



CASA CONEJO MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (MAC)
c/o County of Ventura
625 West Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Members of the Council:
Chair Wendy Zimmerman
Vice Chair Edward J. Villa, Sr.
Richard Gaz
R. Scott Horn

January 28, 2022

Ms. Jessica Magaña, Associate Planner
Mr. Kelvin Parker, Director
City of Thousand Oaks
Community Development Department, Planning Division
2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, California 91362

**RE: Casa Conejo Municipal Advisory Council's Objection to Proposed Drive-Thru Restaurant
At Conejo Gateway Plaza, 701 N. Wendy Drive**

Dear Ms. Magaña and Mr. Parker,

At their regularly scheduled meeting on January 19, 2022 the Casa Conejo Municipal Advisory Council (CCMAC) discussed the plans for a drive-thru restaurant proposed by the property owner, DH Holdings, to be situated in the small corner of the Conejo Gateway Plaza shopping center next to Exer Urgent Care. Both the CCMAC and members from the community who attended the meeting, expressed concerns that this use would create unsafe road conditions and harm area residents. The CCMAC and other local residents are opposed to this plan. We ask that approval for a drive-thru at this location in the shopping center be denied.

WENDY DRIVE IS ALREADY DANGEROUS

Wendy Drive is already heavily traveled and difficult to navigate between the 101 freeway and entry streets into Casa Conejo on Wendy Drive just a few yards down the road from the shopping center.

Wendy Drive narrows to a single lane at the same driveway that would be used for ingress and egress by patrons of the drive-thru in addition to existing traffic at the shopping center. This is already a dangerous merger as the disappearing righthand lane is often used incorrectly, but constantly, as a passing lane by impatient drivers who don't want to wait in the one lane that goes southbound on Wendy. Speeding is also common, as are unexpected cars suddenly turning into and departing from the shopping centers on both sides of Wendy Drive without signaling. Traffic is already very heavy on this stretch of Wendy Drive. Adding more cars would worsen this situation.

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Wendy Drive is the ONLY way in and out of the neighborhood for many residents in Casa Conejo and for all of the residents in the Fox Meadows tract. The two-lane road with bike lanes is also the main North/South artery through Newbury Park from the 101 Freeway on the North all the way out to Lynn and Potrero Roads at the South end. It is relied on by thousands of Newbury Park residents. As such, the drive-thru will impact many more people than Casa Conejo residents who live the closest to the bottleneck.

To help you visualize our issues, I'm including some photos that I took October 8, 2021 in Attachment A. You will see how close the left turn lane onto Bella Drive is to the shopping center; how close the proposed drive thru would be to Casa Conejo homes; what the first block of Bella looks like and cars turning both left and right out of the driveway with the merge arrows.

A DRIVE-THRU WILL GENERATE NOISE POLLUTION, AIR POLLUTION, LIGHT POLLUTION AND LITTER

The proposed drive-thru would be immediately in back of homes in Casa Conejo. It would add substantial noise and air pollution from waiting cars to their back yards and into the houses. There's no such thing as a quiet drive through. Motorists often play loud music while waiting in line, there is yelling from lots of vehicles. Big trucks, street racers and older vehicles are often very noisy-- even at idle. And of course, there will be noise from the loudspeaker box. The neighbors and passersby will be exposed to virtually non-stop noise day and night. This shows no consideration for the neighbors' quality of life.

Exhaust fumes from waiting cars will pollute the air. Potential food smells permeating the neighborhood can also be unpleasant and unappetizing. These are health hazards as well as a form of trespassing. Plus, there will be much more trash as drive-thru restaurants are well known for generating litter in the form of wrappers, cups, bags and other litter. Additionally, drive-thru customers will be distracted by food and drink as they drive off from the window onto a busy roadway.

We also have concerns about light pollution as drive-thru restaurants are known for late night hours and can also make it difficult for neighbors to sleep. We like being able to see the stars. The other venues on the Casa Conejo side of the center close fairly early.

No wall would adequately mitigate these problems. Neither would plants. They would make neighboring homes feel closed in like living next to a fortress. A drive-thru doesn't belong next to homes.

It is not acceptable to disturb our quiet residential neighborhood and endanger our residents as well as thousands of other Newbury Park residents who use Wendy Drive. This location is not suitable for a drive-thru. That the owner has not even disclosed what kind of food will be served nor the number of trips generated adds to distrust and distaste for this project. To be successful, we have to think a drive-thru restaurant has to serve hundreds of cars, maybe more, every day. The road and neighborhood conditions cannot handle this extra burden. We already have more than enough.

