

This letter is addressing:

NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION & PUBLIC MEETING TO AMEND THE ZONING BY-LAW

Subject Lands: 151 Bristol Street

File No: OZS21-011

Public Meeting: September 13, 2021 at 6:30pm

Proposal: The applicant is proposing to rezone the subject property to allow the development of a townhouse block with five units.

To Whom It May Concern,

As the newest and youngest home owners on [REDACTED] we feel a tremendous responsibility to speak up about this **application to amend the zoning by-law for 151 Bristol Street**. This proposal raises a number of concerns for the residents of this neighborhood and we hope that our plea does not go unnoticed. Emslie Street is home to a number of houses built in the mid to late 1800s. We recently had the pleasure of visiting the Guelph Museum and found a bird's eye view of Guelph in 1872, which shows that there were 8 homes facing onto Emslie Street during that time, including ours and a few other long-standing residents on the street. The residents of this neighborhood are not only heart-broken over the idea of the historical significance of this area being corrupted, but are frightened by the consequences pertaining to this zoning by-law amendment.

Zoning concerns:

The existing lots on Emslie Street, including those which extend to Bristol Street, have always remained an R1.B zoning, with the exception of House 44, and should continue to remain as such. Proposing a mid-block rezoning to accommodate 5 townhomes is not compatible with this area. To our knowledge, there has never been an instance in the downtown Guelph area where a mid-block of townhomes has been approved on a street with all detached homes that would set precedent for this proposal. Therefore, the proposal should be amended to meet the current zoning for the existing lot or at the very most, have the developer re-apply for a zoning by-law amendment for a semi-detached home given that House 44 is also currently zoned R2.B. Also, as the current home faces

onto Bristol Street, the proposal should also be amended to match the current direction of the existing home on the property. In previous years, the City of Guelph has prohibited new development forward facing onto Emslie Street, so what has changed? Why is the proposal for this change in frontage being entertained? If it wasn't permissible then, why is it permissible now?

There are a number of concerns that have been raised within the neighborhood if rezoning is allowed to happen. One of the major concerns with this proposal is population density. Emslie Street will not be able to tolerate this proposed substantial increase in density. With on-street parking recently being taken away, there have already been issues with Emslie Street residents finding parking on side streets. Trying to find parking has become a daily and frustrating experience for most of us. Many of the guests from the neighboring apartment buildings also park on these side streets which already takes away parking space from residents living on Emslie Street who do not have designated parking. With this street and many of the homes being established in the mid 1800s, there is a lack of sufficient designated on-site parking to meet today's needs and the current residents should not be faulted for that. The residents of Emslie Street previously relied on on-street parking for themselves and for their guests and with it recently being taken away, it is unfair to ask us to now compete further for parking. If you introduce another 5 homes facing onto Emslie Street, where is everyone going to park in the event that every one of those dwellings has more than two vehicles and guests each night? Even if it was decided to lift parking restrictions on Emslie Street to allow this mid-block of townhomes to be built, there still wouldn't be sufficient parking to accommodate another 5 families on this street. One or two detached homes, with a property severance, facing onto Bristol Street is a proposal which meets the current zoning for the property, would solve this density parking issue and is favoured by the entire neighborhood. An amendment to R2.B could also be argued since the property for House 44 is zoned the same and extends from Emslie to Bristol Street.

Another significant concern with this proposal is drainage. There is currently a storm drain which sits dead centre in front of the property that extends to Emslie Street. This drain receives a substantial amount of water during heavy rainfall which would need to be moved. This would not be an issue if the frontage remained as it stands now. The relocation of drainage on this street could have detrimental effects in the future for the current home owners on Emslie Street, not to mention the huge disturbance this would cause for the residents who live on this already very narrow street. The plan to build essentially

a 3-storey home with frontage on Emslie Street will leave the neighboring properties on Bristol Street, who will continue to remain at a lower elevation than the proposed development, very vulnerable to flooding. It makes me so sad because I know that this developer has ulterior motives with this design given his history and previous communication with the neighbors.

If any proposal is approved for frontage on Emslie Street, the majority of the road will end up being occupied with equipment for extended periods of time during development. If you hand out a street occupancy permit to this developer for this proposed development, there is nothing stopping them from taking up the entire street with their machinery through every stage of building. We watched closely as new detached homes were being built on Mary Street across the river and took notice of how often the street was closed off due to their construction, which is much wider than ours. What happens to the neighboring elderly residents who have caregivers coming and going or the transport vehicles that need to pick up on a daily basis directly across the road from this property? Does it make sense to allow this proposed change in frontage of the property, which would undoubtedly cause disruption to the residents on this street, many of whom are elderly and are not capable of speaking on this proposal, or does it make more sense to have the developer maintain the current frontage for the existing property? Rhetorically the latter. We are understanding of the fact that any individual is within their right to make a proposal to improve upon a property that they have possession of, but we also recognize that boundaries are set for a reason with the intention of regulating new development which is suitable for the area. There is a reason why the zoning for this street has never been amended from R1.B and I think that in itself speaks volumes. These issues would be eliminated if the proposal was revised for one or two detached homes, or at the very most a semi-detached home, facing onto Bristol Street given that the street is wider, and services could be accommodated better, it would disrupt fewer neighbors and that new development on Emslie Street has previously been prohibited.

Historical Preservation Concerns:

We realize that historical concerns are not necessarily zoning concerns, but I think that they are important to mention given that Guelph has always prided themselves on preserving the city's history. We have called Guelph our home for the last 10 years and have lived in many different neighbourhoods during our

years here. Old City Guelph is unlike any we have lived before and we feel so incredibly lucky to be able to say we bought our first home on Emslie Street. Guelph has always been known for its preservation and careful restoration of the history that neighborhoods like this one hold. One of the most intriguing aspects about this neighborhood is that visible evidence of the Emslie and Morrison limestone quarry, which stretched along Bristol Street between Yorkshire Street and Edinburgh Road, still exists today, the majority of which is visible along the periphery of the 151 Bristol Street property. With this intended proposal of a mid-block of townhomes facing onto Emslie Street, all of that history will essentially be covered up, never to be enjoyed again by the neighborhood. If the proposal was amended for one or two detached homes facing onto Bristol Street, that history could be preserved and act as a beautiful backdrop to a new development. The long-standing residents of this neighborhood care very deeply about preserving the history here and hopefully so will everyone else involved in this decision.

So many of us in the neighborhood have become overly emotional about this application and hopefully you can understand why and come to a compromise so that both the developer and the residents on this street can walk away happy. We would love to be notified of the Council decision on this application.

Sincerely,

Bianca Iannitelli & Kris Lentsch