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Heather Taylor
Deputy City Clerk
City Clerk's Office
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL. 34286

Dear Heather Taylor:

I am submitting this letter to be submitted for the May 7th, 2020 meeting.

RE: Public Hearing for Resolution NO-2020-R-11 and NO. 2020 R-12

I am a long-time resident of our North Port since April 1st, 2000, and I am writing to express my deep concern about the recent discussion and the pending decision on the 24-hour 7-11 Gas Station with car wash at the Cranberry and Price Blvd. intersection. I understand that the county is taking a look at the residential neighborhood that is adjacent. Currently we are zoned neighborhood commercial high intensity. When I bought my land in 1999, I inquired about the adjacent land, and was told under no circumstances could they ever allow for a gas station to be right next to residential homes. So fast forward now 20 years and my nightmare has become a potential reality for so many reasons. **Having a gas station located so close to our residential homes creates a tremendous health risk. I have read endless articles and studies show living in close proximity to gas stations are linked to higher respiratory problems, especially in kids, lung, brain, and kidney damage from exposure to the gas liquid or fumes, toxic soils, and possible increases in cancer.** In my home my husband and son suffer from asthma, and chronic issues. **In addition, studies show living close to a gas station significantly reduces property values and increases crime rates, alcohol use and tobacco use, light pollution, traffic and noise.**

I understand the county is eager for expanding business growth and development for North Port to flourish. However, I do not believe that this proposed development is a necessary benefit to our neighborhood. From the site data location point, if you travel in any direction 0.5 -5 miles you will find a gas station, car wash, 24 hr. convenience store, grocery store, pharmacy and or much of the same as the proposed plans. We are not in need of yet another 24-hour gas station w/ car wash. Since finding out about this proposed project, I have been utterly sick to my stomach. The residents

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(including myself) that will have to endure all the negative impacts that is attached to this development is simply not fair.

Cranberry / Price Blvd over the past 20 years has gotten extremely busy. We have added several schools and business in the surrounding area that has attracted more families with small children. Those same children play in the streets, riding bikes. The increase of traffic has become evident on Lucaya Ave for fastmoving vehicles to cut through to avoid the traffic light and heavy congestion during work and school hours. There have been several serious life-threatening accidents at the intersection light and recently children were struck biking to school. The additional sight and sound of traffic, on the other hand, are not pleasant, and will leave us feeling more stressed in our homes. On the other hand, adding an unnecessary and potentially dangerous gas station in our neighborhood will increase energy costs by increasing temperatures and air pollution and will decrease surrounding property values.

The Cranberry/Price Blvd. intersection is the ONLY set of 4 lots that has been zoned NC-HI. The only others are at Toledo Blade/Price and Sumter /Price which is the city center. These areas do not back up to residential properties, and do not cause negative impacts to the area. So, I ask.... How did this happen and why is it zoned this way considering so many homes that surround it are not on City water. The negative impacts on us residents outweigh any possible gain. Has anyone looked into our health risk regarding the expulsion of the gas vapors in the underground tanks as they are filled with liquid gasoline? The vapor is not healthy to breathe and depending on the wind if we are generally downwind from the vent pipes (there is one for each tank). The vapor released will be equal to the fuel delivered by volume. The constant flow of additional cars will create ground level ozone from the vehicles exhaust. This is particularly harmful to children, so again I ask, why is this property even zoned NC-HI. The soil can get contaminated by spillages of gas and oil when it rains, the immediate area surrounding the station will get some degree of contamination. There is evidence that shows increase in casual theft to properties and drug use that are adjacent to gas stations. People will cut-through your property to get a drink or cig's etc., then leave behind trash and debris. There is wildlife that will be displaced, we have several protected turtles on the land. I have pictures from the past few months that show they burrow on the commercial lot. What about the nuisance of bright lights and lack of privacy this project would bring? I worry about an increase of rodents that will be drawn to the large trash containers and homeless looking for discarded food. Panhandling is also common at these businesses due to the increase in patrons and public restrooms are easily accessible.

