

Kopinski, Sara

From: Marilyn L Schweitzer [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 10:56 PM
To: Council
Cc: Krieger, Doug; Novack, William; Laff, Allison; Kopinski, Sara
Subject: Planning for Safe Pedestrian Access and Service

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Mayor Wehrli and City Council Members,

Naperville has many fine qualities thanks to its leadership. However, effective planning for growth does not stand out. This, one could say, goes back to the denying the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad a right-of-way in 1851, granting a right-of-way to the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad in 1864, but never cementing a vision to connect it to and through Naperville's downtown. Various plans for 5th avenue and the Washington corridor have come and gone over the 37 years I've lived here with nothing solidifying. Naper Boulevard was built with no sidewalk connectivity to Chicago Avenue despite its proximity to the Bell Laboratories campus. The Washington St bridge over I-88 did not have a sidewalk until around 1998 when it was widened to 4 lanes. Planning for South Naperville's growth has been equally lagging. As we get landlocked and more built-up planning because more difficult and more contentious. But, that doesn't mean one should just hope for the best or develop a plan on only to shelve it because it is too hard, too time consuming, or not immediately financially gratifying in the short term to think about.

Naperville's [current Land Use Plan](#) was approved by City Council in 2022. Implementation of this plan, if it is to succeed, must:

- 1) Look at developments and redevelopments in the entire context of the plan.
- 2) Apply the goals of the plan within the existing restraints of our municipal code.
- 3) Update the municipal code where it is inadequate to meet the goals of the plan.

My window into how much effort the City puts into achieving the goals of the Land Use Plan is limited pretty much by what goes before the PZC and City Council. From that vantage point, I have not been impressed. The most recent disappointment is the proposal for a 7 Brew to be located at 1203 Iroquois Avenue (formerly known as 1200 E. Ogden Avenue). The proposal was presented to the [PZC on On February 13, 2024](#) to gain a recommendations for variances to eliminate a bypass lane and for increased signage. It was approved 6-1.

I wouldn't object to these the variances if this redevelopment were to satisfy the goals of the Land Use plan for this area, but it does not. Thus, for me it is a detriment rather than an improvement.

The redevelopment is described by staff and the petitioner as a "drive-through coffee shop". This is an exceptionally vague term as it could be one of:

- 1) a coffee shop designed for indoor seating, walk-up service, and drive-through service
- 2) a coffee shop designed for walk-up and drive-through service, but no indoor seating
- 3) a coffee shop designed for drive-through service, but no walk-up service nor indoor seating

Similar to the [Dunkin Go approved by City Council on May 16, 2023](#), this 7 Brew is only is designed for only drive-through service - there is no **planned** walk-up service. Whether or not it is planned for, it will be used by pedestrian and cyclists. Will 7 Brew refuse to serve clients not in vehicles because of liability issues? If so, will they post signs at entrance stating cyclists and pedestrians will be refused service? Will they wait until the client has approached a 7 Brew employee only then to be denied service? Denying or not providing safe pedestrian access to services either way is not favorable for 7 Brew's reputation. So why not provide walk-up service? Walk-up service does not imply restrooms must be provided as was stated or implied in the case of the Dunkin Go. Walk-up service doesn't even necessitate a separate walk-up window. In the 7-Brew business model, 7 Brew employees walk up to the vehicles. 7 Brew employees could walk up to pedestrians and cyclists as well. **All that needs to be provided is a safe place to do so.**

Both Dunkin Go and 7 Brew establishments **do** support walk-up service in many locations. Looking at the existing 7 Brews via Google, 6 out of 7 in Illinois are not limited to vehicle service as they have outdoor seating albeit limited. The [video on 7 Brew's home page](#) even shows someone pickup a drink at a service window, walk away, drink from it, and continue on to join a companion with a similar drink. Many corporate images show customers hanging around with drinks - [even in rollerblades](#). I believe the more likely reason to not plan for safe walk-up service is because:

- 1) parcels are too small to provide even required elements, hence the need for variances
- 2) municipal code does not require safe pedestrian access for service
- 3) safe pedestrian simply lacks the necessary attention it deserves

The intersection of Iroquois and Ogden is already prime for pedestrian access:

- 1) It already has a relatively [high walk-score](#).
- 2) There is a [PACE bus stop at the SW and NE corner of Ogden and Iroquois](#).
- 3) There is much residential area nearby the location and the majority of unincorporated land is designated for residential use (see attached map).
- 4) The commercial development at Ogden and Naper has revitalized the area as both a pedestrian and driver destination.
- 5) The microapartments at 1350 E Ogden have been great an asset for our community and local area.

