



July 11, 2022

City of Guelph
1 Carden Street
Guelph, ON
N1H 3A1
ATTN: Mayor Guthrie and Members of Council

**Re: Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw and Proposed Official Plan Update
130 Macdonell Street – Objection to Proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment &
Request to Maintain Flexible Zoning Permissions**

Dear Mayor Guthrie and Council,

Skyline has been actively engaging City staff since 2017 pertaining to the Downtown Zoning By-Law (ZC1612) as amended, and the subsequent Comprehensive Zoning By-law review, providing comment and objecting to the inclusion of 130 Macdonell Street, amongst other properties within the Downtown District. Please accept this letter as a follow up to our letter as previously submitted on November 28, 2019, which has yet to receive a response.

130 Macdonell Street was exempt through Council decision in 2017, explicitly amending the proposed by-law so as it would not apply to the property municipally known as 130 Macdonell Street, legally described as Pt. Lots 8, 9, 10, 225 & 226, designated as Pt.13, Reference Plan 61R2356, City of Guelph. This ensured that the current zoning designation of Central Business District CBD.1, permitting dwelling units and commercial uses in the same building, was maintained for the property. The viability and flexibility for future tenancies was preserved through this decision.

Through the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review and proposed amendments, the City is again proposing an amendment to the zoning for this property to have it designated to a Site-Specific Downtown 3 (D3) Zone (D.3-2). Residential Uses are not noted to be permitted in the D.3 Zone per the proposed Zoning By-Law. The existing permissions of the CBD.1 Zone, inclusive of the ability to have residential is essential.

With The Co-operators soon to be no longer operating out of 130 Macdonell Street, finding new office tenants for this building could take time. A vacant building in the downtown is not a good scenario for the downtown or the municipality. Providing zoning flexibility preserves the potential to attract larger institutional or educational tenants where a component of housing is needed as a permitted use. Ensuring the flexibility rather than have the largest office building downtown sit vacant is fundamental in ensuring the viability of this property and the downtown district.

It is acknowledged that staff want to preserve major office uses. We share this goal and will be working closely with economic development to attract new business in the downtown. Our request is not to omit



office as a permitted use, but to incorporate flexibility in the zoning to allow for residential to remain as a permitted use. The business context of how offices are used is changing and will continue to change with live work, staff housing, and office hotels as examples. Continuing the existing zoning or assigning a mixed-use zone which permits both office and residential dwellings ensures resiliency and adaptability for the next chapter of business in the downtown.

The City has been able to take a practical approach in the Proposed Downtown Zoning By-law by adding new zones to facilitate the Wilson Street Parking Garage and the Guelph Police Services Headquarters to ensure that the Downtown Zoning By-law does not interfere with these City projects proceeding. Our request is that the City maintain the intent of the previous council decision, applying a practical and flexible approach to the zoning of 130 Macdonell Street.

In summary, Skyline is requesting to either preserve the current zoning for 130 Macdonell or incorporate flexibility in the proposed zoning, to maintain a range of both residential and office uses as permitted uses in the same building.

Should you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Kind Regards,

Greg Jones
President, SkyDev
T. 519.826.0439 x173



Platinum
member