any Darien constituent.

PZC Prior Resolutions

PZC has previously approved permits/special permits for convenience stores inside of gas stations. Those were all stipulated with critical operating constraints including:

- Operations limited to 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- No sale of any alcoholic beverage
- No on-site food prep
- No lottery machine

These prior approvals were also based on the following assumptions:

- No increase in traffic congestion in the area
- No creation of unsafe traffic conditions in the area
- No discouragement for the appropriate development of adjacent buildings

The public record for the 7-11 proposal clearly demonstrates that none of these conditions exist.

Conclusion

Taking all this into consideration, the 7-11 proposal is utterly tone-deaf to the existing zoning regulations in our town, to the harmonious development of Darien and to the needs of this community. 7-11 is asking PZC to scramble the rules on our existing tax-paying businesses in exchange for no net benefit to any Darien constituent. We encourage the PZC to reject all proposed amendments and to not provide a permit for this application.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued time and energy supporting our town.

Sincerely,
Tara & Rob Levinson
30 Point O' Woods Road
Darien, CT

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Jori Meyer <jori.meyer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 11:09 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; DarienPZC
Subject: Opposition to 7-Eleven Proposal

Dear Mr. Ginsberg -

My family and I have been Darien residents for over 11years after leaving NYC to raise our children. We have been grateful to live in a small community, away from the business of city streets where we know our kids are in a safe environment.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal to build a 7-Eleven at the current Duchess restaurant site. From a safety standpoint, this seems like an unnecessary risk to our town as it will cause added traffic through Darien. Our town already gets backed up enough on Post Road that we do not need to add any additional congestion. It adds unnecessary risk for traffic collisions, as well as danger to cyclists (including kids) and pedestrians. In addition, give the gas station would be open 24 hrs, Darien could see a rise in crime that could put our community and police force in danger. We have more than enough gas stations along Post Road serving our community, including one close across the street from the proposed 7-Eleven. There is also a rest-stop off of 95 to serve residents as well as drivers passing through the area. There is no need to add another gas station period, let alone one open 24-hours.

In addition, part of the charm of Darien is the small town feel. Adding a 24 hour gas station with a large sign in no way adds to the charm or quality of life in Darien. In fact, it's the exact opposite. Residents will bear the burden of added traffic, crime and loss of town charm...while local small business may suffer from competition from a chain establishment. It's a lose-lose situation for Darien. The only one who wins is 7-Eleven and the property owners. Please do not let this happen to our community.

Thank you for your time and attention to the matter.

Best,
Jori Meyer
66 Bridle Trail

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Brian Smith <mrbranesmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 11:57 AM
To: DarienPZC
Cc: Ginsberg, Jeremy; amanda smith
Subject: proposed 7 - Eleven store in Darien

Dear Planning and Zoning Commission,

We are writing to express concerns about the proposed 7- Eleven at the current location of Duchess. We live on Gardiner Street and are very familiar with the Post Road and how traffic on 95 affects this key road. While on the other side of town, adding any additional reason for non residents to use the Post Road for non essential needs (there is a rest stop on 95 south very close) makes no sense to us. It's dangerous and will only increase traffic on what is already a problem road. Also, we have multiple other gas stations near by, none of which are open 24 hours. Thank you for service to our town and hopefully your understanding that this is a very bad idea that should not be allowed.

Best,

Brian and Amanda Smith
26 Gardiner Street

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: David Upson <dsupson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 1:20 PM
To: Stevenson, Jayme; DarienPZC; Ginsberg, Jeremy
Cc: terrie.wood@housegop.ct.gov
Subject: Opposition note to the 7/11 Project on the Post Road -Upton

Dear Jayme, Stephen and Jeremy,

I would like to register my strong opposition to the development of the 7/11 gas station and convenience market to the town of Darien. As a 10 year resident of Darien one of the things that drew me and my family to this community is the small town "New England" feel of this community. This was corroborated by my sense that there was an engaged resident governing board that would ensure this dynamic going forward.

