

## Committee of Adjustment

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**From:** Heather Snider [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 3, 2023 8:59 AM  
**To:** Committee of Adjustment  
**Subject:** Committee of Adjustment Application A-51/23 and A-52/23

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To: Ms. Di Lullo, Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment, City of Guelph  
Re: Committee of Adjustment Application A-51/23 and A-52/23 (239 Kathleen St, Guelph)

As owners and residents of the dwelling directly across from 239 Kathleen St, we would like to put forward some questions and concerns re: the proposal to sever the lots at 239 Kathleen St, which includes requests to seek relief from Zoning By-law (1995)-14864 in relation to minimum lot frontage and minimum lot area. We have studied in detail the documents provided to us by the City of Guelph (Committee of Adjustment Notice of Public Hearing Application Details), including the sketch. Our questions and concerns are as follows:

### **Additional vehicles/parking, and related safety concerns and snow clearing concerns**

No details were included in the application details re: the types of dwellings being proposed. However, the owners verbally notified us that they are severing the lot, without indicating whether they would be building single family homes or multi-unit dwellings, and mentioned the possibility of these becoming a rental business venture. As such, the number of vehicles needing parking space (plus visitors with vehicles) will no doubt increase with the addition of another dwelling, and could potentially increase substantially if the units are multi-dwelling residences.

Our block of Kathleen St is a very busy thoroughfare for children, local residents, Guelph community members and pets. This includes:

- Children walking to school (Victory PS and GCVI)
- School buses (a school bus picks up children in front of 238 Kathleen)
- Families, pets and community members travelling to and from Exhibition Park, including children going to summer day camps and sports activities
- Cyclists travelling the north-south route between London Rd and Speedvale (often to connect with the bike route on Kathleen St north of Speedvale)
- Vehicles using it as a route to travel between London Rd and Speedvale Ave.

Our block has a narrow road, with no sidewalk on the east side (i.e., the side 239 Kathleen is on) and a very narrow sidewalk with no boulevard on the west side. It is already congested with vehicles as it is used as a thoroughfare as a north-south corridor between Speedvale and London Rd. There is street parking on the east side of Kathleen, directly to the north of 239 Kathleen and in front and to the south of 239 Kathleen going down towards Division. Because cars park on the east side, and because there is no boulevard on the west side of Kathleen, cars drive along a narrow stretch of road, very close to the west sidewalk, and often have to tuck off to the side to allow other cars with the right of way to pass. Visibility is often reduced, and this is compounded by the steep hill that begins at the top of Kathleen St going down St. Andrews - cars need to pull out quite far onto Kathleen St as they come up St. Andrews to see if they are able to turn safely onto Kathleen St.

Frankly, our block of Kathleen St can be dangerous for children, pedestrians, cyclists and pets due to the restricted and narrow roadway, and reduced visibility at the corner of Kathleen and St. Andrews. This is particularly notable during the winter months, with the addition of snow and ice which restricts parking and vehicle navigation even further. As well, cars often do not abide by speed limits, and as recently as last summer there was a serious accident at the corner of

Kathleen and Division, which resulted in neighbours requesting a full review of the signage and safety along this section of road. Adding multiple vehicles that will need parking or will need to navigate turning in and out of driveways at 239 Kathleen will only compound this issue, will reduce the limited street parking that already exists for residents of our block, and will increase the risk to children, families and community members who walk and cycle along Kathleen at all hours of the day.

In the winter, snow removal poses a significant challenge on our block. The plows need to navigate around parked cars and often push the snow up onto the sidewalk along the west side of Kathleen. Then the sidewalk plows push the snow back onto the road. Residents do their best to support snow removal and clear safe walkways for this busy thoroughfare, but people regularly need to walk on the road to avoid icy stretches created by the issues that arise from the road snow plow/sidewalk snow plow "tension." Adding additional vehicles that require parking (or visitors to the multiple dwellings being proposed) would only compound this issue.

Additional questions:

- Is parking being considered in the building plans for the two new residences? In particular, if multiple vehicles are connected with each residence (especially if multi-unit residences are being built), where will they park?
- Has the City considered the safety concerns related to adding an additional driveway (if that is being proposed) along the narrow lot - this will at a minimum double the number of cars needing to turn in and out of this property, and as noted there is reduced visibility at this lot due to the street parking and the steep hill at the corner of St. Andrews and Kathleen.

### **Privacy and building height**

The sketch does not indicate any details about the type of building or dwelling being proposed by the new owners of 239 Kathleen St, apart from referring to a max building height of 3 storeys. The lot at 239 Kathleen also has substantial grading in the backyard - a very steep decline which could potentially allow for another "storey" or walkout, which may not be considered as a storey under zoning bylaws.

- We are concerned that if three-storey buildings are built, the height of the buildings will compromise our privacy in both our house and back yard, and that we will lose access to natural sunlight in our house and backyard.
- We have a substantial kitchen garden in our backyard that supplies us with fresh and preservable food and we are concerned that our ability to grow that food would be compromised due to restricting access to sunlight.
- The neighbours at the lots on either side of 239 Kathleen (54 St. Andrews and 237 Kathleen) would be navigating the same concerns - privacy and lack of access to sunlight.

### **Maintaining character of Exhibition Park neighbourhood**

Exhibition Park is one of the oldest and most historical neighbourhoods in the City of Guelph, and as such it's important to consider the overall design of any new buildings being proposed. The character and charm of our neighbourhood are what makes it unique and a desirable place to live and visit. The proposed lot sizes and frontages are significantly smaller than the current regulations under Zoning By-law (1995)-14864, and given the need to abide by minimum front and side yard regulations, the proposed dwellings will likely be very narrow (less than 10 sq m wide), particularly when compared to all other houses on our street.

- Will the proposed dwellings be designed with the character of our neighbourhood in mind?
- Will the height and design align with the other houses on the street?
- If the severed lots are approved, could this negatively impact the property values on our street?

### **Potential for rental properties**

As mentioned above, no details were included in the application details re: the types of dwellings being proposed, including whether these will be rental properties, and whether these are single family homes or multi-unit dwellings. With the potential for two three-storey buildings and the potential for a fourth, basement walkout level this could mean up to 8 rental units.

- Would these be long-term or short-term rentals?
- If short-term rentals, what type of supervision would there be re: abiding by noise by-laws and similar considerations needed in a family-oriented residential neighbourhood?
- How many people can be accommodated in each unit? Will large groups be able to rent a single unit?
- What type of parking will be required for these proposed rental units?

In summary, without having a detailed understanding of the design of the proposed dwellings (including not knowing the proposed height or whether they are single-family homes, multi-unit dwellings, or rental units), and when considering the significant safety concerns that arise due to the need for additional vehicles and parking, we are not able to support this application at this time. Thank you for considering our questions and concerns.

Richard Martin and Heather Snider  
Owners and residents, [REDACTED] Kathleen St