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RE: 4721 Palladium Way

CC: Thomas Douglas, City of Burlington

Jan 28, 2018

Greetings,

I am writing to you with regards to the proposed development at 4721 Palladium way. I would first like to thank you and the City for hosting the neighbourhood meeting at the beginning of January. It is important to provide lots of opportunity for input from the community, especially as this is a new type of use for North Burlington. I was in attendance at the meeting and was the one who asked the question with regards to the capacity and commuting patterns for the proposed mosque for Friday prayers.

Before I go further I should introduce myself. My name is Kelvin Loveless, and I am a member of St. George's Anglican Church, the neighbouring property. I was the chair of our churches building committee, and was intimately involved in the full process including the re-zoning application. I would like to share with you some of what we learnt through our process and some suggestions for your consideration related to the development on the 4721 Palladium Way property.

In the meeting it was suggested that a number of people would walk to the Mosque once it was built. As noble an objective as this is, it has been our experience that very few people walk. In winter the snow banks on Palladium Way make it a challenge to cross from Mikalda Rd. to the North side of Palladium Way. In our experience as a church only one or two families walk and they live in the Mikalda Rd. area. That works out to 2%-3% of our attendance. When it comes to public transit none of our attendees come by public transit that I am aware of.

On the parking lot capacity I can share with you our experience. We installed considerably more parking than was required by the city. The target recommended by the church building consultant was that on average each parking space would support 2-3 people in the worship space. That has been consistent with our experience. We find that when we get near capacity we run out of parking. I anticipate that you will have a similar experience for your events held on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. As with our case families will tend to come together in one vehicle because they are coming directly from home.

One area that does concern me is the true parking requirements for Friday Prayer. I appreciate that a lot more parking has been provisioned than is currently required by the city, but the question remains, is that enough for that actual use case. Below I have come up with some potential scenarios to explore the parking impacts. Whether these are realistic or not will be for the Halton Islamic Association to judge. At the meeting a capacity of 500 to 600 was stated for Friday Prayers. If we plan for success we should provision parking for 500 on a weekly basis. For this exercise assume those coming directly from work are 1 per car, and those coming from home are 2-3 per car. As some households will be split between those coming directly from work and those coming from home the numbers will be less than for a weekend gathering. Let's assume 2.5 per car for these scenarios. Let's also assume that 4% or 20 people walk or come by transit. Below are three scenarios, named based on the from work percentage.

		Scenario 1 - 50%		Scenario 2 - 33%		Scenario 3 - 25%	
Transportation	Per vehicle	People	Parking	People	Parking	People	Parking
From work	1	250	250	167	167	150	150
Walk and Transit	0	20	0	20	0	20	0
From home	2.5	230	92	313	126	330	132
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>282</b>
<b>Accessible parking usage</b>		<b>50%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Usable Parking</b>			<b>256</b>		<b>259</b>		<b>261</b>
<b>Parking Deficit</b>			<b>86</b>		<b>34</b>		<b>21</b>

All of these scenarios that I came up show a shortage of parking. I am not sure if these represent likely scenarios of not for Friday Prayers at the Mosque. I would recommend that if you have not already done so, come up with a model of transportation methods for Friday Prayer when the mosque is near capacity. These should guide the amount of parking provided and make it clear if there will likely be an enough or not. In the best interest of the community it would be good that there is sufficient on-site parking for regular events and only occasionally is parking required in the community. It is our experience that the community is willing to put up with us parking on Mikalda and adjacent streets occasionally, but they don't love it.

I did also notice that the application is counting on time sharing the parking between the office building and the Mosque. For many places of worship that works well because the office uses is typically week day and the worship space weekends and holidays. For the proposed use there is a conflict on Friday afternoons. The proposal of adding restrictions in the lease forcing closure during Friday Prayers is an interesting one, but I am concerned that it may not happen in the long run. There is a lot of vacant office and medical space in the immediate vicinity so there may be pressure to remove this restriction if the office space is not leased. Also, if during the initial years the parking is not at capacity some office building tenants may push to increase their time to allow use on Friday afternoons losing that parking protection when attendance grows. If this time sharing arrangement is going to succeed I would recommend that the rezoning include in it a restriction that the office building be closed to the public on Friday afternoons in order to better meet parking requirements.

As you prepare for the formal public meeting, it would be helpful to describe briefly what types of thing happen at the Mosque. People fear what they do not understand. It would be helpful if you summarize what your main weekly gatherings are and when they are held. Also the other types of activates that go on and typically when they are held. A few words on each would be sufficient. This will help people understand the impact the related traffic may have on them, as well as bring some better understanding of what having a Mosque in their community means.

I hope that you take my comments in the tone in which they are intended. I am sharing with you my experiences and thoughts with the hope that your final design will be a success both for those who use the worship space and offices at 4721 Palladium Way as well as not being a burden on the Alton village community. If God wills that your project go ahead, I pray that we are good neighbours.

Sincerely,



Kelvin Loveless M.A.Sc., P.Eng.