I feel that this dynamic is at risk as a result of this project and that there are several reasons as well as large negatives as a result of this project which are detailed below.

1. Traffic which is already strained in downtown Darien threatens to be overrun by a 12 pump gas station right off the I-95 at exit 13. This is a tricky intersection that will be overwhelmed by this additional burden and needlessly draw additional highway traffic into our community.

2. The potential for crime and unnecessary loitering is expanded by a facility that is going to offer 25 parking spots and a 24/7 operating schedule.

3. Property values in this area will be dragged down by a heavily trafficked and unattractive 12 pump facility with accompanying 24/7 lighting. Birch road a wonderful road and community in our town is directly across the street from this location.

4. This facility is not need as there are more than enough gas pumps to choose from in town.

In summary I see the issues above as my core challenges to this project but not all of my objections. On the flip side I also don't see any positive upside to moving forward here. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my input.

Best,
David Upson
101 Leeuwarden Rd
Darien, CT 06820
917-499-0988

From: Jennifer <cipp@optonline.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 8:39 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Anderson, Don; Shreders, Robert; DarienZBA; Huffard, Kim; Cunningham, Kevin; Stevenson, Jayme; Hayes, Brent
Cc: Michael Cippoletti
Subject: Opposition to the 7-Eleven proposal

Dear Darien Town officials,

We are writing to express our opposition to the 7-Eleven proposal to replace the current Duchess restaurant with a 24 hour multi-pump gas station, convenience store and fast food restaurant. Our opposition is primarily on the grounds of safety, traffic, and overall impact on our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood (Birch Road, Point O'Woods, Richmond Drive, and the surrounding streets) lies very close to Exit 13 on 95. While convenient, it also means that our area is heavily impacted by any traffic issue related to 95. When an accident, construction, holiday period, or any other issue occurs, the resulting traffic created by people avoiding 95 creates significant traffic and delays moving north or south on the Post Road. A 7-Eleven would only exacerbate the situation.

Even on a typical day, traffic on this very small part of the Post Road can be difficult and dangerous. A few scenarios that already exist without the 7-Eleven and would be made much worse by the 7-Eleven proposal.:

- Southbound 95 traffic off Exit 13 that continues south on Post Road must cross a very narrow break in the median to make a left turn. There is only room for two cars side by side, and often the sight lines are obstructed for the car on the left. Cars waiting to cross the northbound lane of Post Road and make the left turn have to wait in the exit ramp.
- Turning left on Post Road to exit Birch Road is already difficult and often dangerous, as many cars heading northbound on Post Road go around cars waiting to turn left onto Birch and do not see the cars exiting Birch.
- Cars heading south on Post Road similarly must go around cars waiting to turn left into Duchess, and it is easy to encounter cars coming from Birch, the gym at the end of Birch, or the shopping center on the other side of Birch.

The proposal to change existing zoning laws in Darien and allow 7-Eleven to operate 24 hours a day is of great concern. 24 hour locations are subject to loitering, crime, and as such, pose a greater burden on our police services. Our neighborhood is already prone to break-ins because of our proximity to 95. The 24 hour presence of 7-Eleven has the potential to make us more of a target. In addition, it's not clear why the two 24 hour rest stops along our stretch of 95 are not enough to meet the needs of any driver. Why would we need more?

Noise pollution is another concern of ours. If you stand anywhere in our neighborhood, at nearly any time of day, on almost any day of the year, you can hear cars and trucks on 95. While we understand that this is a natural consequence of our proximity to the highway, it seems in the best interest of the residents and the town of Darien to mitigate any additional noise created by trucks, cars, and gasoline deliveries to the proposed 7-Eleven location.

Lastly, the residents of the neighborhood view the adjacent section of the Post Road as fully part of the neighborhood. Our kids ride their bikes and walk along the sidewalks lining the Post Road to go to the Darien Diner, Chipotle, and the other restaurants and stores in the area. The bit of freedom they enjoy by being close enough to walk into town is a positive element, but one that would be made vastly more dangerous by the 7-Eleven proposal.