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ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION

In the event that the shopping center owner still wants a drive-thru, we believe such a business could be more safely and appropriately located on the Old Conejo Road side of the Conejo Gateway Plaza by the Taco Bell. Old Conejo Road can carry the traffic more safely than Wendy Drive. The business would not be in residential back yards. The noise would be less of a disturbance, and there would be more room for the pollution of all kinds (noise, lights, smells, litter) to dissipate instead of going into back yards and residential streets. There is plenty of room for the drive-thru on the Old Conejo side and provide customer convenience there. This could be a win-win alternative for all of us.

We thank Ms. Magaña for attending our CCMAC meeting and listening to our concerns. We hope to work with City of Thousand Oaks and the property owner to mitigate the safety hazards and work toward a meaningful solution that may benefit all of us. It is in all of our best interests if we fix the problems now rather than through an appeal process later.

On behalf of the Casa Conejo Municipal Advisory Council,

Wendy Zimmerman

Wendy Zimmerman

Chair, Casa Conejo Municipal Advisory Council.

/wz

cc: Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks

Attachment

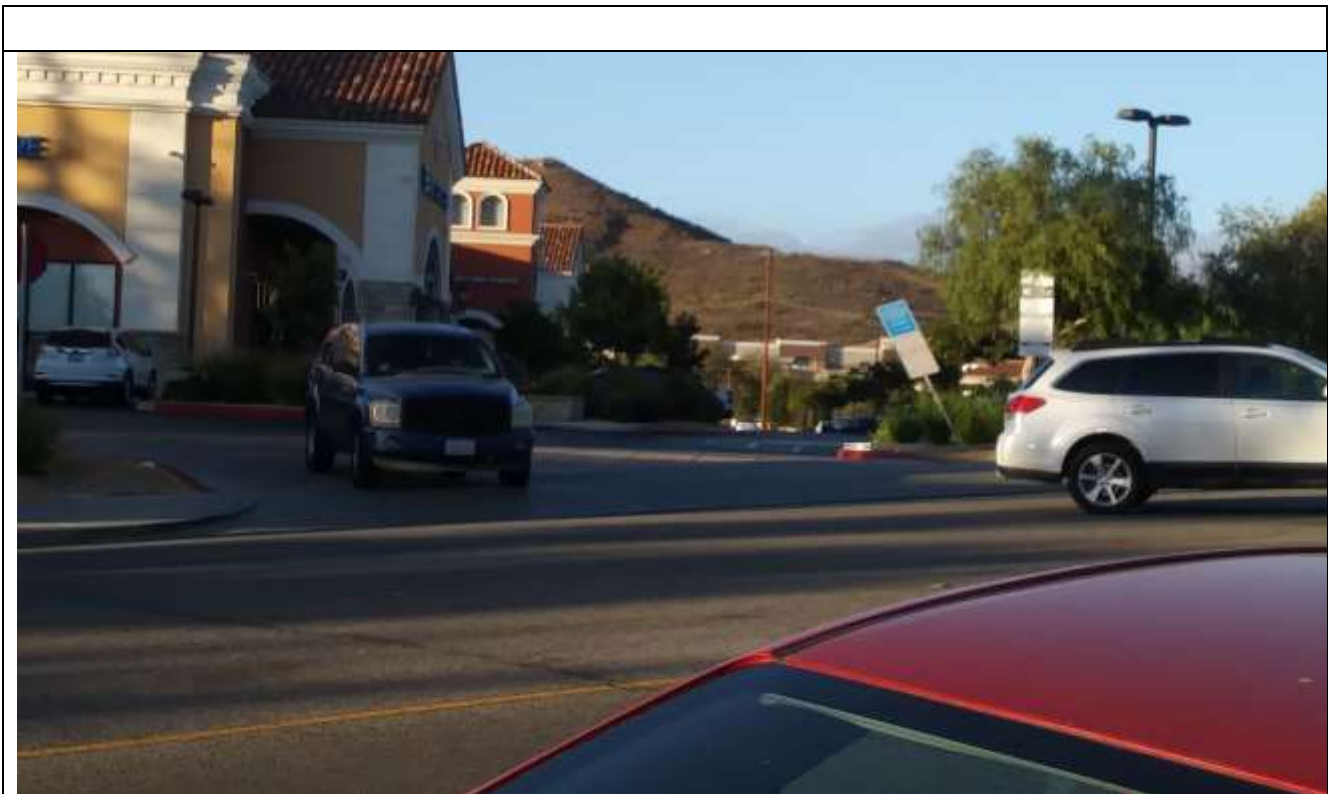
ATTACHMENT A



Left turn arrow and lane to turn onto Bella Dr. from Wendy Dr.



Shopping center close to homes and narrowing of Wendy Drive



Cars exiting Conejo Gateway to left and right onto Wendy Drive



View from Bella to Wendy Drive, Casa Linda apartments to right