

Item 12 - Correspondence

From: [Michael Wolf](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Rock Creek Village Shopping Center Plan #82020019A Chipotle drive-thru
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 6:06:36 PM

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I have had the pleasure of corresponding with Troy Leftwich and Richard Brockmyer on this matter for several months, and am hereby submitting a brief summary of my concerns regarding this proposed conversion of the former bank to the Chipotle drive-thru.

My main concern with this plan is the traffic that is going to be generated at an already extremely busy intersection, and driveway/entrance to the shopping center that is very congested due to the Exxon gas station and the other stores on that side of the shopping center. While I understand the intended "unique" concept of this drive-thru, and the claim that traffic counts will not be significantly increased, that is not a reasonable assumption and I predict backups from the shopping center will significantly impact the safety of the road and intersection. I have lived in the neighborhood for 30 years and routinely walk to this neighborhood shopping center. I regularly patronize many of the stores, restaurants, and until it closed, the bank.

I believe the application downplays the expected number of peak-hour trips for this location. Although the applicant claims that because orders must be placed online via app, and paid in the same fashion, and there will be no onsite ordering, customers will not be making "last minute" or spontaneous trips to the restaurant. I think that is a simplistic and unrealistic assumption, as it is easy for vehicle passengers (unfortunately, easy even for drivers) to decide spontaneously on the commute home to order dinner online, when a few minutes from the restaurant. When traffic is backed up on Norbeck during evening rush hour, orders can (and will) be placed spontaneously. I understand that the Plan Reviewer used an independent trip generation analysis to confirm that the project trip generation would be below the threshold (a net increase of 50 person trips or more) that requires a full TIS. The analysis reportedly showed a net increase of 43 person trips. I understand that the analysis treated the land use like any other drive-through restaurant, and did not make any adjustments based on the type of ordering the applicant is proposing. While the Reviewer believes that the estimated 43 added peak hour trips is valid, I believe it is low, and given how close it is to the 50 person trip threshold that triggers a Traffic Impact Study, I strongly encourage that such a study be conducted.

Traffic at the Norbeck/Bauer intersection is always extremely heavy. There are routinely backups when turning from Norbeck onto Bauer both from the north and south, compounded when vehicles are pulling into the Exxon Station entrance, and when Ride-on buses are turning at that tight corner and for passenger pickups/drop-offs at the shopping center. There are frequent accidents at the intersection. There are also many pedestrians crossing that dangerous intersection, including elderly and disabled residents from the HOC apartments across the street and children crossing from Manor Lake (including during peak hours after school activities).

I believe that a traffic count based on current conditions, and a formal TIS, will confirm my

observations that the intersection and the streets adjoining the shopping center are already at or above capacity, and that even 43 added trips per peak hour (which as discussed above I believe is a significantly low estimate) will cause additional accidents and backups as well as gridlock in the shopping center during evening rush hour. During evening rush hour (peak Chipotle time), it is often difficult to pull into the gas station, and cars waiting for pumps or to exit onto Bauer frequently cause backups in the parking lot, which will compound the problem of cars trying to enter the Chipotle drive-thru. Drivers will then cut through the remainder of the parking lot to use the other exit, where there are also large numbers of pedestrians entering and exiting the Safeway, CVS, etc.

I urge the Planning Department to require a traffic count of existing traffic, and a formal study for the proposed drive-thru so that more realistic added traffic volumes can be determined.

Sincerely,

Michael Wolf

5510 Amesfield Court

From: [Leftwich, Troy](#)
To: [BJulien](#)
Cc: [MCP-Chair](#); [Brockmyer, Richard](#); [Folden, Matthew](#); [Sanders, Carrie](#)
Subject: RE: Comment: Rock Creek Village Shopping Center Chipotle site plan
Date: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:34:46 AM

Hi Elizabeth Julien,

Thanks for providing your comments. I will forward you comments to the Planning Board Chair's office (cc'd) since this item has already posted.

You can also sign up to testify via the link below:

<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/sign-testify-form/>

This link is Planning Staff's report regarding Rock Creek Village Shopping Center 82020019A (please see section 5 page 20):

<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Rock-Creek-Village-Shopping-Center-82020019A-FINAL.pdf>

Thanks,

Troy Leftwich

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You can s

From: BJulien <bethjulien@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:21 AM
To: Leftwich, Troy <Troy.Leftwich@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Comment: Rock Creek Village Shopping Center Chipotle site plan

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I understand I can submit comments to you re: the proposal to allow a new drive-thru restaurant at Rock Creek Village Shopping Center WITHOUT a prior traffic study.

As a person who has lived in this neighborhood for 19 yrs, I know the traffic patterns in and out of that shopping center. It's clear to anyone who frequents this shopping center that the addition of a

drive-thru business will exacerbate current traffic flow challenges -- leading to more traffic backups both along Norbeck and along Bauer, and increasing the risk of both auto and pedestrian accidents.

The specific configuration of this particular shopping center poses special traffic flow challenges. There are ONLY 2 entrances to this small center. Both entrances are off Bauer Dr, and situated within one block of an extremely busy intersection (Norbeck and Bauer). This intersection carries a lot of foot traffic from students leaving school in the afternoon, as well as auto traffic to both the shopping center and to Bauer Dr, which is the main entrance street for adjoining neighborhoods (Manor Woods and Manor Lake). Moreover, there are 2 major businesses situated **immediately at the entrances** to the center -- an Exxon gas station and a Safeway. Thus, at busy afternoon/evening times, traffic already backs up as cars seek open spaces at the gasoline pumps, seek grocery store parking spaces, or wait for grocery shopping pedestrians in crosswalks. These configuration factors combine to ensure that traffic to and from the shopping center is already very congested in the late afternoon and early evening (i.e., the very period leading to, and including evening meal time).

A new drive-thru restaurant will, BY DEFINITION, increase auto traffic into and out of the center. Moreover, unlike the previous drive-thru bank traffic, drive-thru restaurant traffic will be concentrated in time periods leading to and around the evening mealtime. Clearly, an afternoon/evening traffic study should be conducted BEFORE approving a new business that by its very nature (drive-thru eatery) will attract more automobiles at a time period that already poses significant traffic problems.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Elizabeth Julien
14825 Clavel St