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12:20 PM  
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**VIA EMAIL ONLY: [townclerk@townoflitchfield.org](mailto:townclerk@townoflitchfield.org)**

Town of Litchfield  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
80 Doyle Road  
Bantam, Connecticut 06750

Re: Proposed Text Amendment to Allow "Bakery Accessory Drive-Through Use"

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Commission:

I am opposed to the proposed text amendment to allow an accessory use to a principal use designed to enable customers in idling or parked vehicles to transact business with employees inside the building. These kinds of uses require a tremendous amount of additional space to make them safe along with additional signage. Their uglifying effect tends to fall on deaf ears, but no accommodation to the lazy should allow less safe enjoyment of the community.

As by-products of the automobile age, drive-through facilities have become a common feature, mainly in urban or urbanizing areas where the American footprint – in this case, consisting of tire treads – has grown heavy. These drive-throughs are aimed at permitting the hurried, the lazy, and the disengaged a convenience for a range of accessory uses, which were once considered personal interactions with your local banker, trusted pharmacist, or your friendly waitress. Does our community, like that other exurb that has grown too congested for pleasure – the Town of Greenwich -- seek to become faster and ever more impersonal?

Perhaps a well-designed drive-through on a parcel with expansive area can be convenient for people who like to spend time in their cars without getting out and could have minimal impact upon the streetscape and pedestrian enjoyment and safety. But a poorly designed drive-through on a parcel of inadequate size can cause problems with traffic circulation and create areas that are hostile to the pedestrian and create a nuisance to the community, let alone idling cars, pollution, carbon footprints, and aesthetic blight. Moreover, drive-throughs have the potential to generate undesirable impacts for adjacent properties such as odors from vehicle exhaust, noise from engines, car stereos, and intercom loudspeakers. Strict standards which allow for the typical behaviors while frequenting these drive-throughs, while ensuring public safety and mitigating the associated impacts is imperative.

While I would prefer no drive-through facilities or a use with drive-through service, if they are to be allowed, a special exception with high standards must be required. For example, restaurants and retail establishments, such as drug stores, pharmacies, or package stores, should provide not less than five car-stacking spaces at or behind the menu board. Even that will not be enough eventually; **two days ago, on Saturday, I witnessed a spill-over onto Route 202 at the Park Lane Dunkin Donuts just south of**

**Northville. Drivers had to decide whether or not to skirt into the oncoming traffic lane to get by.** Only one drive-through stacking lane should be permitted, and it must be delineated from other vehicular use areas by means of a landscaped divider median. Stacking into the street must be prevented and prohibited, but enforcement of this kind of chaos is onerous and puts the burden on the police.

Drive-through lanes that obstruct the pathway between parking areas and entries into the building are dangerous. Will they be allowed? If they are contemplated, they must be designed with a pedestrian crossing that is delineated by landscaping, curbing, raised or decorative pavement, and signage (signage which of course kills community feel, small-town know-how, and is necessarily anti-aesthetical.)

Will a drive-through lane be allowed to intersect a public or private sidewalk? If so, the sidewalk pavement must be continued through the driveway to clearly delineate the pedestrian network. How wide will the maximum width of a driveway be at the intersection of a public sidewalk? Curb cuts and wide expanses of traffic are a danger to every senior pedestrian the Town has left and a nuisance to every nanny or mother pushing a baby in a stroller.


Will a drive-through speaker be allowed to be oriented to face a single-family residential use or the historic district? Do we really want loudspeakers at all: CAN I GET A LARGE COFFEE WITH MILK AND SUGAR AND A BLUEBERRY SCONE? *EXCUSE ME, WHAT DID YOU WANT? I SAID, CAN I GET A LARGE COFFEE WITH MILK AND A BLUEBERRY SCONE?*

When the drive-through facility abuts a residential use or historic district, drive-through services must be strictly prohibited between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. weekdays and between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

If the Commission does decide to allow drive-through facilities, they need to be located to maximize pedestrian safety, peace and quiet, and aesthetic enjoyment and must not be allowed on lots that are impractical due to the lot's physical constraints or uglifying factors, or concerns regarding vehicle and pedestrian safety. Needless to say, any lighting and signage must comply with existing zoning regulations.

I thank the Commission for its time and careful deliberation of the text amendment being sought. Prevention of blight and unintended consequences of permissible uses is far easier than enforcement of poorly chosen or ambiguously worded regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Richelle Hodža', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richelle Hodža