

Statutory Public Meeting  
February 12, 2019

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5340 Lakeshore

**Thank you for this opportunity** to address the redevelopment of the Lakeside Plaza. I reside immediately opposite at 5340 Lakeshore Road. From one side of my unit I can see its retail and service establishments, and its flow of traffic and pedestrians. Quite frankly it is an eyesore and redevelopment is urgently needed.

I believe, however, that the proposed development has missed the mark.

We want and need an attractive and functional community centre, not the over-built design this flawed proposal provides.

Given the short time, I will focus on **FIVE DESIGN FLAWS**

- **First, 900 residential units create unreasonable density**

900 units will assure a handsome return on investment for the owner who quite probably has mentioned the tax revenue that this density would create. But 900 new units are not required to satisfy Burlington's intensification goals, and I'm sure that our present Council members are well aware that successful management of the city's budget cannot be dependent on the degradation of neighbourhood environments. At a conservative estimate, 900 units would bring 1400 new residents into a relatively small 3.84 hectare area bounded by three streets, each with two-lane capacity. Although some residents would depend primarily on public transport, most will have cars. This population density would overwhelm an already busy area, creating chaos and safety threats.

In conversations among neighbours, 400 has been mentioned as a number of units for discussion. We support development, but reject an urban jungle.

- **Second, there is too little public space for the pleasure and safety of the community.**

If the Lakeside Plaza is to enhance the neighbourhood, it must, as the Official Plan states, “promote a sense of community identity.” That means accommodating large numbers of seniors as well as younger families. The parking areas show no adequate walking routes wide enough for residents with mobility aids to safely and comfortably meet and pass, and there are too few spaces for benches to allow rest and invite socializing. There appear to be no areas where children could play safely close to home if some residential units were family oriented. Parks are not an adequate alternative. Skyway Park is heavily used for organized activity and no five-year-old could get to Lakeside Park without adult supervision. A reduction in the number of units and reconfigurations of available space will allow for more and different public areas.

- **Third, the height of towers facing Lakeshore with little setback is unacceptable.**

These structures (to use a famous phrase) build a wall. 14 and 18 story towers are proposed for the south side of the development with a narrow setback and minimal landscaping. Lakeshore Road has 2 car lanes and a turning lane between Kenwood and Hampton Heath; thus, no expanse of road alleviates the walled tunnel effect. The Conceptual Rendering in the developer’s submission is bizarrely misleading suggesting as it does visual expanses that simply would not exist. In addition, the height of the proposed towers is out of character with the multi-story buildings immediately opposite. 5340 is eight stories, as is 5314, and 5348 is 10. That means the two central towers would be 10 stories higher than two opposite buildings and more than double the average height of the three. No right-minded person could claim those towers were compatible with the neighbourhood.

- **Fourth, the tallest buildings should not front Lakeshore.**

A scaling upwards from *low-rise buildings* on Lakeshore to *mid-rise buildings* further north is more suitable. If this principle were part of the design, the Plaza would be much more inviting for the public to access businesses and services in the interior of the development and the fortress effect would be eliminated. If mid-rise were kept as the standard for interior buildings that are adjacent to the residential areas, structures could be designed with reasonable modification of the current proposal.

- **Fifth, a single story grocery store is a poor use of space.**

A quick Google search yields a *Globe and Mail* article with the headline “What sells condos? Grocery Stores.” The accompanying article goes on to say, “Increasingly, developers are trying to make grocery stores part of their mixed-use developments right from the beginning – rather than an afterthought,” and refers to a picture of a seven story development that incorporates Loblaws beneath residential and office space.

Let’s get with the times.

In addition to flaws, this proposal **MISSES SOME IMPORTANT TOPICS**

- **First, there is no detail provided for the planned mix of housing.**

What sizes will units be? Will they be rental, condominium or co-op? Will some be affordable or subsidized? There are many possibilities and the community deserves an opportunity to make recommendations before irrevocable decisions are made. If these aspects have not been planned, they should be.

- **Second, there is no mention of beneficial coordination with plans for Skyway Park**

We see this combined area as integral to a thriving neighbourhood, serving not only residential and commercial needs, but links to recreational and cultural destinations in the park. The time to consider those connections is now, while redevelopment is being planned.

The developer proposes an **OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

We have noted that the Official Plan designation for the Lakeside Plaza property is currently *Neighbourhood Commercial* and that the developer has asked for an amendment to re-designate as *Community Commercial*. The Official Plan (Part III, p.38) makes clear that such re-designation needs to be evaluated on a long list of criteria. Examples of the criteria are the following:

- The anticipated traffic will not result in through traffic in surrounding residential and business areas or detrimental impacts on local roads
- The site is located on at least two multi-purpose arterial or major arterial roads that can accommodate the anticipated traffic

Those criteria are certainly not satisfied by the proposal, and traffic is only one of many issues this re-designation raises. The proposed amendment to the Official Plan deserves to be questioned in detail and changed.

Also requested are **ZONE REGULATION AMENDMENTS**

The changes in the Zoning amendment are exactly those that permit the flawed design I have noted. As you have seen in the staff report, the developer proposes

- Building heights *raised* from 3 stories (12 m.) to 18 stories (60 m.).
- Amenity area requirements *reduced* from 20 sq.m, to 14 sq. m. per unit.
- Separation of parking areas, including walkways, *reduced* from 3 metres to 2 metres.

The proposal for redevelopment as submitted is a far cry from meeting requirements originally set out in the Official Plan and accompanying Zone Regulations. Such major deviance is not in the interests of the community.

The developer proposes to squeeze too many buildings into a small site, with too little open space, too few trees, too little imaginative architectural design, too little concern for traffic, and too slight regard for compatibility with the diverse residential community it is meant to serve.

Burlington can do very much better.

**Thank you for this opportunity to speak – you will later have the opportunity to decide. Based on all the issues, Council can insure that Lakeside Plaza achieves our shared goal of making Burlington the best it can be.**