We strongly urge you to vote NO on this proposal and protect our section of town. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Jennifer and Michael Cippoletti
29 Point O Woods Rd

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: A KT <alexandfamily4@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 1:50 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy; DarienPZC
Cc: Denny Taylor
Subject: 306 Boston Post Road -the Duchess property 11/24 meeting

Dear Planning & Zoning Commission.

We are writing in regards to the proposed zoning change for proposed 7-Eleven in town at 306 Boston Post Road (the Duchess property). We are opposed to the change in this zoning and the building of this large facility by 7-Eleven. We encourage the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) to reject all zoning amendments.

There are many reasons to be opposed to this change. First being it is not needed. Not only do we have two I-95 rest stops within town limits and within a few miles of the proposed facility there are multiple gas stations up and down the post road near exits to I-95.

This change would hurt the local business and bring more traffic to an already busy area. Every time there is a backup on 95 the post road becomes a traffic jam and people can't get into town. Everything is congested and it brings big delays. This new facility will not only add to those traffic issues but exasperate them.

Once you make this type of change there is no turning back. This is just one gas convenience store but it is a big change to the make-up of the town and the main road. If you look at historically what has happened in town when changes have been made they have had big impacts. When 95 was run through town it changed the make-up of our town center and the local business. Noroton Heights is just now trying to make changes to recreate the area it once was over 50 years ago(2015 article Darienite). Our family owned a business (now Jake's Place) and saw the direct impact of the change and how it forever changed the dynamics of that business. When we lived in Brooklyn, we saw big development come in force through changes in zoning to create large developments in what was to be a park. Not only did the break promises and build bigger and more obstructive buildings. The residents that thought they were protected regretted not fighting the proposals in the beginning and had to turn around and fight once it was really too late. Once this type of zoning is approved there is no going back and we may see the town in legal fights to try to correct a bad incorrect decision.

As we are in the midst of the pandemic we are unable to have a forward projecting environmental and traffic impact study. We have no idea how the traffic patterns will be in the future as people start to go back to NYC. Will there be even more cars as people avoid trains and more cars during vacations as people avoid planes. This is not even taken into account the approved changes for the Corbin District that we will not really understand its impact to traffic and the environment until it is completed. This is not a time to make dramatic changes in zoning. We can't even study the environmental impact as again a lot of these factors are not at full capacity. So the impact of adding more emissions with the added traffic and gas pumping cannot be fully realized.

We know the voices you will hear from in the greatest numbers are the ones that live right in the neighborhoods closest to the proposed facility. But the effects of this type of business will affect every resident in town so we need to publicly state we are strongly against any zoning changes to allow this building.

Thank you for your time and your work for the town.

Alexandra and Dennis Taylor

4 Barringer Road

Darien CT

203-322-5521

Darienite 2015

“Before the highway was built through Noroton Heights, Palmer told the boards, his family’s store and several others formed a small village center close to the intersection of Noroton, Hecker and Linden Avenues”

From: Sonia Johnson <soniasparolini@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 2:54 PM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: Proposed 7-Eleven Development at 306 Boston Post Road - Public Comment

Darien Planning & Zoning Commission,

I am writing in vehement opposition of the 7-Eleven proposed development at 306 Boston Post Road for the following reasons:

Safety:

Convenience stores are well known to attract crime, especially when they are open 24 hours and are easily accessible to the highway, like the proposed 7-Eleven project. All Darien residents, regardless of their address, should be concerned about this project. This proposed project is located very close to a residential neighborhood. Young children ride bikes, play catch with friends and take the school bus in sightline of this location. It was jarring to hear the 7-Eleven asset protection specialist reference things like "panic alarms" and "hold up alarms" as crime prevention measures... essentially acknowledging that an increased level of crime is inevitable. The immediate residential neighborhood would become less safe as well as the nearby businesses such as the office buildings and fitness facilities, which are utilized by residents from all over town. The entire town of Darien would be penalized by this project.

