

REMARKS TO COUNCIL AT D&I FOR 4853 THOMAS ALTON

TUESDAY, DEC 13, 2016

Mr. Chair, Mayor, Councillors and City Staff,

Thank you all for listening this evening and the past few weeks to our concerns. You have heard tonight about traffic and safety issues, noise, the overcapacity of our schools and the impact of additional growth, accessibility and walkability concerns and overall community change that this increased density will bring.

This proposal represents a major departure for the existing community character of the neighbourhood. Alton Village is a stable neighbourhood of single detached homes and townhomes zoned for secondary intensification only (and this development is zoned as per the Burlington website for 100 – 110 units/hectare.) The introduction of a condominium tower complex on a relatively small land area (roughly a bit bigger than the size of this building tower/City Hall) combined with other development proposals such as the Valera buildings (another 450 units across the street) represents anywhere from 5 – 12% of Burlington's required population growth. There is no question that these developments will negatively impact the community putting strain on an already taxed area under-served by public transportation, schools, walkable amenities and parking (we all know about the additional parking permits granted to Alton residents). In our opinion, this development proposal is inconsistent with the City's Growth Plan. The current intensification criteria laid out in previous Staff decisions on other local development proposals in Ward 1 and 4 and our mandate to Build Smart....all contradict this development proposal.

We'd like to stress that even though we may disagree with the financial logic of the current provincial, regional and municipal plans on what intensification means. Practically, any intensification whether mandated or not must be done "gently" and with a great deal of thought and care. Otherwise what have we learned through all the previous proposal battles in our City?? Tonight, you will hear from other groups about the character of their neighbourhoods. This is a cornerstone to the foundation of Burlington. After all Burlington's history is built on communities coming together, not simply about growing a bigger community but becoming a better community that we can all be proud of.

Let me read from the recent Regional Official Plan Review Directions Report (Oct. 2016)

“Burlington’s downtown is designated as an Urban Growth Centre (UGC) by the Province’s Growth Plan, and is expected to be a focus area for future intensification. In addition, other intensification areas in Burlington include two Major Transit Stations (Aldershot Go Station and Appleby GO Station) and two Metrolinx-designated Mobility Hubs (one in downtown Burlington by the waterfront, and one around the Burlington GO transit station).”

Now, let me read from the Official Plan

“The amount and form of intensification must be balanced with other planning considerations, such as infrastructure capacity, integration with existing residential neighbourhoods and be compatible with surrounding properties.”

Having had the opportunity to participate in the City’s Strategic Plan development, I embrace our need to grow but as was stated very clearly in our Strategic Plan - intensification must be achieved through a balanced approach. Build Smart means the city will make it easy for people to get around, make good use of existing infrastructure, and target growth to the right areas of the city. It also means walkable neighbourhoods built around transit and GO stations that give residents easy access to a broad range of services they want like shopping, healthcare, recreation centres and green spaces... None of this reflects overdevelopment at the "end of the line" on Appleby butting onto the protected green space of North Burlington. (Within a neighbourhood, not even on the arterial road)

Furthermore, as your Sustainability Advisory Committee has stated repeatedly and commented in the Staff Report before you, “the updated proposed design seems to be an overdevelopment in comparison to a responsible development, and may overwhelm the area”. Simply increasing density does not lead to the objectives we are trying to achieve as a community.

As my neighbours have all clearly stated, we ask that you vote to refuse the rezoning application on the grounds that they do not meet the intensification criteria set out in the Regional OP nor Burlington's approved Strategic Plan, nor the current or proposed municipal OP and frankly it sets a precedent for any future development proposal in any intensification neighbourhoods that may be untenable for the greater Burlington community.

Thank you