

From: Deby Morrison [<mailto:coreresidents@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2017 11:52 PM
To: LaPointe, Amber
Subject: Nov 30th Delegation Notes Development & Planning Committee

Amber, Please find my delegation from last night's, Nov 30, Development & Planning Committee. Please confirm receipt. Many thanks, Deby

Good evening Members of the Development & Planning Committee

It is unacceptable to be rushing this Official Plan through Development and Committee tonight to head to Council for a vote when the public has been given 14 days to comment on such major and drastic changes to the future of this City. Defer the approval of the Official Plan to June, 2018. Defer approval of the Downtown Mobility Hub precinct plan and Official Plan policies until June, 2018.

The Official Plan was released November 9, 2017 to the public, an email went out Nov 13/17 and the public was given 14 days to Nov 27/17 to comment. After only 14 days, why is this plan being considered today, November 30, 2017, at a Planning & Development committee meeting to be sent to Council for a vote? Noted, there were three public open house presentations of this plan from November 16 to 20th, 2017, 4 days, during which time I was out of the Country; I am sure that I am not alone in this situation. Many Burlington residents are still unaware that the Official Plan has been released.

This Plan is recommending drastic changes to the City and is going to forever change the landscape and culture of Burlington and our Downtown. This should not be rushed to Council prior to a specific, detailed design of the Downtown Core having been established and further public consultation and discussion. I haven't had time to review the entire report, but I do not agree with raising heights to 17 to 25 storeys from 4 to 8 storeys in entire precincts and changing precinct borders without a more refined, detailed design of the Downtown Core. How will City Staff manage multiple development applications from Developers requesting 25 storeys? Once a precedent of 25 storeys is established, that will be the new starting height; as we have experienced in the downtown core these past 10 years. Does the City have the resources to handle numerous Development applications? How will the City control the height restrictions? How does the City approve 23 storeys at 421 Brant St and then not approve 25 storeys at 437 Brant St that is zoned for 17 storeys? Is the City prepared to constantly be preparing for the OMB? Is this the best use of City staff resources?

I am pro development, but I am NOT pro development of a canyon of 25 storey condo buildings up the entire length of Brant Street. What a sure way to kill the Downtown core for people and entrepreneurial business and encourage car traffic congestion; there are no main arteries into and out of the core. What is being proposed would create a most unfriendly environment for people and create a congested traffic mess. This City is going to end up with what King Street in Toronto has become. Toronto is spending millions trying to figure out how to end the daily traffic gridlock and bring people back to King Street at night. We have history and lessons close by to draw from, why would we do this to our Downtown Core? Who is benefitting from this type of Development and why are we in such a rush to move forward in this manner?

I attended many of the public sessions on developing the new official plan and the grow bold initiatives and was left with the impression that the majority of residents did not support this level of increased height and density in the core. The City is on target to meet their intensification targets of 200 people/jobs per hectare as we are already at 174 jobs/hectare, without this level of intensification in the Core.

It would be irresponsible to change these zoning laws without having a Downtown Core Design plus Transit, Traffic, Transportation, Cycling, Pedestrian and Infrastructure Plans finalized and in place. The traffic and construction time and effect of these buildings will gridlock the downtown in the near term and forever be a detriment to the appeal and draw to our downtown core. Any successful City needs a successful Downtown.

Making zoning law changes for Developers over these past years has led Developers to overpay for downtown properties as they gambled on whether or not they would be able to build 23 storeys vs. the zoned 4 to 8 storeys. These Developers have allowed the Downtown Core to become somewhat shabby as they have not kept their properties in good repair nor have they allowed entrepreneurial business owners to sign long term leases. Developers wanted to be ready to go when "the height was right". Should Developers be rewarded for these actions; driving up property prices and encouraging decaying property conditions. Why should the residents of the City have to pay the price because Developers are lamenting that they can't make a profit on 4 to 8 storeys as a direct result of their own decision to overpay for property. It seems that Developers are driving the design and future of our Downtown Core rather than the citizens of Burlington being the driving force behind the design of our Downtown.

A wonderful Downtown 'culture' has been emerging the past few years with interesting entrepreneurial businesses bringing residents and tourists alike to our Downtown Core. Kellys, a major draw for residents & young people from far and wide, Centro Garden Store & their Sunday Farmer's market & Maker's Markets, Tamp Coffee, a major meeting hub for business & residents, the Burro, draws a younger crowd from far and wide, just to name a few and none of these businesses will survive the higher rents these new high rise condos bring. In fact, Kellys has been given their walking papers by a Developer, Centro is slated for a 17 storey development and we won't get these businesses back. We should be nurturing and encouraging these business owners, as against all odds, they were building a culture and environment that was drawing young people, residents and tourists to the core. If there's any doubt about that just look at the current businesses at ground level in the current high rise condo towers: real estate, bank, mortgage, franchise, medical, empty; absolutely no draw or culture to be found.

Sometimes what's in the buildings is more important than the buildings and we have an opportunity to foster and create that environment in our City. Part of the Downtown Core should be developed into an area where these businesses can flourish, perhaps a Pedestrian Promenade. This should be designed prior to any change in the Official Plan. We only have one Downtown Core, there is no where else in our City for these businesses to relocate or this type of Pedestrian friendly area to be developed. I'm sure if this type of project was tendered to Developers, we'd see some wonderful plans and designs.

We have a gem on the Lake, let's be careful going forward and foster a thriving "Niagara-on-the-Lake" destination community, not a "Toronto Queen's Quay Nightmare" on the Lake.

I am pro development downtown, however, I am for reasonable, responsible development with a defined design plan prior to pushing forward.

Thankyou for your consideration,

Deby Morrison

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