Traffic Safety/Congestion:

This is a very congested part of town. I have personally witnessed accidents in this area and have struggled to make the left turn from Birch or Richmond onto the Post Road... often waiting for many minutes or eventually taking a right turn to then turn around and make my way into Norwalk. A Police Officer watches over this area on most days, alluding that the area is a traffic (and potentially other) issue. Further down the road, the line into Costco often spills into the road and is enough for people to post traffic updates on social media. The 7-Eleven project will further bottleneck this area, by pulling vehicles off I-95 via signage, the location based app, etc. Once patrons are done at 7-Eleven, they may decide to continue on the Post Road into town, to avoid highway congestion, which would further exacerbate downtown traffic.

P&Z Development Strategy:

As you can see from my family's street address, we live on "this side" of town. But I have never viewed our town as having sides. My family considers ALL areas of town our community. Our town's 2016 Town Plan of Conservation & Development says that as far back as 2006, "the overall philosophy has been to keep development consistent with the small-town New England character of Darien." While this specific quote is for the downtown area, I would hope a similar lens and filter would be applied to all of Darien. The 7-Eleven project is glaringly inconsistent with P&Z's development strategy. This project has numerous red flags and I absolutely do not see how a 12 pump and 24 hour gas station/convenience store/quick serve restaurant should be approved. In order for 7-Eleven to be approved, numerous changes would be required to existing regulations and prior stances would essentially be violated. What is it about this project that would allow for such a departure in strategic direction? Who is benefiting from this project? The 7-Eleven project is a detriment and disconnect to Darien. Please keep our town & community your priority.

I sincerely urge you to vote NO on the 7-Eleven development!

Thank you for your time and work for the betterment of our town,
Sonia Johnson
Point O' Woods Road

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Sloan Bohlen <sloan.bohlen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 2:40 PM
To: Anderson, Don; shredders@darienct.gov; Huffard, Kim; Cunningham, Kevin; Hayes, Brent
Cc: Ginsberg, Jeremy; Stevenson, Jayme
Subject: 7-Eleven development opposition

Darien Police Commission,

Like many others, my family and I would like to express our concern and strong opposition to the proposed 7-Eleven development at the current Duchess site on the Post Road.

My wife Samantha and our two children Millie (7) and Conor (3) live at 25 Point O Woods Road, which is in close proximity to the site under discussion. We moved to Darien from Manhattan 6 years ago for the same reasons that many other new families do, including the safety and quiet that comes with smaller town life compared to a city that is open 24 hours a day.

The proposed 24-hour 7-Eleven development represents the exact opposite of those attractive small town characteristics and that's exactly why so many Darien residents are concerned, regardless of proximity.

Beyond that clear and major concern (which is especially stark, in this case, as the 7-Eleven would be the first and only 24-hour business to operate in Darien), there are a number of other reasons why the proposed 7-Eleven development makes no sense.

First, a 24-hour convenience & gas station, in such close proximity to an exit on I-95, would certainly require additional police resources, which comes at a cost to our town. Given COVID-19 has already stretched state and local budgets, it would seem illogical to approve a business that would add to that burden. There are many other viable business options that would aid tax revenues without requiring additional police presence and cost.

Second, a 24-hour convenience & gas station would make Darien a more dangerous place to live. Full stop. Dangerous because 24-hour convenience stores have higher instances of crime. Dangerous because a highly trafficked location on the Post Road would become even more congested. And Dangerous because a 24-hour convenience store will serve as a de facto meeting spot for Darien's teenagers. With the proximity to I-95 and out of town traffic, there really couldn't be a worse combination of factors from a safety perspective.

Lastly, a 24-hour convenience & gas station, does not serve any real need that the town has. The location is already served by 3 gas stations within blocks. Southbound I-95 has a 24-hour convenience & gas station less than 3 miles away. And lastly, Darien residents have no need for 24-hour convenience stores, which is why there are no other businesses in town that operate those hours.

