

Thursday, January 23, 2020

To: City Clerk, City of Guelph
clerks@guelph.ca:

cc: Mr. Michael Witmer, Planning and City Services
City of Guelph, michael.witmer@guelph.ca

Re: Request for Rezoning at 68 to 76 Wyndham Street South:

My wife and I are making this submission of our comments on the proposed rezoning at 68 to 76 Wyndham Street South. We plan to attend the Council meeting at 6:30 pm on Monday, January 27. We live at 60 Wyndham Street South, directly across the street from 68 to 76 Wyndham and the recently approved 14 storey condo apartment tower at 71 Wyndham Street South.

We strongly oppose the requested Zoning Changes and waivers for the reasons outlined below:

1. Apartment Building or Co-Op Housing?

Guelph Today reported on January 21, that the owner of 68-76 Wyndham is proposing a 4 storey co-living apartment building with 30 bedrooms. The city rezoning notification we received in the mail specified the zoning change request was from single family residential to a 9 unit 4 storey apartment building and a duplex. There was no indication from the city that this was anything but a request for a normal apartment building. But this is not what's being proposed? If we hadn't seen the story in Guelph Today, we would not have any idea that what is being proposed is a co-living apartment building which resembles a rooming house much closer than it does a regular apartment building.

The proposal is for a minimum of 30 residents and potentially as many as 60 residents to live in this building. This does not resemble a normal apartment building which is likely to have between 9 to 18 residents. Neither are the requirements for resident and visitor parking likely to be the same for 30 to 60 people as they are for 9 to 18. It is highly likely that the resident and visitor parking requirements specified for this apartment building will be far greater than the requirement for an ordinary apartment building on which the city's parking requirements are based.

The builder is also asking for a number of waivers because the proposed building does not meet the parking and some other of the requirements of the proposed zoning. As you will read further on we are very concerned about the adequacy of parking not just for this building, but for all the buildings along Wyndham south and north of Wellington.

We object to the rezoning change request because it does not respect the residential single family and low rise character of the East side of Wyndham. We respect the high density apartment zoning on the West side of Wyndham Street and the zoning for high tower apartment buildings in the whole area south of the railroad tracks, but we also believe this neighbourhood and the residents deserve to have the single family, low density zoning of their neighbourhood respected and preserved and not encroached on.

2. Spot Rezoning:

Re-zoning on a lot by lot basis defeats the very purpose of having Zoning By-Laws, it means that residents are denied the protection and due process which Zoning By-Laws are meant to provide and defeats the integrated planning that went into the approval of the Zoning by-laws. Will City Council approve one by one, other builder spot rezoning requests for single family to duplexes, doubles, apartment buildings and rooming houses in every single family zoned neighbourhood in every Ward?

3. East Side of Wyndham Street South:

On the east side of Wyndham South are building lots 68-76, for which this rezoning request is currently under consideration. There is also a single family house next door at 82 Wyndham and at 66 York, a couple of lots away. There are 7 single family lots across the street on York Street backing on the apartment building lot at 83 Wyndham. Will City Council approve future requests to rezone the single family lots to permit apartment buildings? What criteria will City Council use to approve or reject spot zoning changes in this and other areas of the city to permit single family houses to be demolished to permit apartment buildings?

4. Highway 7, Wyndham Street South - Safety:

Wyndham Street South is actually Highway 7 which runs from just west of Ottawa to Sarnia. In its way through Guelph, Highway 7 runs along York Road which turns into Wyndham Street South for a short distance and then makes a left turn onto Wellington Street on its way to Kitchener. There is a steady stream of daytime car, truck and tractor-trailer traffic in both directions on Wyndham South.

Most of the visitors to residences on the east and west sides of Wyndham Street South, who don't have on-site visitor parking and have to park on the street will have to cross Highway 7 twice on their way from and to their parked cars. This means nurses, caretakers, workers, service vehicles, the elderly and the physically impaired, families with their kids and grandkids, etc., will have to cross this busy street. This makes it very important that adequate on-site

visitor parking is provided by each apartment building to minimize pedestrian crossings across a busy highway.

71 Wyndham Street South:

The Stantec planning document for 71 Wyndham St. dated March 19, 2018 indicates that visitor parking will be provided on the street. It's clear from the drawings and pictures of the building that no provision has been made for on-site visitor parking on the building site, at street level. After enquiries to the City Planning Department I was told that the builder will have to provide the minimum required 7 visitor parking spaces or apply for a minor variance. If the variance is not granted, the builder will have to provide visitor parking in the building's indoor garage. If the variance is granted, this is likely to set a precedent as other builders request similar concessions?

The city granted the builder a rezoning request which included a 40% increase in building height from 10 to 14 floors. At the same time the builder has so far not made specific plans to provide for the minimum visitor parking requirement although the shovels are already in the ground. If the city waives the building's visitor parking requirement it will greatly increase the competition for on street parking.

6. 60 Wyndham Street South:

I didn't see any discussion of the adequacy of visitor and resident on-street parking in the planning documents, yet this is by far the single most important factor for residents and the people who live in these buildings.

My wife and I live at 60 Wyndham Street South, a 10 storey, 120 unit apartment building. We have a total of 10 regular and handicapped on-site visitor parking spaces. All 10 visitor parking spaces are used and there are times when the 10 spaces are not sufficient. The extra vehicles then have to find parking spaces on Wyndham and Howitt streets.

Here is the problem. The parking spaces on Wyndham Street South and Howitt street are already mostly occupied during the day. I started my research on this submission on January 7. At 11:00 am that day, all of the 10 visitor parking spots at our apartment building at 60 Wyndham were occupied and there were 2 vehicles illegally parked for a total of 12 vehicles. 15 of 17 parking spots on the east and west sides of Wyndham St. South were also taken, and 8 of 9 spots on Howitt were filled. The off-site parking at the medical offices at 81 Wyndham was filled to capacity on this day with about 15 to 20 vehicles. The number of cars here varies with doctor visiting hours.

