

March 22, 2021

To: Monroe Township Planning Board Members

Re: LiDL Inconvenience

Before I begin I want to make myself clear...I have NO problem with new businesses coming to our town. That being said, this Board along with our elected officials should be taking great care to ensure this is done tastefully and tactfully so businesses seamlessly integrate with the existing residential areas without creating a substantial negative impact. Slamming a 28,000 sq ft supermarket behind an existing building on the corner of a mostly residential area is the exact opposite of what I am talking about. Everything about what LiDL is proposing is wrong, I strongly oppose the current proposed location, and I am hoping that this Board will agree. If, in the unfortunate event, the Board approves this site it should not be without substantial relief to the nearby residential community.

**Sidewalks:** The applicant is requesting a sidewalk waiver along the Black Horse Pike and Lake Ave. This requirement should be non-negotiable, and they should have to install sidewalks. This should have been a requirement for the bank lot back in 2008, but for whatever reason it slipped through the cracks. The applicant is agreeing to install sidewalks along Herbert Blvd, but (so as not to make them useless) the applicant should be required to extend that sidewalk down Herbert Blvd and tie into the existing Brookdale sidewalk. This would create a safe walkway for pedestrians looking to travel down an already dangerous roadway, especially since they may be using this path to get to the proposed shopping center.

**Parking:** The applicant is requesting to reduce the required parking spaces by 25%, the Board cannot allow this. The already crammed lot is not conducive to a 28,000 square foot high-volume supermarket. Compound that with a lack of parking and you are just asking for trouble. A significant reduction in the building size may allow the applicant to adjust the parking lot size to conform to the rules set forth by this Board.

**Buffer:** As if a 270 foot wide by 27 foot tall building isn't enough, the applicant had the audacity to request LESS of a buffer between the commercial and residential lots. I strongly urge this Board to require a substantial buffer (at least 25ft) and it should start from the sidewalk, not the edge of the property line. Also, when I say substantial, I do not mean 6ft arborvitae that will take 7-10 years to provide adequate coverage. If the applicant is serious about this location I think it is only fair that the residents across the street not be required to endure any hardships (visually or otherwise) as a result.

**Traffic:** Regardless of whether or not this Township wants to acknowledge it, Lake Ave, Herbert Blvd, Brookdale Blvd, and Virgin Island Dr are well known cut-through streets. I understand it isn't fair to try to use our existing problem to argue against the applicant building a business in that location, and that is not my intention here. However, one would have to be

naïve to think that a high volume supermarket won't have a significant impact on an already dangerous situation. Every step must be taken to eliminate/discourage non-residents from using these streets as a cut through. If the Lake Ave entryway is to remain, the exit portion should be a right-hand turn ONLY that sends exiting traffic to the Black Horse Pike. Lake Ave should also be widened into a minimum of three lanes. This would create a left-hand turn lane at the traffic light, as well as a left-hand turn lane into the Lake Ave entrance of the property and prevent a backup from occurring in both directions on Lake Ave. Please remember, the burden will fall on the residents if this isn't addressed now. Feel free to use any one of the existing problem areas in Williamstown as an example of what we should be working hard to avoid.

**Easement:** Philip Bowers (aka Monroe Lake LLC) sold Block 1101 Lot 11.02 to the owner of Great Railing for \$500,000 in 2019. As part of the sale Mr. Bowers granted an access easement to the owner of Great Railing. Since this easement exists, I feel it is critical that this Board err on the side of caution as there are no restrictions set forth and we cannot possibly predict how the owner of Great Railing is planning on using it. Great Railing has already initiated a major land clearing project on the lot, and as far as I know, they have not submitted any formal site plan nor have they disclosed any details to the township as to what they are planning on doing there.

**Herbert Blvd Entryway:** This was the tipping point for me. The setbacks are beyond the maximums, the parking lot is undersized, they want to reduce the residential buffer, they do not want to install desperately needed sidewalks, and the icing on the cake...an entryway...directly across the street from a residential driveway. I cannot see how this can be viewed as anything other than encroachment. This entryway serves no purpose and is absolutely absurd; nearby residents have no chance of avoiding this disaster. Not only will it encourage more cut through traffic from non-residents, but it will certainly create unnecessary wear on an already neglected road. To make matters worse, this opening will result in ZERO buffers between the adjacent residential properties thus creating an unsightly view of their parking lot. This, along with the lack of a substantial buffer, will result in unwanted noise and light pollution, especially with cars exiting onto Herbert Blvd whose headlights will shine directly into the windows of the houses across the street.

I am not asking the Board to frivolously reject LiDL's application; instead, I am asking you to truly consider whether or not this location is suitable for a project of this magnitude. I, along with hundreds of other residents, do not feel like this is the right location for a high volume supermarket. If anything, perhaps a well-thought-out, well-buffered, low-impact business center would be a much more desirable fit for everyone in this area. Thank you for your understanding and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony DiMauro

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