Your support in opposing the 7-Eleven development would be greatly appreciated and from our perspective should be aligned with your aim to keep Darien safe.

Best regards and please let us know if there is any way we can help.

Sloan Bohlen

sloan.bohlen@gmail.com
samanthawbohlen@gmail.com

sloan.bohlen@gmail.com
917-902-0454

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: DarienPZC
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 2:26 PM
To: Amy Souchuns
Cc: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: FW: Proposed 7-Eleven in Darien

From: Charles Barthold [mailto:cbarthold@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 10:40 AM
To: DarienPZC <darienpzc@darienct.gov>
Cc: Peggy Barthold <pbarthold@gmail.com>
Subject: Proposed 7-Eleven in Darien

To Darien Planning and Zoning:

We are residents of Richmond Drive and are writing to express our opposition to the proposed 7-Eleven at 306 Post Road.

Richmond Drive is already a cut through with most drivers ignoring the stop signs in place at the intersection just north of the Post Road. A high-volume establishment will only exacerbate the situation. The same problem exists for our neighbors on Birch Road.

In addition, the volume of traffic on the Post Road is already untenable. Adding a gas station/food establishment will make it worse. It is my understanding the latest traffic data is from several years ago and certain assumptions have been made about the potential increase without understanding that there are significant differences between a restaurant and a gas station/convenience store/restaurant open 24 hours a day.

Finally, a 7-Eleven does not fit with the character of Darien which tries to minimize the proliferation of large, national chains.

Thanks for your consideration.

Charlie and Peggy Barthold
34 Richmond Dr, Darien, CT 06820

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Sonia O'Connor <scoconnor2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 8:48 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Development of 7 Eleven

Hello Mr. Ginsberg,

Thank you for sharing my earlier comments with Commission members. To add, 7 Eleven would in no way benefit the town or its citizens. There are existing service stations on I-95 and other gas stations in town. No more are needed.

Furthermore, the proposed development site is not zoned to permit all the uses 7 Eleven is requesting. Variances, changes in regulations and prior stances would have to be made. These regulations have been in place to protect the town of Darien and should be upheld. My neighborhood with its close proximity to the site will be adversely affected if approved.

The proposed development of the 7 Eleven, 24 hour gas station/convenience store would be a **detriment** to our neighborhood and town. For the safety and well-being of all our residents, please oppose the development of 7 Eleven.

Kindly,
Sonia O'Connor
(646)498-7921

onto I-95, most of those vehicles will have to navigate their way into the eastbound traffic after visiting the subject property. There is simply no way such volume will not cause significant traffic issues during busy times. Moreover, the impact on congestion will no doubt increase given the strong likelihood that some of the vehicles that came from the westbound direction will chose to turn left towards downtown Darien. Whether to visit downtown or to access northbound I-95, there will be more traffic passing Birch Road, thereby making it harder to turn off of Birch (whether turning right or left). And should some of the westbound traffic attempting to turn left into the subject property find that they are unable to make such turn because of backups, there is a significant likelihood that they will continue straight until getting to Birch, where they will turn right, attempt to turn around in someone's driveway, and then attempt to turn left to get to the subject property. The residents of lower Birch in particular never signed up for such use of their driveways.

As a final note about the first McMahon report, it makes no effort to model traffic patterns throughout the entire day or during the weekend. Given the estimates for the "peak" hours, one can only extrapolate that 7-Eleven is expecting to attract hundreds and hundreds of visitors throughout the day. With particular note about weekend traffic on the Post Road, the reality of living on Birch is that such traffic is often unrelenting no matter the time of day. On weekends in particular, far too often vehicles attempting to turn left off of Birch are forced to turn right and then find a location to turn around to go to eastbound on the Post Road. And that is without a very active gas station and convenience store a stone's throw away for the Birch/Post Road intersection.

