

Dear Committee of Adjustment~

Thanks for considering our application to expand Polestar Hearth Bakery just a tiny, wee bit!

## **Background on our Business and its Place in the Guelph Community:**

### **Cottage Industry Years**

I started this as a home-based bread baking business when our kids were little, to contribute to our family income while being a stay-at-home parent.

Within a few months demand for good bread grew bigger than our kitchen could handle. We moved up the street to a new home with an attached garage, built a brick oven there, and spent nine years delivering fresh bread directly to homes across the city.

### **Laundromat Conversion**

In 2016 the laundromat at 535 Woolwich came up for rent. Angelo and Gina, the owners of this building, came to me and asked me to take the spot. Together we imagined changing the semi-derelict laundromat with needles in the washroom to a vital community hub for our neighbourhood.

We funded the making of this bakery without any bank loans, only small \$2000-\$5000 loans from individuals in the community who wanted to be part of growing a creative business model in their city.

And the Committee of Adjustment saw fit to approve a zoning variance to allow this to happen. This was my first experience working with City Hall, and I'll admit it was a little intimidating. But I quickly learned that everyone here is helpful beyond my expectation, and clearly believes in making a better, more liveable city. Many thanks for that!

### **Seven Years of Success**

Fast forward 7 years and our little bakery has become a busy little beehive employing 10 great employees, and feeding hundreds of families of all walks of life every week. When real estate agents started advertising how close their

properties were to Polestar, we knew we'd really done our part to pick up this little corner of the city and help it fly!

## **Need for a new Variance:**

### **Barbershop Becomes Available**

When our neighbour Barberino found a larger venue for his business we snapped up the opportunity to expand the bakery into the whole building.

It's a tiny addition to our footprint but it will allow a few key things to happen. Firstly, we can have all the parking spaces dedicated to our business. That will help a lot! And we can carve out a little place for a staff lunchroom, so no-one has to eat huddled over a chest freezer jammed between the laundry hamper and the water softener any more. That will also help a lot!

### **Coffeeshop Vision**

We want to use the remainder of the space to make a beautiful little coffee shop to compliment the bakery. The space available for that would be approximately 200 square feet, smaller than most living rooms. We envision a simple and straightforward use of space, with a beautiful espresso machine front and centre, and four seats at a window bar.

In the same spirit as the bakery, this would be mainly a grab-and-go establishment, not designed for lingering. This will keep our busy parking lot in easy rotation without creating larger parking issues in the neighbourhood. We see a lot of bicycle and stroller traffic here, too, and we expect that to expand.

We'll operate this part of the business semi-independently, with a pass-through doorway between the two customer areas, but two separate exterior doors and two cash registers. Customers can move easily between the two parts of the shop, or they can visit either side independently.

### **Zoning Compliance**

We've been advised that this usage fits easily in the new 2023 Bylaw, where our building will be in the Convenience Commercial zone. To make it work with the 1995 Bylaw, we are asking for a Variance to allow Bakery Usage of the barbershop space. If this usage is approved, we can then use the available space as an "Accessory Usage" to house the coffee shop, as it will be under 25% of the total area of our building.

Together with my staff and family, I thank you for considering this opportunity to make this little corner of our city just that one bit better caffeinated!

Kind Regards,

Jesse Merrill