

Committee of Adjustment

From: Mary Peirson [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 1, 2021 8:59 AM
To: Committee of Adjustment
Subject: Attention Trista Di Lullo re 130 Oxford Street / Application # B17-21

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To the Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment Trista Di Lullo,

Re: Application # B17-21 CoA files A-42/21 and A-43/21
Subject address: 130 Oxford Street Guelph

My name: Mary Peirson
My address: [REDACTED] Oxford Street Guelph

Please accept these written comments re the above file numbers and forward to the Committee of Adjustment members.

My family and I live directly across the street from the subject property. I have reviewed the materials provided by the CoA carefully. In general I do not object to the redevelopment of the subject property but there are some very significant issues that should be carefully considered in any proposed redevelopment of this site.

With respect to the requested variances:

In File A-42/21 there is a request to provide no landscaped open space between the driveway and the right lot line for the proposed retained parcel.

Having recently obtained a building permit for infill housing downtown within our own extended family, I can attest to the fact that City Staff can be very strict about retaining a minimum 0.5m of landscape between a driveway and a neighbour's lot line especially in a narrow heritage lot. Given the length of the proposed driveway, retaining the green space will be of even greater importance.

Stormwater management plans are exacting and we have been told that this strip of green space is considered integral to a drainage plan. Oxford Street slopes steeply to the west towards GCVI and this property is near the bottom of the hill. 130 Oxford will need an effective stormwater management plan as will the new proposed property on the severed lot. This green strip may be integral to that plan.

City staff may be more amenable to a variance for a narrower driveway than give up the green strip along the lot line.

Our own lot and basement (directly across the street) flooded incessantly until we:

- installed weeping tiles around the foundation
- Installed a sump pump in the basement and
- regraded the yards away from the house

Additionally:

- We have a large gravel drive (not pavement) where we installed integral drainage pipes throughout
- There is a very large concrete retaining wall running the length of our west property line which helps to direct storm water from our lot away from the apartment building next door and towards storm sewers

I fear that the neighbours to the west of 130 Oxford (134 Oxford and 132 Oxford) may experience increased flooding in their own basements and on their properties with this proposed redevelopment plan especially since 134 and 132 have rubble stone foundations. The current house at 130 Oxford is to be lifted and placed on a new foundation which will no doubt be impervious to water. This, in addition to a long driveway on the west side will result in significantly more storm water reaching 132 and 134 Oxford.

The existing double lot, trees and green space at 130 Oxford has acted like a french drain for the street and surrounding properties thus facilitating drainage and mitigating flooding.

A city-approved stormwater management would be beneficial before any adjustments to the by-law are considered for this site.

In File A-43/21 there is a request to permit the parking area situated in the rear yard to be 0.6m from the right lot line.

It is probable that these two properties (Part 1 and Part 2) will have a fence running between them the length of the property line including past the garage in question. The 0.6m proposed will only allow minimum access to this area between the garage and fence. The by-law requirement of 1.0 meter between the garage and the fence allows for more open space for drainage and more light penetration through to the neighbour's yard on Paisley. Siting the proposed garage closer to the fence and property next door will see more roof water directed onto 130 Oxford's property.

Maintenance and easy access to a narrow space of 0.6m will be difficult, and we have seen garages go up in flames in our neighbourhood in the past. I believe there are good reasons to provide 1.0 metre around a garage near a property line not the least of which is fire prevention and fire fighting access especially in dense heritage neighbourhoods.

Re both Files: There is a great deal of hardscaping in both these proposed developments. The driveways run the entire length of both properties and end in garages. In Part 2 development most of the existing green space for drainage is being lost and a wider driveway with a large amount of parking is being proposed. Again, large areas of hardscaping impede stormwater drainage and will need to be offset by a significant plan for stormwater drainage elsewhere on these properties. Large amounts of hardscaping also increases heat retention in the urban environment whereas the current green space acts as a heat sink helping to provide environmental cooling.

Of note: There is a majestic mature conifer in the rear yard of 130 Oxford. Unfortunately it is not protected by the City of Guelph tree by-law because the property is less than 1/2 acre. This tree provides significant storm water mitigation for this site and prevents soil erosion (in addition to cooling and shade). Shame to lose it! (It stands where the proposed garage for Part 2 is located). A report from TD economics for the City of Toronto states that *66% of an urban tree's value comes from its role in storm water management*. Healthy mature trees provide the most benefit of all.

Oxford Street from Glasgow to Yorkshire is a uniquely hilly topography. If you live on this street you become intimately acquainted with the flow of surge water during storms. This new development at 130 Oxford will be clearing trees, increasing hardscaping, adding three additional buildings (1 additional house and 2 garages) and the developer is

currently seeking variances to eliminate a green border and allow narrower lots than the by-law allows. Storm water-wise - this does not bode well. A stormwater management plan will be essential.

We who reside downtown dislike losing green space in our neighbourhoods especially in our climate changing environment but we're happy to gain new neighbours and increase density so more folks can live downtown. These are competing priorities, so I ask the developer and the Committee of Adjustment (as well as City Planners) to carefully consider all factors that could impact our Oxford street community before considering approval of the proposed variances.

Many thanks for your time and consideration,

Mary Peirson

■ Oxford Street, Guelph