Overall, Figure 8 of the initial McMahon report estimates that 20% of the vehicles expected to visit 7-Eleven will be coming from the eastbound direction of the Post Road, all of which will pass by or come from Birch Road. That volume will no doubt have a very negative impact on the ability for drivers to navigate their way off of or onto Birch Road, and I have no doubts that accidents will occur.

While I have significant reservations about introducing a proposed 24-hour enterprise into this town, for which I see no need, as well as establishing another gas station when there are two stations in very close proximity, I have already gone on for too long. I am sure some of my neighbors will weigh in on those issues and I expect that I will share in many of those viewpoints.

I appreciate the Commission's consideration of my submission and again respectfully ask that the application be denied for the safety of the roadways and the residents in the immediate surrounding area.

Respectfully,

/s/ Paul Dehmel

Paul Dehmel
18 Birch Road

very active Post Road, is ultimately a terrible location for an active gas station and convenience store, particularly of the size proposed. 7-Eleven's own numbers prove this very point.

McMahon's first "Traffic Impact Study", dated July 2020, reflects that during the "peak" weekday morning hour, 7-Eleven should expect 28 "new" daily visits traveling from the eastbound direction. (Figure 9.) The McMahon report estimates that 23 "new" afternoon visits should be expected during the peak hour from this same direction. (Figure 10.) Notably, McMahon seems to indicate that each one of those visits will result in the vehicle exiting the proposed 7-Eleven location by turning left back towards downtown. Assuming any sense of accuracy, that is 28 additional vehicles driving past Birch Road in the eastbound lanes of the Post Road and then sometime shortly thereafter 28 additional vehicles travelling westbound. Beyond the impact such traffic will have on vehicles attempting to exit Birch during that time, it is difficult to imagine how so many additional vehicles will be able to turn left out of the subject property onto the Post Road during peak hour conditions. Indeed, as for McMahon's projections, at least 825 vehicles are traveling eastbound during the "peak" afternoon hour, which traffic any vehicle turning left out of the subject property will have to avoid. One should assume that some of the eastbound traffic will slow to let those left-turning vehicles exit, potentially backing up the eastbound traffic.

McMahon's report accounts for some of the vehicles attempting to turn left out of the subject property with the remarkable – and cavalier – assertion that those vehicles "would have the option of turning right and utilizing the turnaround at Exit 13 to continue southbound on US Route 1." (Page 26.) For anyone familiar with that turnaround, it is often very congested and only accommodates several vehicles at a time. Moreover, while that "turnaround" can no doubt be used as a turnaround, its true purpose is seemingly to let vehicles coming off of exit 13 to turn left towards downtown or to access the Mobil station. The "turnaround" can also permit eastbound traffic to access the Mobil station. Not that it should have a monopoly, but one must assume that the Mobil station, which has served the community for many, many years, could suffer a significant decline in business as a result of 7-Eleven's plans. Lastly, the "turnaround" is actually very hard to navigate as a left turn because the traffic coming from Norwalk is comprised of two lanes of high speed traffic and accidents will undoubtedly happen with increased use. And of course, overuse of the "turnaround" will negatively affect traffic exiting Richmond Drive.

Another aspect of the first McMahon traffic report is that it estimates that during the "peak" weekday afternoon hour, 7-Eleven should expect 112 "new" daily visits traveling from the westbound direction. (Figure 9.) The McMahon report estimates that 92 "new" visits should be expected during the peak afternoon hour. (Figure 10.) McMahon seems to indicate that each one of those visits will result in the vehicle exiting the proposed 7-Eleven location by turning back from where it came.

Aside from the fact that such estimates reflect a significant increase in vehicles attempting to turn left into the subject property, which necessarily means cutting across two lanes of traffic immediately in front of an active traffic light and a busy entrance ramp

traffic will presumptively cause back ups, whether because vehicles slow down to turn into 7-Eleven or to make way for vehicles turning out of 7-Eleven. Any back up in traffic, given the close proximity to Birch, will make it even harder to turn left off of Birch. To the extent that vehicles leaving the proposed 7-Eleven location attempt to turn left, those vehicles will not only increase the westbound traffic but the likelihood of back-ups in the eastbound direction will increase exponentially as traffic will have to slow to accommodate the turning vehicles.

