



URGENT! BULLETIN



SAVE OUR DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

Join Us In Opposition at next City Council Meeting, Dec 19th, 5pm.

Dear Neighbors,

It recently came to the attention of the Garfield Organization (your non-profit neighborhood organization), that the Circle K corporation has been distributing information touting “benefits” of a proposed new store at the southeast corner of Roosevelt and 7th Street. Garfield Organization does NOT support this new development, and all other affected neighborhoods and community groups in the area agree with us that a new Circle K store would negatively impact crime, safety, health, traffic, and quality of life for residents of Garfield and the rest of downtown over the long term.

“[Circle K] has not shown itself to be a good neighbor to the area residents.” – Zoning Adjustment Hearing Officer Michael Widener

Circle K plans to close their small store on the NE corner and open a much larger store with up to 16 gas pumps on the SE corner of Roosevelt and 7th Street. It is important to note that this increase in size of the proposed Circle K store has nothing to do with demand from our neighborhood - but instead is to service freeway traffic and other visitors to downtown. The proposed store may be a good fit in a far-away suburb, but is a terrible idea for Garfield. That corner is now an empty tire shop, but the lot is large enough that a variety of more-appropriate uses could easily be built there – for example, restaurants, a small grocery store, a hardware store, or live-work spaces for artists and small businesses.

We ask that Circle K work to improve their existing store on the NE corner, and encourage owners of the property on the SE corner to pursue a safer, more appropriate development in keeping with the character of a downtown neighborhood. A shiny, new, mega Circle K may seem like a benefit in the short term - but in the long term WE MUST DO BETTER if we want the neighborhood to thrive.

Our Top Concerns

Crime. The new store will bring in more people, good and bad. Circle K has a long-established pattern of attracting more crime (such as beer-run thefts and robbery of other customers) than any other convenience store chain in the Phoenix area. That was documented by a recent ASU study, and continues to be true. The new store will also sell more alcohol to local transients and other trouble-makers. While the new Circle K will include some measures to improve safety, the fact that so many more people will be visiting the store is bound to increase overall crime relative to their old store. As was discussed in a community meeting in September, this is exactly what happened at a new Circle K store on Buckeye.

Liquor. The Garfield area already has an extremely high density of liquor licenses, including two other Circle K stores. Some access to liquor is reasonable - but enough is enough. Note that in recent years the Phoenix City Council voted to deny a liquor license to the Shell station across the street (SW corner) for this very reason.

December 12, 2012

Our Top Concerns continued

Safety. More gas pumps and a larger store will mean more traffic. Not necessarily more traffic on 7th Street (which is always busy!) or the Freeway... but instead it will mean many more cars making turns into or leaving the Circle K. That corner is already a terrible mess and extremely dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists. The flow of traffic will also mean more cars traveling eastward down Roosevelt along a stretch that is already too narrow. Also, the new store and gas pumps will be very close to houses in Garfield. Fumes from gasoline, noise and exhaust from idling cars and delivery trucks, and potential leakage from gas storage tanks are all environmental concerns that may adversely affect the health, quality of life, and property values of nearby residents.

Appropriateness. Garfield is a downtown neighborhood, not a suburb. Roosevelt Street is evolving into a cultural and economic hub for the entire city, all focused on a walkable, safe streets, and unique locally-owned businesses. The corner of Roosevelt and 7th Street is one of Garfield's main links to that vibrant core – and the installation of a massive gas station owned by a huge corporation with a bad reputation is the antithesis of what should be done with that property. Also, Whether by choice or necessity, many of our residents get around on foot or bicycle. A car-oriented business that draws crime and compromises safety is utterly inappropriate on that corner in the 21st century.

Deception. Circle K corporation has acted in bad faith throughout the negotiations related to zoning and liquor licenses, including but not limited to presentation of deceptive statistics about crime to the neighborhood, and “astro-turfing” a Friends of Circle K campaign to distribute misleading information about the new store to nearby residents. This pattern of behavior is extremely telling of the kind of business they intend to run - which will NOT be good for Garfield overall.

ACT NOW TO SAVE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

To these ends, Garfield Organization is working with several other organizations in the downtown area to stop this project. Currently, details regarding use permits and liquor licenses for the proposed store are being settled with the city. Circle K knows how to work the system, and they are making every possible effort to crush opposition to the store. We need to make our voices heard, and be clear that an expanded Circle K presence is NOT welcome in Garfield.

Garfield Organization, a non-profit neighborhood alliance, openly announced several months of meeting inviting residents to meet with and discuss this new mega Circle K development, and other neighborhood issues.

We are your neighbor, we ask for your voice in attendance. Our next Revitalization Meeting (RED) is Tuesday, Jan 22, 5:30-6:30pm, at our Lupe Sisneros Safe Haven, 1029 E Garfield.

Garfield Organization, non-profit neighborhood alliance, addresses resident interests since 1986.