There is no parking allowed on Wellington and no parking allowed on Wyndham Street north of Wellington. A walk down Surrey, Fountain and Farquhar streets reveals that on-street parking is already at capacity. Unless adequate off-street visitor parking is provided for in the new high rise apartment buildings which are planned over the coming years, there will be a catastrophic shortage of visitor parking which will affect everyone in the area, north and south of Wellington, including apartment residents, businesses, employees and others.

Implications of Visitor Parking Shortage:

When Wyndham and Howitt parking is at capacity, how far will health care workers, housekeepers, building maintenance workers and visitors have to drive to find a vacant parking spot? Where will there be vacant on street parking spaces to be had and how long will it take to find one and walk from their cars to the building and back again?

My point in belabouring the parking problem is to highlight that adequate, off-street builder provided visitor parking is of utmost importance not just to apartment residents but to everyone.

6. Visitor Parking Requirements on Wyndham south and north of Westminster:

Our apartment building is adequately served with the number of parking spaces and drop-off and pick-up area. But it is not unusual to need more than 10 parking spots. If our apartment building with 120 apartments needs 10 parking spots and at times more, it seems reasonable that 71 Wyndham with 140 units will need 12 visitor parking places and sometimes more.

800 or 900 apartments are planned for Wyndham street within 120 metres of 68-76 Wyndham, the subject of this re-zoning application? Will there be adequate off-street visitor parking at these buildings? There are large apartment towers planned for the north side of Wellington south of the railroad tracks. I don't know how many apartment units this will add but my guess is 1000 or more. These buildings too need to provide visitor parkings spaces.

Residents who will live in these buildings in future years do not have a voice today but they will have to contend with these parking problems day in and day out if proper care is not taken today to make adequate provision for visitor parking. The term "Visitor" is not very descriptive to describe the people who need access to visitor parking, they include: Health Care Workers, Caretakers, Tradesmen, Building Maintenance Workers, Landscapers, Family and Friends, Kids and Grandkids, and other service providers and businesses.

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Steps can be taken to minimize the pedestrian traffic crossing the highway portion of Wyndham to the corner of Wellington by ensuring that the apartment buildings on Wyndham have adequate off-street visitor parking.

It is understood that the zoning approved for 71 Wyndham Street requires 7 on-site visitor parking spaces. Given our experience at 60 Wyndham this is in practice not enough, 12 spaces is what's needed. The apartment buildings that are being built will hopefully stand for 100 years. There will be no chance to make changes after the buildings are built. As these apartment buildings go up over the coming years is the only chance we will have to get the parking right.

Summary:

Intensification is fine, we know we need it, but it has to do more than just maximize a builder's profit, it also needs to respect the needs of the apartment residents and to keep the neighbourhoods attractive, safe and viable for residents and businesses.

We object to the requested zoning changes and waivers for the reasons outlined in this memo. City planners develop zoning by-laws in consultation with residents, then submit the final drafts to City Council for approval. These zoning by-laws receive careful consideration before approval and are designed to meet and balance the needs of the local residents and businesses, the neighbourhood and the broader community. Changing zoning one lot at a time and waiving important requirements circumvents and defeats the planning process and is inherently unfair.

We need to have high density apartment tower developments but we also need to preserve the character of our low rise, low density residential neighbourhoods. Wyndham is zoned high rise on the West side of the street and zoned single family, low density residential on the East side of the street. We need to preserve and protect the character of this residential community by respecting and not changing the existing zoning.

I have included an appendix to illustrate how many visitor parking spaces will be needed. Providing adequate off-street parking for visitors is an essential part of the parking solution. The alternative is endless parking problems for everyone - residents, visitors, service providers, businesses and others.

Regards

Fred and Penny Schafer

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Appendix:

Summary of Apartment Units within a 120 metre radius of 68-76 Wyndham Street:

	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>On-Site Visitor Parking Provided</u>
60 Wyndham South	120 apartment units	10 visitor spaces
68 Wyndham South duplex		n/a
76 Wyndham South	30 units in 9 apartments	14 parking spaces required, waiver for 2 spaces requested
82 Wyndham South	single family house	n/a
84 Wyndham South	double	n/a
86 Wyndham South	double	n/a

Future Apartment Building Developments:

67 Wyndham South	70 units?	?
71 Wyndham South	140 apartment units	0 - 7 visitor spaces (TBD)
81 Wyndham South	60 units?	?
83 Wyndham South	40 units?	?
Total	460 units	

Corner of Wyndham and Wellington:

East Corner (fire station) 25 storeys	250 - 300 units?	visitor spaces ?
West Corner (empty lot) 18 storeys	180 - 210 units?	visitor spaces ?
Total	430 - 510 units?	

**TOTAL NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITHIN 120 METRES of
68 - 76 Wyndham Street South = 890 to 970 units**

How many Visitor Parking Spaces are actually Needed?

Extrapolating 10 visitor parking spaces for 120 units which is what we have and regularly use at 60 Wyndham, 70 to 80 visitor parkings spaces will be needed for the apartment buildings on Wyndham south to the corner at Wellington.

What I'm trying to highlight is that future apartment buildings within 120 metres of 68-76 Wyndham as well as future apartment buildings in the whole area south of the railroad tracks will affect everyone in the area, including those people living on the South side of Wyndham. Parking problems are not localized, they are contagious. In addressing the parking issue the whole neighbourhood needs to be taken into account, and making spot zoning changes can make the problems worse.

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