

Ann Arbor Planning Commission
Re: Circle K site plan
1420 E. Stadium
TWO PAGES

September 1, 2016

My name is Garrett Scott and I live at 1421 Iroquois Place in Ann Arbor, behind the Circle K. I have appeared before the Planning Commission five times over the past two years to offer public comment on the proposed demolition and redevelopment of the Circle K site at 1420 E. Stadium. I regret that travel on business to the Brooklyn Antiquarian Book Fair next week will prevent me from appearing in front of you for a sixth time.

Many of the commissioners have heard my concerns before. Many of these concerns remain, even with the substantially revised new site plan, which **even further increases the footprint of the 24-hour convenience store and freeway-style gas station** in a central residential neighborhood in Ann Arbor since its last review before Planning Commission this past March.

You have heard my concerns about the **new unscreened, 17-foot tall detached canopy**, lit up all night and sitting in the middle of six R1C parcels; that concern remains in full force under this new plan.

You have heard my concerns that **the front of the new convenience store will face away from the street, across a broad stretch of parking lot**, rather than engaging the street for all users. These concerns remain—and in fact are made worse under this new plan, which points the lit front windows of the 24-hour convenience store into the neighbors' back yards.

You have heard my suggestion that the design **does not meet the spirit of the city's Area Height Placement standards** for a front setback to engage all users of the street, or that a large, blank wall on Packard will do that trick. I further suggest that a couple of false windows and a fake door on a substantial zero-setback wall running along Packard does not meet the city's goals for enlivening our neighborhood streets.

You have heard my concerns whether unstated constraints drive the minimum 50-foot distance between the fuel pumps and the cash registers.¹ These concerns remain.

¹ Michigan Compiled Laws 436.1541, sec. 541, the Michigan Liquor Control Code of 1998, which requires a vendor with fuel pumps who might someday seek a designated merchant license for beer and wine sales to have the site of payment and selection of alcohol not less than 50 feet from that point where motor vehicle fuel is dispensed.

You have heard concerns about **idling trucks** brought closer to residential properties; about **polluted runoff** from plowed snow into the landscape buffers, even with the city's mandated new storm water retention system. You have heard concerns about traffic patterns, about the safety of non-motorized transportation in the neighborhood, about **pedestrian safety**. Indeed, with the decreased landscape buffer size since the plan submitted in March, these concerns not only remain but are made worse.

And under this latest proposal, the footprint of the convenience store is even bigger than the store proposed last March. The concern that traffic exiting onto Packard will be screened by this large building and pose a threat to pedestrians provides me with a new concern to join my many others.

And you have heard from me before that as a next-door neighbor to the gas station for over 15 years, we have all seen the effects of neglect on the current site. The place looks plenty run down. But **the best fix for neglect isn't to build a highway-style gas station on a site adjacent to six single-family homes**, in an established mixed-use residential and small-scale commercial neighborhood in the heart of Ann Arbor.

So once again I ask the Planning Commission to do on Wednesday, September 7 what I've seen you do at so many other meetings: take a close, careful look at the proposal and help the developers craft a workable solution to their site—but also to help further the city's goals for **engaging the life of neighborhood streets**, for **insuring pedestrian safety**, for assuring **development appropriate to the scale** of our largely residential, central neighborhood, appropriate to the Ann Arbor residents who live here with the reasonable expectation that we might preserve some small measure of the quiet enjoyment of our own property, in our own neighborhoods.

Thank you.

Garrett Scott
1421 Iroquois Place