The redevelopment as planned for the 7 Brew runs counter to the overall vision of the [2022 Land Use Plan](#). That plan promotes pedestrian services and access:

- 1) The plan reflects the vision of CMAP On To 2050 that includes the recommendation for cities to build compact, walkable communities with a variety of services, amenities, and transportation options. It predicts that places with accessible and walkable amenities will continue to gain popularity.
- 2) One implementation measure is to encourage gathering spaces within new and redesigned commercial developments such as in Urban Centers such as this location.

3) In Urban Centers, the city is to work with property owners and developers to implement best practices for walkability, such as connections to adjacent areas, walkways through surface parking, and pedestrian amenities. In particular, the planning context for an Urban Center states: "Although auto-oriented development is likely, convenient and direct access for pedestrians and cyclists should also be provided from adjacent areas utilize lower traffic roadways, while minimizing cut-through traffic."

Any redevelopment of 1200 E. Ogden should improve rather than diminish pedestrian access. Any redevelopment of 1200 E. Ogden should not spoil the gains made thus far along the East Ogden corridor.

Besides lacking safe pedestrian access, I also do not believe vehicle traffic has been adequately studied or at least it hasn't been made available to the public. No traffic study accompanied the PZC materials.

Questions I have are:

- 1)** There is a single entry/exit point for this 7 Brew. Traffic from the North on Iroquois, East on Ogden, and West on Ogden all will be making a left turn into the 7 Brew. Traffic from the North on Iroquois will most likely be making a left turn out of the 7 Brew to continue southbound on Iroquois. What is the probability of Southbound traffic on Iroquois being blocked due to vehicles waiting to make a left turn into 7 Brew? (Iroquois is one lane each direction.)
- 2)** When the 7 Brew was planned for Danville, Illinois [this article stated](#) that "for every 7 Brew that opens, a Take 5 will be there alongside it as well." The store manager was claimed to have said the two businesses were "kind of like sister companies, like affiliated". [Take 5](#) is an express drive-through oil change service. Coupled with 7 Brew, it seems the model is one may get an oil change and beverage service with never exiting your vehicle. The Danville location is not alone for this pairing as it will be [paired as such in Champaign, Illinois as well](#). Is there any possibility that a Take 5 will be redeveloped adjacent to the proposed 7 Brew (i.e. on a part of the Gerald Collision Center) and if so, what would the traffic impact be?
- 3)** [Discussions for a 7 Brew in Springfield, Missouri](#) stated a study of other 7 Brew locations found "an estimate of 41 vehicles an hour under a worst-case scenario". A [traffic study for one in Ellisville, Missouri](#) gave slightly higher numbers. Both are similar to the traffic volume for a then proposed coffee shop in Tartan development on Washington and Gartner. I believe coffee shops, particularly ones that provide exclusively drive-through service have considerably more traffic impact than a bank that includes a drive through. What is the anticipated traffic impact on Iroquois due to this redevelopment and the anticipated residential development to the southwest? (Again, Iroquois is one lane each direction.)

In conclusion, I have four requests:

- 1)** Until a traffic analysis is complete and is shown to not be detrimental, please do not approve these variances. Unless safe pedestrian access to services is added, please do not approve these variances. To do otherwise runs counter to the Land Use Plan.
- 2)** I believe our municipal code must be changed to ensure safe pedestrian access to services and request that Council initiate that process.^[1] Limitations as to how drive-throughs are designed and where they may be located are common. In Naperville, drive-throughs are prohibited in B4 (Downtown Core), B5 (Secondary Downtown), and Transitional Use zoning districts. I doubt this was done for pedestrian safety and frankly find it a bit draconian. I would much prefer code that would ensure pedestrian safety and access to services.
- 3)** I request that any plan going before the PZC and City Council clearly show or state pedestrian flow and access similar to how vehicle flow and access treated. Pedestrian flow and access should not be ignored until the matter is questioned.

4) Naperville government should never allow the impression of being open to bribery. The casualness with which free donuts were offered if the Dunkin Go were to be approved[2] and a free lunch from staff may be offered for the removal a pole sign[3] was inappropriate. Even if in jest, such comments should be rebuked by staff, commissioners, or council.

Thank you as always for your consideration. Please call me if you wish or have time to discuss this with me.

Marilyn

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Marilyn L. Schweitzer

[1] This would be a benefit not only to those who prefer to walk or bicycle over driving, but also to those who cannot drive. It is an accessibility matter and an age matter. Seniors who not longer drive should not be needlessly excluded from commonly available services. Youth who are not yet old enough to drive should not have to wait until they can drive to independently and safely enjoy commonly available services.

[2] [Around the 38 minute mark of the May 16, 2023 City Council meeting.](#)

[3] [Around the 13 minute mark of the February 13, 2024 PZC meeting.](#)

