

Written Deputation 86 & 89 Willow Road Project

Guelph City Mayor,
Council/Representative,
Community members,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Elisha Ogbonna, a resident of Onward Willow Road neighbourhood. I would like to thank our esteemed city representative, staff and everyone present for this opportunity to delegate for the second time on this very important issue through writing.

I am here to address some issues as it relates to Planning staff recommendation for Zoning By-law Amendment which has been claimed to be consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019). The proposed Zoning By-law amendment as we know it does not meet the standard objectives and policies of the Official Plan and the specialized zoning regulations.

Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the Growth Plan identify how population growth to the horizon year of 2041 will be accommodated within the 'Delineated Built-up Areas' of the City. The subject lands are located within the Delineated Built-up Area. These sections contain policies related to intensification, the creation of complete communities and efficient use of infrastructure and public service facilities. Specific to the creation of complete communities is the goal of improving social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes and the provision of a diverse range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and affordable housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes [2.2.1.4].

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment conforms to the policies of these sections by failing to meet some of the specifics to the creation of complete communities is the goal of improving social equity and overall quality of life. But this recommendation violates the goal of improving the social equality since it takes away common amenity and green space from the Willow neighbourhood and apartments where the majority of immigrant/refugees population resides. Immigrant/Refugees population in this neighbourhood has suffered massively in Covid-19 pandemic compared to other groups, due to the fact that many live in over-crowded confined living quarters with multiple relatives, creating a situation where social distancing is impossible, and many work in the major warehouses in Guelph where there has been heavy transmission. Taking away common amenity and green space from them will only make things worse for them as they already have few places to spread out. It is unfair for planning staff to agree that one larger common amenity area could work well for the residents of all three sites.

In terms of compatibility, This building being zoned for bachelor units is discriminatory against families in the neighbourhood who need it. Also, since the same supports will not be available for the neighbours who need them which is not inclusive. In these regards it is also not compatible with the location. Human Rights Code (Section 2(1) which states that "Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to the occupancy of accommodation without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status,

disability or the receipt of public assistance.” Planners and municipalities have the responsibility to ensure their recommendations and decisions adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2020, provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Policy 1.1.1 of the PPS encourages creating healthy, livable and safe communities, including promoting efficient development patterns and accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types [1.1.1a),b)]. There must be a fair variety of housing options available across the city of Guelph for vulnerable sectors, and so far it seems that all the housing is being provided to only one vulnerable sector. Considering that Willow Road is the most densely populated with largest number of immigrants and refugees, is the perfect location to offer housing to this vulnerable sector, which would help the housing plans of the city to be more inclusive, and supportive of our newcomer population. It could be a stepping stone towards eliminating racialization in Guelph, especially when we know that thousands more are coming soon, and will need housing.

Since this staff planning and zoning recommendation lack the fairness and have encroached on neighbouring housing right to equal amenities and have violated human right code of right to equal treatment for occupant of the building through presumptuous permanency of their health condition through all the reductions spelt out in the report. It is important for the council to uphold the provincial policy and human right code by rejecting this recommendation.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Elisha Ogbonna