

From: Garrett Scott: Bookseller
Sent: Thursday, March 02, 2017 2:59 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: Circle K redevelopment site plan and alternative

2 March 2017

To: Ann Arbor Planning Commission

I am writing in regard to the proposed redevelopment to the Circle K property at 1420 E. Stadium. As an immediate neighbor to the property, I am opposed to the site plan that will be on the agenda to be considered at the next Planning Commission meeting on March 7, 2017.

Though this site plan conforms in placement of the new building, and in its various setbacks and buffers, etc., there is much here that runs counter to the interests of the neighborhood, including

- the light and windows of the storefront are directed into the adjoining residential properties;
- the curb cut on Packard will present suboptimal visibility to vehicles exiting the gas station, posing an increased risk to pedestrians over alternative designs;
- the layout of the site brings traffic and business activity right up to the adjacent residential properties;
- despite the addition of a single door on the east side of the proposed new building, the convenience store still “turns its back” on the neighborhood and runs counter to the principles of a front setback meant to engage the life of the street in accordance with the guiding principles behind the city’s AHP requirements.

I urge the Planning Commission to table this plan at its March 7 meeting and instead to consider the preliminary alternative site plan that was presented to the neighbors by Quatro and Circle K on February 22. This plan was developed as a final alternative in consultation with Ann Arbor Planning staff.

(See the plan listed under NEIGHBOR MEETING ALTERNATE on eTrakit.)

The neighbors have agreed that they support this alternative site plan over the plan on the agenda for consideration on March 7, and all of the immediate neighbors have agreed they would be willing to see a variance granted to the alternative site plan, which we prefer because

- the placement of the building in the alternative plan will provide some screening to the lights and noise to at least two adjoining properties;
- the alternative plan’s curb cut on Packard is more open, less screened, and allows drivers greater visibility to see pedestrians (and vice versa);
- the alternative plan moves the business traffic, delivery trucks, and commercial activity further away from the residential properties;
- having the front of the new convenience store face out onto Stadium, even with a stretch of parking lot between the storefront and the street, at least concedes that commercial activity is better suited to facing a busy street than our back yards.

There are still mitigation factors that we think would be reasonable steps to take as the developers increase the footprint of the convenience store, add a lighted gas pump canopy, and increase the traffic to their site; some mitigation factors include “softer” lights in the canopy and around the property (as opposed to bright white LEDs) and assurance that the pumps will not play music or television.

I plan to address Planning Commission during the public hearing at the meeting this Tuesday, but wanted to have my views on record with the commissioners.

After slightly over three years of correspondence, citizen meetings, and speaking at public hearings on this redevelopment, I'm looking forward to finding a way forward – both on this project specifically, and on helping Ann Arbor's future zoning and planning evolve.

With thanks,

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