Are these tradeoffs ones that you really want to make? Are they worth the risk? What can be done to find a happy medium? What can add potential growth without a negative health, safety, and economic impact? Its not to late to fix this and properly zone these lots and not grant special exceptions for this kind of potentially harmful development. There are little options for us homeowners adjacent unless our properties are rezoned "commercial", as then we could sell it for

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a comparable price. Personally, we have reached out for legal advice and how to proceed with this potential circumstance.

Sincerely,

Stacy Tynan Tracy

- Pictures of protected Wildlife/ Turtles sent in separate email
- Aggrieved person letter submitted in January to City Clerk office
- Notices have been emailed to state representatives and senators
- I have requested meetings with each separate commissioner and have had the privilege to meet with 3 to discuss the proposed project.
- I have heard from my surrounding neighbors who have many of the same feelings as I do regarding this project. We all oppose the development of the 24 hr. 7/11 carwash

Topics:

1. **Health Concerns:** Gas stations emit benzene and other hydrocarbons. Benzene is a well documented **carcinogen**. Children who live near Gas Stations are more likely to develop childhood cancers.
2. **Environmental Damage:** No matter how safe they make the Gas Station; there will be spills and the smell of Gas will occasionally be present in all neighboring communities. The gas will get into our water bodies, our sewers and our air. It happens all the time near Gas Stations.
3. **Sight, Sound and Odor Pollution:** Nobody wants to sit in their backyard and see, smell and hear the continuous stream of cars flowing through a Gas Station or the car wash going off all hours of the day and night.
4. **Traffic Flow, Congestion and Crime:** We do not want the additional traffic into our residential neighborhood. Price Blvd has traffic and congestion problems already.
5. **Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Accidents:** Children will be tempted to go to the Gas Station to buy Candy. For some neighborhoods this means children will be crossing the street. Anyone who has lived near Cranberry/Price, which already has its fair share of accidents and congestion, knows that ***the last thing we need is more traffic and children crossing that road.***
6. **Real Estate Value:** Lastly, and most importantly, Parents think twice before buying homes near Gas Stations. This will affect the real estate prices of all homes in this area of Cranberry - which till this point - has been one of the fastest growing real estate markets. I have personally spoken to many parents who have said that they will move if a Gas Station is built on this site. Here is a link to a Zillow thread on how property values will most likely decrease near a multi pump gas station.

FACTS:

Toluene –

- Toluene (methylbenzene, phenylethane) is an aromatic hydrocarbon (C₇ H₈)
- Toluene is found in gasoline and is a colorless, sweet smelling, and volatile liquid.
- Toxicity can occur from unintentional or deliberate inhalation of fumes, ingestion, or transdermal absorption.

Xylene –

- Xylene is an aromatic hydrocarbon widely used in industry and medical technology as a solvent. It is a colorless, sweet-smelling liquid or gas occurring naturally in petroleum,
- Exposure to xylene can occur via inhalation, ingestion, eye or skin contact. It is primarily metabolized in the liver by oxidation of a methyl group and conjugation with glycine to yield methyl hippuric acid, which is excreted in the urine. Smaller amounts are eliminated unchanged in the exhaled air. There is a low potential for accumulation. Xylene causes health effects from both acute (<14 days) and also chronic (>365 days) exposure. The type and severity of health effects depends on several factors, including the amount of chemical you are exposed to and the length of time you are exposed for. Individuals also react differently to different levels of exposure.
 - The main effect of inhaling xylene vapor is depression of the central nervous system, with symptoms such as headache, dizziness, nausea and vomiting. The effects listed below can begin to occur with exposure to air levels of about 100 ppm.
 - Long-term exposure may lead to headaches, irritability, depression, insomnia, agitation, extreme tiredness, tremors, impaired concentration and short-term memory. This condition is sometimes generally referred to as “organic solvent syndrome.” Unfortunately, there is very little information available that isolates xylene from other solvent exposures in the examination of these effects.

EYES, NOSE AND THROAT

- Irritation of the nose and throat can occur at approximately 200 ppm after 3–5 min. Accidental splash in the eye may damage the surface of the eye, which will heal within a few days.

