

The proposed EZ Stop facility on Concord Road should not be approved. First, the property abuts the historic Village of Concord, Knox County's only such designated village. A convenience store/gas station/drive-through restaurant is totally incompatible with and a stark contrast to, Concord Village. The architecture, traffic noise, and lighting for the EZ Stop facility degrade the peaceful aura of the Village, detracting from the residents' enjoyment of their location. Commercial use of this property should be restricted to much more passive forms, such as professional offices or small, specialty retail shops whose facility design could be much more compatible with Village architecture and whose operation would be much less of a disturbance than what is proposed.

Second, the property is adjacent to the Concord Masonic Lodge cemetery and the site of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Considering that the church may have had its own cemetery, including those for paupers or slaves, there is the possibility that disturbance of the EZ Stop property during construction could reveal historic remains or artifacts. A cultural survey should be performed on the property before construction of any facility contemplated for the site. The fact that the Masonic Lodge cemetery is still in use also creates the potential for intrusive noise from EZ Stop during funeral services.

Third, topographic maps identify the presence of a sinkhole on the property. If EZ Stop is allowed to proceed, the Commission should ensure that any proposed construction by EZ Stop is in compliance with all applicable Knox County ordinances and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) regulations. Further, there is also the concern of locating underground storage tanks in close proximity to the sinkhole.

Fourth, the proposed access onto Second Drive, that is essentially a one-lane road, creates an increased traffic volume into the Village and increases the risk of accidents on Village roads. It also increases the risk of accidents from traffic attempting to make left turns from Second Drive onto Concord Road headed south.

Finally, traffic exiting and entering Concord Road to and from the proposed EZ Stop facility will create northbound Concord Road backups to the Northshore/Concord Road roundabout during rush hours. As a 30-year resident of the area, I endured many traffic backups until the roundabout and the new bridge over the railroad tracks were built. I believe the presence of the EZ Stop facility, with entering and exiting traffic, would degrade the traffic flow again. With all of the other convenience/gas station options in the vicinity, I don't believe that another one at this location is appropriate.