

Joe Letke

From: Joe Letke
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2024 10:07 AM
To: David Ferguson
Subject: RE: Letter of Concern Regarding ANX2411 Buc-ee's Palmer Lake Annexation

Hello,

Buc-ee's has formally requested to be annexed into the Town of Palmer Lake. The Town of Palmer Lake has not yet held a formal hearing to consider the annexation request. If the Town of Palmer Lake approves the annexation request, then the property will become part of the Town's jurisdiction and all future development proposals for this property will be considered by the Town.

El Paso County has no authority over properties that are located within the municipal jurisdiction of the Town of Palmer Lake and has no statutory authority to approve or deny a request for annexation.

Once the Town of Palmer Lake has a determined date for final consideration of the annexation request, El Paso County Planning staff will present the request to the Board of County Commissioners as an informational item; as such, there will be no formal hearing or decision-making process involving the County on this matter.

Pursuant to State Statute, the Board of County Commissioners does not approve or deny an annexation request, nor does the Board of County Commissioners support or oppose annexation requests. Any questions or concerns regarding the annexation request should be directed to the Town of Palmer Lake.

Thank you,



Joseph Letke

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From: David Ferguson <dferg1927@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 8, 2024 4:47 PM
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Cc: mlakind@tomgov.org; sking@tomgov.org

Subject: Letter of Concern Regarding ANX2411 Buc-ee's Palmer Lake Annexation

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I write the as an open letter to El Paso County, Palmer Lake and any other entity that will truly listen. I am saddened and disappointed in the way that the Buc-ee's situation appears to be evolving and metastasizing. We, in North Woodmoor, feel like we do not have a voice in the disastrous decision to put in a Buc-ee's on Monument Hill. I find it interesting that Palmer Lake can make this decision that will not have an impact on their community yet forces another community to deal with negative impacts from that location. The POCs from Buc-ee's made it abundantly clear that they do not care about the surrounding community and stated multiple time "this is what we do". That alone is a scary, sad and callous statement.

We moved to the Tri-lakes area to be a part of a wonderful, small town community between Palmer Lake, Monument, Woodmoor and the rest of northern Unincorporated El Paso. The decision to leave Colorado Springs was based on the unchecked, non-integrated, irresponsible growth to the detriment of communities in the name of "progress". While we all understand that progress is inevitable, the rampant and unchecked growth that does not flow between neighborhoods and communities leads to irresponsible growth in the name of acquiescing to developers. Unfortunately, developers only care about the near-term profits while disregarding the long-term effects. That is where communities need to manage the growth responsibly. To that note, I seem to remember recently that Palmer Lake turned down a Dollar store to the negative impacts that would result in the community. It certainly appears that Palmer Lake is attempting contradict the standards applied for the Dollar store since the town will benefit from the revenue without having to deal with the negative impacts.

There is an amazing small-town community that Palmer Lake, Monument, Woodmoor and the rest of northern Unincorporated El Paso have experienced for many years, but is fading. All the communities are intertwined and inevitably linked. Our son (our daughter has planned to work) worked at O'Malley's and really enjoyed the close-knit cliental. As a family, we have enjoyed many of the small local restaurants in Palmer Lake; Sasquatch & Yeti, O'Malley's, 105 Social Club, Speed Trap, Rock House and Sundance BBQ. Unfortunately, the eating and employment options listed above will not be for us as we do not want to be going through the heavy traffic that will be taking over the route to Palmer Lake along County Line Road.

Many of us have spouses (or family members) that work for the school district, opting for less pay ("home-town discount") to enjoy a small tight-knit charming community with a small school district. This is one of the intangible characteristics of this community that will fade as Buc-ee's comes in and continues to fracture the community bonds. Many of us directly impacted by the Buc-ees location will want to relocate to different areas. Fortunately, we as a family, have the means and ability to relocate to an area with a greater appreciation towards the community and it would be a step that we would take should this Buc-ee's be approved. From a practicality stand point, the elected representatives may not

care about the increase in turnover from an individual standpoint since it is only about the tax base, right? The issue is the large divide within the community that is created as this area redefines (or loses completely) its identity.

These unintended consequences will have a lasting impact on the local businesses and the Palmer Lake community as a whole. I am sure that Palmer Lake will be enjoying the funds that are received from a Business "Flag-Pole Annexed" into the town from over 3 miles away, it is the small businesses that will feel the biggest impact as neighboring communities go elsewhere for dining options as the congestion on County Line Road will deter transit into Palmer Lake.

There is a lot of continued discussions about the impact on the community with regards to sex trafficking and other crime prevalent to "Free-way communities" and Buc-ee's "Pledge" to help combat and that "it has never taken place at a Buc-ee's". While I find it hard to believe that there has not been a sex-trafficking incident at any Buc-ee's location, I do not have the any data readily available to analyze. What we do have to available is the morals of the Company Co-owner's Family. On May 17, 2024, a grand jury returned six separate indictments, charging 28-year-old Mitchell Wasek (the Son of the Co-Founder) with 21 counts of felony invasive visual recording on 13 separate victims. Is this really the type of values from a corporation that we want to bring into our "community"?

Final thought on Buc-ee's as a whole: In my opinion, it does not fit in the responsible growth plan for the community. Yes, that area is zoned for commercial, but is the intent of the master plan that and additional 120 gas pumps, with a massive water resource drain, a massive waste requirement and massive light pollution looked at as acceptable? How many people that are directly impacted by the negatives of this proposal are actual for it being put in that location on Monument Hill? All have seen so far is the benefit of tax revenue for a town 3 miles away at the expense of those not fairly or adequately represented.

As a last resort and this monstrosity gets pushed through without regard to the neighboring communities, it would only make sense and to screen this disaster from the neighboring communities with natural trees and a design blend into the natural environment as best as possible, if Buc-ee's and Palmer Lake honestly "cares about the community partnership".

Thank you,

David Ferguson