LUNGS

- Exposure to xylene at levels of 200 ppm or greater can irritate the lungs, causing chest pain and shortness of breath. Extreme overexposure (e.g., in a confined space) can result in pulmonary edema, a potentially life-threatening condition in which the lungs fill with fluid. However, there is no evidence that repeated, low-level exposure has any long-term effects on the lung.

LIVER AND KIDNEY

- At very high levels of exposure, xylene can injure the liver and kidneys, but this is extremely unlikely to happen without noticeable effects on the nervous system. Generally, such damage is reversible. Low-level occupational exposure does not affect the liver and the kidneys.

- BLOOD
- There is no evidence that exposure to xylene affects the blood cells in humans. Earlier reports of low red blood cell counts (anemia) may have been due to contamination of xylene with benzene.
- GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT
- Symptoms of nausea, vomiting and gastric discomfort were observed in workers exposed to xylene vapors (unspecified concentration), which were reversible.
- MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM
- Workers exposed to xylenes (TWA 14 ppm) reported reduced grasping power and reduced muscle power in the extremities more frequently than the unexposed controls. This is due to the neurological effect rather than a direct effect on the muscles.

SKIN

- Xylene, like other organic solvents, can dissolve the skin's natural protective oils. Frequent or prolonged skin contact can cause irritation and dermatitis, dryness, flaking and cracking of the skin. Damaged skin may allow greater absorption of chemicals. Xylene easily penetrates most ordinary clothing and can become trapped in ordinary gloves and boots. Xylene trapped in the clothing can cause burns and blistering.

Trimethylbenzene –

- Trimethylbenzene exposure occurs mainly in the occupational setting. Trimethylbenzene can enter the body either by inhalation of air containing trimethylbenzene, ingestion of contaminated food or water, or by dermal contact with trimethylbenzene. Inhalation of air containing trimethylbenzene can lead to irritation of the respiratory tract, sore throat, headache, wheezing, vomiting, anxiety, tension and may affect the blood. Ingestion of trimethylbenzene may lead to health effects similar to those for inhalation. Dermal contact with trimethylbenzene can irritate the skin. Eye contact can cause irritation.
- Benzene-
- Benzene is very poisonous. Poisoning can cause rapid death. However, deaths have occurred as late as 3 days after the poisoning. This happens because:
 - Permanent brain damage occurs
 - The heart stops (cardiac arrest)
 - The lungs stop working (respiratory arrest)
- People who have regular exposure to low levels of benzene can also become sick. The most common problems are blood diseases, including:
 - Leukemia
 - Lymphoma
 - Severe anemia

Ethylbenzene

- Ethylbenzene is mainly used in the manufacture of styrene. Acute (short-term) exposure to ethylbenzene in humans results in respiratory effects, such as throat irritation and chest constriction, irritation of the eyes, and neurological effects such as dizziness. Chronic (long-term) exposure to ethylbenzene by inhalation in humans has shown conflicting results regarding its effects on the blood.

Naphthalene –

- Naphthalene is a white solid substance with a strong smell. Poisoning from naphthalene destroys or changes red blood cells so they cannot carry oxygen. This can cause organ damage and death.
 - As part of the ground pollution / ecological poisoning includes the nearby private fishing canals. When these get polluted, the fish and species will be killed and poisoned.
- In the woods (wetlands) near this property are various types of wildlife which will suffer from pollution of the land and air nearby this gas station installation.
 - Risk of Increased Crime
 - Petroleum refueling stations run increased risk of armed robberies and prostitution
 - Increased Traffic in our neighborhood and side streets
 - Value of Homes will be drastically reduced.
 - Noise pollution from the refueling will be 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This will cause a serious problem for nearby residence who have set working schedules. Noise Ordinance laws of Florida statutes state that residential subdivisions must not have loud noise disturbing the residence past 10:30 PM EST or before 7.00AM EST. They are already waking up local residence starting at 6AM EST. Local surveillance videos construction workers with construction activities involving heavy machinery earlier than 7AM.