

Dear Commissioner,

As president of the Council of West Knox County Homeowners, I am writing the commissioners on behalf of the neighbors of Gulf Park and Belmont West regarding the pending Use on Review request for a drive thru Popeye's Fried Chicken restaurant at Cedar Bluff and Fox Lonas Roads. The Council has voted unanimously to support these neighbors in their adamant opposition of said Use.

A recent meeting with the 2 property owners and the potential developer revealed several issues:

1. These men have been willing to listen to the adjacent neighbors' concerns and make some promises regarding perimeter privacy fencing, dumpster screening, landscaping, exterior appearance, control of grease odor, lighting, and drainage.
2. The neighbors oppose this Popeye's Restaurant with its drive thru primarily because of safety fears for the large number of children who walk, bike, are driven, and drive past this property. Cedar Bluff Elementary, Cedar Bluff Intermediate, Tate's School, and Catholic High School students pass this intersection daily to and from school.
3. Cedar Bluff area traffic flow is presently one of the worst in Knox County during school traffic hours, rush hours, and especially during storms, when the road routinely floods. The developer has stated the Popeye's operating hours of 10am- 9pm will be extended in the future to include breakfast, resulting in hours from 6am- 9pm. This will complicate all high traffic and pedestrian periods.
4. Traffic studies predicting no increase in vehicle numbers due to the addition of this restaurant say nothing of the actual impact on the traffic flow of the predicted 600 customers per day. Turns in and out of this parking lot will tremendously slow traffic flow and threaten the safety of all of the children and adults who walk and drive these roads.
5. A drive thru restaurant will result in more customers and faster movement through the parking lot, increasing traffic problems more than an office, service, or retail business would.
6. This property is immediately in front of Gulf Park subdivision's pool. The possibility of smells of grease or food is also a concern.
7. Numerous fast food restaurants, including a Kentucky Fried Chicken, currently operate within several blocks of this property. The neighbors do not want another.

Neighborhood Commercial zoning exists specifically to "limit retail and service uses in a manner convenient to and yet not disruptive to established residential neighborhoods." The Neighborhood Commercial requires a Use on Review for both a restaurant, and to have a drive thru. These limitations are surely for instances such as these, where safety, traffic, and duplication of services should preclude this restaurant's approval.

The Council respectfully asks the MPC to deny this and any future requests for a drive thru restaurant at this location. We hope the commissioners will take this opportunity to opt for extreme caution when considering this and future requests for commercial development in this area. Currently, the strip of fast food restaurants on Cedar Bluff Rd. ends a block and a half before this property. The block north of these restaurants is wooded. An electrical substation and a new office building are the first two properties in this block. The properties north and across the street from this are not developed. Offices, retail shops, or service businesses are certainly more appropriate for this location than another fast food restaurant.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Debra Van Meter, President
690-1414