

**WESTON  
CONSULTING**

planning + urban design

Planning Department  
City of Burlington  
426 Brant Street  
Burlington, ON L7R 2G2

January 15, 2020  
File 9412

**RE: 2016, 2018, 2022 Victoria Avenue & 559-615 Brant Street  
City of Burlington  
Response to Preferred Downtown Concept Plan**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for Victoria Brant Ltd. who are the owners of 2016, 2018, 2022 Victoria Avenue & 559-615 Brant Street (herein refer to as the Brant Plaza). This letter has been prepared to provide comments of the City's *Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown* initiative and their preferred concept plan that is being discussed at the Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility Committee meeting on January 16, 2020.

Subsequent to Weston's letter dated December 5, 2019 which provided comments on the City's two Downtown emerging concepts, this letter is provided to reiterate previous comments made on the subject site's development potential and to provide recommended revisions to the preferred concept. Weston and Victoria Brant Ltd. have reviewed SGL's January, 2020 report and the corresponding preferred concept. While we generally support the direction and vision illustrated for the Mid- Brant Precinct, it is our position that the subject property provides the City a unique opportunity that isn't found in the Downtown and can yield more than what is currently illustrated. Again, we appreciate that Staff accepted our comments to move forward with a revised version of previous Concept 1, however our primary concern with the current concept is the height limitation proposed at the rear of the site along Rambo Creek.

The preferred concept proposes a 45 degree angular plane from the rear of the site to regulate height and massing; this is something we agree with as it is a standard urban design practice to ensure built form compatibility. Oddly, the concept also proposes a 3m height max. along the Creek that does not appear to be fully justified. It is our opinion that this area of our property can accommodate more than 3 storeys within the angular plane; this was illustrated in the Weston's concept that was included with our December, 2019 submission. In reviewing SGL's report, the following rationale for this height maximum:

*"An increased open space buffer will be provided along Rambo creek with a walking trail along the west side of the Creek. John Street will be extended north as a local road abutting the open space. Together the open space and John Street will create a significant separation from the low -rise neighbourhood to the east."*

If the subject lands are developed as illustrated in Figure 1 below which is taken from SGL's report, a significant buffer would be created that would provide more than enough separation from the nearby residential community. Through our calculations, there would be 35.5m+ separation from future development on this site to the rear lot line of the residential homes. John Street currently has a right of way width of 20m and it is expected that this would continue to Victoria Street. In reviewing the City's Community Trails Strategy Report (2015), it has been identified that a 20m right of way can accommodate a primary use trail and cycle path within the ROW boulevard. Further, the existing Rambo Creek block is approximately 15.5m wide and includes large mature trees on both side of the Creek. This 35.5m separation is in addition to the required 9m rear yard setback for the adjacent detached homes in the R3.2 zone.

This 35.5m buffer is conceptually shown on Figure 2 below. Figure 2 builds on the City's concept by adding dimensions, the trees within the Creek block and the residential lot. This is to visually demonstrate that if additional massing was provided at rear of the subject site (illustrated by the red dashed line) there is more than adequate separation and screening to mitigate potential shadow and overlook/ privacy impacts.

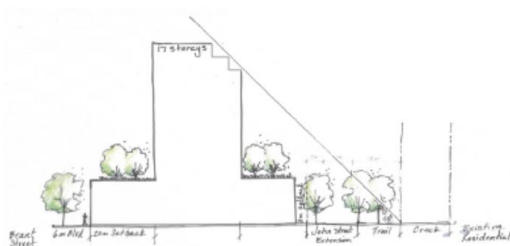


Figure 1- Preliminary Preferred Concept Vision- Mid Brant Precinct

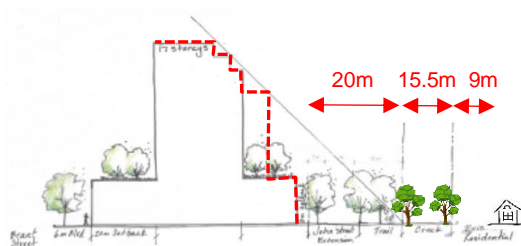


Figure 2- Proposed Mid Brant Precinct Vision with Dimensions

Further, the extension of John Street is an impact that only the Victoria Brant Ltd. lands will have to accommodate within the Mid- Brant Precinct. In our review of the SGL's report, the Victoria Brant Ltd. property is the only site in the Downtown that is subject to new roads. Through the dedication of this new road, the property owner will lose valuable development lands and also lose the potential for additional public/ private parking below grade. It is our opinion that adding massing, as shown in Fig. 2, is reasonable to offset these losses as long as the built form design meets good planning and urban design principles.

To flush out the City's concept for the Brant Plaza lands, Weston will be meeting with Planning staff in February to discuss our vision, and appropriate heights and massing. It is acknowledged that our meeting will be held after Council is expected to endorse the preferred concept on January 27, 2020. We request that Council defer endorsement of the plan until Weston has had an opportunity for meaningful discussions with Staff in order to present Council with an alternative vision for the Mid Brant Precinct, specifically the Brant Plaza lands. Alternatively, we request that the 3 storey restriction in the rear be removed to allow for development to occur within the angular plane. Victoria Brant Ltd. lands

Weston and Victoria Brant Ltd. look forward to meeting with the City to progress on-going discussion regarding the subject lands. Should you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

**Weston Consulting**

**Per:**



Martin Quarcoopome, BES, MCIP, RPP  
Associate

c. Clients  
Ward 2 Councillor Kearns