Coming from the other direction, 7-Eleven is undoubtedly counting on visitors coming from Norwalk and vehicles coming off of I-95. Beyond the difficulties increased traffic coming off the highway will face when making the initial left turn by the Mobil station, those vehicles, and those coming from Norwalk, will have to cross two lanes of traffic to turn left into the subject property. Such turns will undoubtedly lead to accidents and barring that, will likely cause backups with the eastbound traffic.

After visiting a 7-Eleven, one can only presume that a certain amount of traffic will exit the subject property by turning left towards downtown, thereby increasing volume on the Post Road.

As something of a final Birch Road traffic consideration, Birch is an active cut-through for many vehicles coming from northern Darien and beyond. I would estimate that far more than half the traffic on Birch is coming from or going to Mansfield Avenue. Presumably 7-Eleven hopes people coming from northern regions will be attracted to its proposed location, many of who will use Sylvan Road and Birch to get to the location. Such thinking probably has merit. For residents of Darien and points north that travel into downtown Darien to visit the downtown area for a quick coffee and/or breakfast item or snack who then plan on jumping on the highway (or even returning home), the convenience of a 7-Eleven right by the southbound entrance to I-95 will no doubt be very attractive. When such a location has a full service convenience store with hot food items, etc. and gas, I have every expectation that traffic on Birch will increase. McMahon's second traffic study, which concludes that Birch will only see an increase of one vehicle because of the 7-Eleven seems unrealistic and fundamentally flawed

Not only will any increase in traffic cause delays in turning onto the Post Road but it could endanger the many children that live on Birch. I have enjoyed living on Birch, with the many children who have grown up on the street, mine included, and it has been welcoming to see yet another transformation of the neighborhood with the recent arrival of a number of young families. I believe there are at least 10 homes on Birch with two or more young children, many of whom consistently play outside during daylight hours. Everyday there are groups of children playing in their front yards, riding bikes, or are otherwise near or on the street. Any appreciable increase in traffic could lead to a terrible tragedy.

At the end of the day, my opposition to 7-Eleven's proposed plan relates not to it being a 7-Eleven but to the significant negative impacts it will have to the surrounding roadways. At its core, the location, on the corner of a challenging entrance to I-95 and a

Left turn

- When turning left, one has to contend with all of the above conditions for turning right but now has to contend with navigating all of the traffic coming from downtown Darien.
- The traffic coming from downtown is also frequently speeding, having navigated the traffic light by Trader Joe's. Whether this traffic is heading to I-95 or Norwalk, it is going very fast and considering that such traffic is coming up a hill, visibility is limited, particularly if there is traffic heading into town
- The traffic coming from downtown is virtually always in bunches
- As that bunched traffic approaches the Birch intersection, it effectively turns into two lanes., thereby causing the person turning left to have to consider crossing over and into three lanes of traffic.
- I have frequently waited several minutes before a safe gap to develop in both directions. While not humorous to me, as for perspective, I have listened to entire songs on the radio while waiting to turn left.

With the above detail in mind, it is a description every driver coming down Birch Road towards the Post Road experiences when he or she is first in line. Quite often there are several vehicles navigating turns and then all bets are off as to how long one must wait.

The above description also ignores the frequent reality that the Post Road backs up when I-95 is a backed up; in which case, turning left (and even right) is even more challenging.

I respectfully submit that the traffic report submitted by McMahon Associates does not take any of this real life, everyday experience into consideration or even model it. I certainly cannot comment on what was observed by McMahon on October 13, 2020 but I submit that it does not reflect the all-too often reality for Birch Road residents, and those of the surrounding roads: turning off of Birch Road, particularly turning left, is a waiting game that is fraught with peril.

