

Chair, Worshipful mayor, councillors, staff fellow citizens.

Official plans are by their nature big, detailed, complex and probably cannot please every citizen.

So I am not here today to condemn or oppose the latest rendition of the Official Plan.

Neither am I opposed to intensification, downtown density or the concept of mobility hubs.

But I would like to offer some suggestions and question a few items I find worrisome in the plan.

My first concern is a Big Picture concern about the validity and workability of An Official Plan that is contingent upon several other plans, if those contingent plans are not yet in place.

The new official plan references the Cycling Plan and the Transit Master Plan, both of which have been in development for several years are still some time from completion. It also references The Downtown Parking Study, which as we speak is still seeking public input and an Area Specific Plan for the Downtown Mobility Hub which according to your timeline will not be completed until June 2018

There are matters of great importance which will impact the lives of citizens embodied in the official plan which council are being asked to vote upon when the prerequisite building blocks are not yet in place.

Is it fair or reasonable for you to vote on detailed areas of intensification and density before we have the Transit Plan in place to move people through these propose areas of intensification?

Can you really make a decision which will determine the walkability and the transport modal split for cycling to ensure livability in our new high density intensified city, if we don't have a cycling plan in place to support it?

Can we plan for a forecast 19,000 new residents every 10 years, many of whom the new intensified precincts are designed for and almost all of whom will bring cars if we do not have a parking plan in place? If buildings are approved with 1.2 parking spaces per unit while the average Ontario household owns 1.7 cars, where will we put the all cars? We cannot just hope people will be less inclined to own a car. We need to have that plan in place.

The proposed intensification precincts are premised upon the success and high level of utilisation of the downtown mobility hub; yet the Area Specific Plan for that will not be presented to council until June 2018. How do we intensify around a mobility hub when we don't have the details of what that hub will look like, how it will work? If it will work?

I am not questioning the good or bad of intensification but I am asking how can council and staff move forward on this very complex and, for our city, somewhat revolutionary, official plan if the building blocks of all the other supporting infrastructure plans are not in place?

My Other concerns and questions are about the public consultations that took place and how public input has been dealt with and their concerns answered.

Report PB-81-17 tells me that the public provided **“a significant amount of feedback on the following:**

Citizens want to protect the character and experience of Brant St.

Citizens want to protect views to the lake

Citizens want to locate taller buildings closer to Burlington Go Stationwhere additional transit infrastructure is available and fewer compatibility issues exist.

The responses from city staff say the following:

Where possible establishing maximum building heights which are consistent with existing development precedent. In what way are the 3 downtown hi-rise precincts consistent with existing development precedent?

The Plan will concentrate the tallest buildings in areas away from Lake Ontario. The Cannery Precinct is on the south of lakeshore road, the second is between James and lakeshore the third on the north side of James St. How is that concentrating the tallest building away from Lake Ontario?

The Plan will establish effective transitions from tall buildings to established residential areas. How do you transition from 23 storeys at Brant and James to residential housing within ½ a city block to the north, west and east?

The Plan will conserve areas with concentrated heritage and or defining elements significant to the downtown hub and the city. That almost perfectly describes the present downtown areas which the plan now proposes will be replaced by the three Intensification/hi-rise precincts. Is this not somewhat contradictory? It seems that staff are saying one thing while the plan says something different.

The Plan will protect significant Public View Corridors to Lake Ontario. Exactly what is a Significant Public View Corridor? Is it like windows to the lake that we have along lakeshore? I imagine several downtown corridors through which one might see the lake. Or might not. If tilt my head to one side I see the lake, if I tilt the other way ... no lake. Will some existing homeowners north of James street get a Public View Corridor to the lake while some do not? Will home owners who lose their lake view due to a view corridor or the lack thereof be consulted or compensated?

These are questions I and other engaged citizens respectfully request answers to before you proceed.

On a more general note on input and engagement, I attended the Grow Bold and a few other public engagement efforts and came away with the distinct feeling that the input was being directed rather than sought. The one I attended at Lions Club had 9 city representatives, 4 Burlington Citizens and 2 people from out of town seeking information about moving to Burlington.

We were treated to slideshows of possible street configurations, including Brant St.

Our work books asked questions about our preferences for cycling on sidewalks or cycle lanes, flower beds or concrete planters, Transit V Autos, parking lots v patios. Given these choices, you can imagine what most people would prefer.

Not one of the Brant Street or downtown street scenarios in the workbooks or slide presentations mentioned the Cannery Precinct or the other two Hi-rise Precincts between lakeshore and James Streets.

Not one of the artist renderings of Brant Street pointed its camera at the skyline and asked would you prefer 23 storeys or 12? That choice, that input was never sought. I think the attendance here tonight suggests it should have been and what our citizen choices might have been had it been asked.

So what I am asking council is: Can you really agree to this Official Plan, The Planning Initiative which will define our city for decades to come, when the sub plans upon which that will be built are not yet in place and in which citizen input has been at best vague, perhaps not fully informed and maybe even skewed towards a desired outcome?

It has been suggested that there is great urgency to approve this plan now. Yet the timeline for the mobility hub area specific plan suggests we have until June.

As a concerned citizen and an engaged citizen I am also asking:

Can we slow this process down please? Can we get the building blocks of sub-plans in place before we commit to an almost irrevocable plan which will impact our citizens for decades to come?

Can we use that time to revisit the consultation and citizen input process to help ensure that whatever we choose to do is thoroughly thought through, and will work for all of our citizens and it can,..... if you truly reach out and listen to their voices.