

Dear Mayor Guthrie and City Councillors,

My name is Joel Pennington and I am a volunteer and member of the Guelph Community writing in support of the zoning by-law amendment for permanent supportive housing located at 721 Woolwich Street.

Our community has a plan to end homelessness by 2023. Creating permanent supportive housing for those who need it most is an essential part of making this happen. Permanent supportive housing is a cost-effective solution that is proven to improve people's lives, increase health and wellbeing, and support a stronger community as a result. When everyone in our community has a safe and affordable place to call home our whole community benefits.


Over the last year it has been heart wrenching to watch homelessness spiral out of control - exacerbated by the pandemic. I volunteer with the SEED making meals for vulnerable members of our community and I volunteer on the distress line receiving calls from members of our community experiencing mental health challenges. What's clear to me is that a safe place to call home is the foundation needed to address the other contributing factors to someone being homeless.

It's time to break this vicious cycle. If we keep doing what we've always done, we'll keep getting what we've always got. The responsibility is now on you to demonstrate real leadership. If you're hesitant to approve this project because of pushback from members of the community, ask yourself this: what would this meeting look like if the plan was to rezone and build 4 detached 3-bedroom homes for a private developer to sell?

I believe that everyone should have a safe, stable and affordable place to call home, and access to supports to make that possible. I encourage City Council to approve this amendment and help put an end to homelessness in our community.

Thank you,

Joel Pennington



April 8, 2021

To the Mayor and City of Guelph Council:

Re: Parkview Motel Conversion project

It is my firm belief that providing permanent housing and services for homeless residents of the City is a positive move for our community. Having spoken to some of these residents on the street and in the Riverside Park it is clear to me that they would benefit greatly from a place to call home.

Providing healthcare and life skills where they live will help most to recover from hardships and gain employment. There are numerous, qualified, retired adults who are available to volunteer in this endeavour.

As a neighbour of the Parkview, I am not worried about the people who will move to the refurbished Parkview.

Sincerely,

Judith Carson
Past President of the GWSA

I am a neighbour. I live within a few minutes walk of the existing motel. As a Senior I object to anyone stating that Seniors are scared of this project and the negative effects it might bring to this area. Such a statement is not representative of what I see and hear.

Living beside the park I have seen many sad situations of homeless people using the park to try to get through one day after another....the heat of summer and the rain and snow...with no place to rest their heads. Imagine yourself living like this without hope for a better life.

There were times in my life when our family needed support. The help that we received gave us the opportunity to move forward. Providing shelter and support to those who need a helping hand benefits those individuals and society as a whole."

The existing zoning means that the motel will continue to be used much as it is today. But the zoning change, as requested, will add so much more to improve the lives of those less fortunate than you & I. **A zoning change would allow for greater benefits to both the clients and the neighbourhood.**

"Joan Coxhead

Dear Mayor Guthrie and City Councillors

My name is Barb Anderson. I am a Ward 3 resident who is passionate about ending homelessness in Guelph. I am writing in support of the zoning by-law amendment for permanent supportive housing located at 721 Woolwich Street.

Guelph has a plan to end homelessness by 2023. As our own Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Eliminating Poverty states: "Creating permanent supportive housing for those who need it most is an essential part of making this happen. Permanent supportive housing is a cost-effective solution that is proven to improve people's lives, increase health and wellbeing, and support a stronger community as a result. When everyone in our community has a safe and affordable place to call home our whole community benefits."

When I moved here from downtown Toronto almost 20 years ago I was naively surprised to learn that there was a population of unhoused in Guelph too. The numbers of homeless have only increased since then. Our numbers, however, are relatively small compared to other cities and we can and should have a goal to completely eliminate them. Grace Gardens is one small step in that direction.

I have worked for and volunteered with organizations that serve our homeless population. I know from studies and initiatives both in Canada and around the world that Housing First works. I believe that everyone should have a safe, stable and affordable place to call home, and access to supports to make that possible. I encourage City Council to approve this amendment and help put an end to homelessness in our community.

Sincerely,

Barb Anderson

This does not meet the public safety criteria for multi-use residential buildings, or the special needs housing designation that considers compatibility w/the neighbourhood when zoning amendments are required.

Just throwing up the OHRC definition to disallow compatibility and other considerations without stating who PSH tenants will be and if they come under this is disingenuous.

Many people who fall under those categories & are in social housing (incl. shelters) are evicted/banned for *behaviour*, not for disability (drug addiction) and/or socio-economic status under the OHRC. If PSH is created for people who are "chronically" homeless, and they are due to their behaviours, assessing for compatibility/safety is not discriminatory, because their OHRC category is not considered, but previous/current behaviour is.

If "Occupancy of accommodation" can be interpreted as only being housed, that doesn't preclude a Zoning location that **is** compatible with the Official Plan, i.e. Commercial/Industrial. [This is in fact where other PSH like Lucy's Place & Bridges are located.] It isn't used to cancel the project, just to relocate it to accommodate public health/safety concerns. If there is a more specific ruling, this should be noted.

Also, just being a member of a protected group doesn't give you the right to hurt/violate the rights of others. If there are competing rights issues, like security of person (Charter), or potentially negatively affected people also in a different protected OHRC class (age), then accommodation is required considering both sides.

Even if they do come under OHRC designation, and are housed at that location under PSH tenancy, evaluating and addressing public safety & compatibility issues for the purpose of mitigation is not discrimination. Things like location/design of amenity space, shape of building, granting smaller setbacks, etc. don't affect when and how the project is adopted, and helps address real neighbourhood safety concerns.

Using CPTED in this way *is* a use of the land and falls within planning mandate of addressing compatibility issues under the Official Plan/Mixed Use designation. [CPTED includes building design, setbacks, building angles, access design, etc. that can involve Zoning]

As I've noted earlier re: this file, TSH/PSH has had problems with violent, criminal and anti-social behaviour from here to Vancouver. The closest equivalent to this project-low-income units w/supportive elements under tenancy-is 90 Carden. That has been notorious for crime, anti-social behaviour, drug dealing & violence for years.

All other existing special needs and R.4A zoning are similar, but PSH, especially with a CTS, is substantially different and should have its own Zoning Category,

complete with public input and *all* stakeholder processes to develop specific zoning regulations.

In addition, City management have previously indicated that staff do not have the expertise, ability or staff to evaluate supportive housing projects. Have they consulted any experts or hired relevant staff? If not, why is a report being produced at this time?

I'd also like to address public comments by the Mayor and Cllr Gordon that ppl who oppose these projects are "NIMBYs who say no to everything" & "part of a NIMBY army". This is inflammatory and inaccurate. I personally & many others I know support an open, democratic process that includes a 4 pillar, secular drug strategy with stakeholder process for **all** relevant citizens, housing, meaningful public input and a long-term scientific rehab facility.

The anti-democratic process driven by religious and socialist activists on and off council has not served the city well, and those who oppose this and other initiatives developed under it are not against supportive housing projects generally.

Thank you for your consideration.

jj salmon