As for another consideration, my focus so far has been on exiting Birch Road but the reality is that it is sometimes quite difficult to turn onto Birch Road when travelling on the Post Road towards Norwalk. Bearing in mind the detail I provided about traffic coming from Norwalk, waiting to turn left onto Birch is frequently a challenge for the same reasons. One either has to cut in front of rapidly approaching oncoming traffic or wait a significant time before one can turn onto Birch.

Ultimately, I have provided all of this detail to put into context 7-Eleven's proposed location and my opposition to it.

Based on the McMahon report, it is estimated that there will be a significant amount of traffic going into and out of that location, all of which I fully expect will negatively affect traffic flow on the Post Road and Birch Road. As McMahon has modeled, eastbound traffic will increase based on patrons trying to access the proposed 7-Eleven. Such increased

I have been a resident of Birch Road for the past 16 years and submit this letter to express my strong opposition to the proposed construction and operation of a 7-Eleven at 306 Boston Post Road, which is effectively a stone's throw away from Birch Road's intersection with the Post Road. Based on the below description of how traffic flows turning off of and onto Birch in real life, as opposed to on a computer model, I respectfully submit that for public safety reasons the Planning & Zoning Commission should deny the application due to the significant negative impact such location will have on traffic flow on and around Birch Road and the subject area and the likelihood of a spike in accidents.

Before addressing the traffic issues with 7-Eleven's proposal that I believe cannot be recognized or appreciated by sterile computer modeling or a one-time, limited onsite survey conducted during Covid-19, I will first detail the already significant existing reality for Birch Road residents, and those from surrounding streets, that necessarily and regularly use Birch Road to travel to the Post Road, particularly Sylvan Road, Woods End, Point of Woods, and Point of Woods South, that are attempting to turn onto the Post Road from Birch. As I am certain most, if not all of my neighbors will attest, turning onto the Post Road from Birch is a challenging task no matter which direction one is turning. Certainly there are times when there is little to no wait time to make a turn but very frequently the delays are unacceptably long and often involve turning on something of a wing and a prayer that there is no accident. Please consider that Birch is one of only several active Darien streets that intersect with the Post Road that does not have a traffic light, and I respectfully submit that with topography and the surrounding commercial enterprises, it is the most challenging to navigate.

As I am certain the Committee members are fully aware, the speed limit on the Post Road in the subject area is 35 miles per hour, which routinely is the minimum speed. Thus, while one is attempting to turn onto the Post Road, one must navigate turning onto a road where other vehicles are approaching the Birch intersection very quickly, which challenge is more than doubled when turning left. Breaking it down by turning direction, please consider the following:

Right turn

- When turning right, one has to look left down the Post Road for approaching traffic, which is coming from around a bit of a bend. From my experience, vehicles coming from this direction are often speeding when conditions are right.
- Besides the speed, vehicles are often bunched together having navigated past the several traffic lights at the Darien/Norwalk boarder or coming off of I-95.
- Adding to the bunching, vehicles turning left out of Duchess toward downtown Darien frequently fill gaps in the traffic, making it even more difficult for cars turning off of Birch.
- All of the above have frequently caused me to wait for well over a minute just to make a right turn – and turning right is the easy turn.

Ginsberg, Jeremy

From: Alison Feeley <alison.s.feeley@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 8:17 AM
To: Ginsberg, Jeremy
Cc: Jim Feeley
Subject: 7-Eleven Proposal

Dear Commission,

I am writing to express my displeasure with a recent application for a 7-Eleven in Darien and I hope that it will be promptly rejected by your office. It seems obvious to me that this application does not make sense for many reasons, the most flagrant being an increase in traffic and crime. The fact that there is a rest stop right off the highway about a mile further on Route 95 is another obvious reason. I'm sure there are many other options for that piece of property that would be much more beneficial to our town and I truly hope you will consider rejecting this proposal. We are counting on your committee to withhold the high standards that we have come to expect in this great town. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Alison S. Feeley
9 Wakeman Rd.
Darien, CT 06820