

February 3, 2021

Dear Zoning Chair Schulman and Zoning Commissioners:

On January 26, the Board of Health voted unanimously to send written testimony opposing Special Permit Application #6-20SP for a 330,000 square foot Warehouse/Distribution Center at 10 Norden Place. The Board of Health's mission is to prevent and control disease spread, promote a healthy environment, and protect the quality of life within our changing community. We feel that this application violates all of our mission's tenets, compelling us to ask Norwalk's Zoning Board to deny this special permit application.

We reviewed a summary of documents available to the public from the applicant, including their environmental impact statements, while also reviewing documents from intervenors. We respect the applicant's assessment; however, we feel more harm than benefits of this application. Many studies have linked elevated particle levels in the air to increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, asthma attacks, and premature deaths among those suffering from respiratory problems. They have also revealed large diesel trucks to be the most significant contributors to harmful black carbon emissions close to major roadways, indicating that vehicle types matter more than traffic volume for near-road air pollution.

The Board is also concerned about the health impact this application will have on the children and elderly who attend the schools and senior care facilities on roads trucks will travel through or nearby. Children are more susceptible than adults to respiratory disease caused by pollutants since their lungs are still developing. The elderly have a higher incidence of respiratory illness and are also more vulnerable to contaminants.

Similarly, we are much concerned about safety issues from the daily truck traffic and degradation of roads on or near recreational facilities such as ball fields and playgrounds. We feel traffic concerns are within our remit as outlined in our mission statement to protect the quality of life without changing our community.

We are well aware that the proposed site is adjacent to Interstate-95; however, we strongly disagree with the applicant's notion of preclusion from Norwalk's air quality standards, safety measures, and plans for a healthier Norwalk because of location alone. We feel that any net increase of any air pollutant and any additional safety risk for Norwalk residents is unacceptable and violates our City's healthier plan.

We feel it is impossible for these reasons, noise, and safety that this application would result in acceptable use in the City of Norwalk's residential neighborhood. We urge you to deny this Special Permit application.

Sincerely,

Norwalk's Board of Health:
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