

(2 Knowles Terrace)  
1259 Western Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12203  
October 13, 1978

Mr. Wiebe, Chairman  
Guilderland Zoning Board  
Guilderland Town Hall  
Guilderland, New York

Mr. Wiebe and Members of the Zoning Board:

You have requested that unless further NEW information is to be added to the on-going matter of Mr. Fiato and his proposed Mexican fast-food establishment information be limited. I do, however, feel compelled to, once again, express my strong objection to this type of venture in McKownville (or any other residential neighborhood).

Because the issue is a very tiring and unpopular one, the Planning Board has chosen to avoid the issue and has decided not to act in a judicious manner, consistent with previous decisions. It is now your decision. Over the past six or seven years, Mr. Fiato has proposed at least six various fast-food establishments on this site. With each proposal, much time has been spent reviewing these issues, both by the residents of the immediate and surrounding areas and by the members of the Planning and Zoning Boards. Each time the final decisions have been an emphatic, "NO". A "NO" answer is again very much necessary--much more so today as is evidenced by past experience and is so visually evident by fast-food establishments all over the area. One has but to look in each direction and see the direct results of this type of business venture. Just go over the city line to Albany...look to the north on Fuller Road...to Central Avenue. The fine residential homes in these neighborhoods have all fallen prey to deterioration and decay. Surely if this is permitted here, the door will open to further undesirable establishments which will lead to neighborhood deterioration, unkept neglected home, pollution, decay, and violations of health and safety standards. This will, in turn, lead to delinquency of youth, crime and other evils of society so prevalent in deteriorating neighborhoods.

The residents here have been trying to upgrade the residential neighborhoods. Must Guilderland follow the paths of mistakes so evident in surrounding communities, or will it take heed and learn a lesson from the now-existing mistakes of others? We must not, and cannot, make the same errors which are already so evident and irreparable...a direct result of this type of fast-food outlet. Someone has to have the courage to say "STOP", STOP the infiltration of profiteering speculators who are not residents of the Town and who do not care about the lives and properties of the residents or the conditions of the neighborhoods and the resultant decay which it will cause.

At a recent meeting here, Mr. Fiato publicly stated his contempt and ill-will toward the community. A sincere, honest person, genuinely interested in the lives, concerns, and environment of the people living in the immediate residential area, would not publicly voice such hostility! It is this contempt and hostility which compels him to destroy, at any expense, the lives of the people in this community. Further, he expects the Town of Guilderland to permit him to make his speculative profits in the Town, to

the point of total destruction for years to come. This was certainly evident from his action and behavior by all who saw and heard him.

I urge the Board not to set a precedent for a fast-food establishment in McKownville. I speak not just for myself, but for many other residents of McKownville. Surely, the members of the Board are aware of our constant concern, as evidenced at these and other meetings. Once a precedent for degradation is set, it cannot be easily stopped. It must be stopped now, before it begins, and before other ventures of this type are allowed to entertain the thought of setting up permanent "residency".

An establishment of this type would drastically alter the appearance of this area, destroy and/or impair and bring about a major change in the hamlet of McKownville. It is well-known that if the environmental quality of an area fails, the area will also fail. This has been clearly shown by our polluted cities--cities which are now fighting for survival and are attempting to bring about a change in environmental quality and living conditions. The underlying strength of any community lies in the quality of life which its residents seek and foster. Young and old people alike have invested much time and effort, to say nothing of money, in improving and maintaining their homes.

Public officials must be responsive to the needs of the residents who elect them, and who live, work, and pay the taxes in their community. If this Board, or any other officials, serving in a position of influence and responsible for the ultimate decisions affecting our lives, permit an area to be destroyed because of a lack of conscience, or the courage to say "NO", through neglect, or a reluctance to act, we will never again have the opportunity to undo the damage which this will begin. We must be willing to set the right priorities now and to pay the necessary price if we want to live in a clean and healthy community in the future. Developmental pressures have already caused serious environmental and residential (economic) problems. The impact of this type of fast-food establishment will cause an unreasonable burden, not only to the residents but also for the local municipal services (fire, safety, and the life).

I urge the members of this Board to once again act consistent with past decisions. Consider carefully the many refuting statements which have been made, and the overwhelming wishes of the residents of this neighborhood--and then have the ultimate courage to again deny this request and help us in protecting, preserving, and upgrading the quality of life which we seek. It will be this attitude of concern for the residential environment which will bring about the lasting progress which we are attempting to make and the future problems which we hope to prevent that will help us in protecting and preserving the quality of life in our neighborhood. By your decision, you have the power to either destroy a community or help preserve it for the future.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alice Torda

cc: Mr. Paul Empie  
Dr. Donald Reeb,  
McKownville Improvement Assoc.