

**Input regarding: Gentle Density: Four Dwelling Units on a Lot.  
Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment – 2024-140 File No.: OZS24-002**

**Submitted by:  
Loreen and Peter McCaskell**

[REDACTED]

We are supportive of the overall goal of the proposal, that being to increase Guelph’s housing supply. We understand both the importance and the urgency of doing this. Further, we look forward to the resulting opportunities to meet new neighbors, make new friends and welcome more folks into our Malvern/Ridgeway neighborhood.

We are especially pleased to note references to “**gently enable**” that appear in various places of the report and related documents.

e.g.

“The proposed changes **gently enable** incremental change while unlocking the number of available lots in Guelph to support increased housing supply”.

From: Pg. 4 of the report.

Relating to that most laudable goal of **gently enabling** densification in existing neighborhoods we wish to share two concerns:

**Concern 1:** Potential “rapid shock” consequences to existing neighborhoods with the removal of any reference to a limit on the number of bedrooms.

e.g.

“Delete reference to a maximum number of bedrooms permitted per unit”.

From: Pg. 5 of the report.

Removing the limit on the number of bedrooms may have the unintended consequence of creating what are essentially “rooming houses” – houses with a large number of unrelated individuals living under one roof. For example, in the case of what the developer is planning for their project on Ridgeway Avenue, the current property would be immediately changed from a home occupied by a family, to four buildings housing a total of **40 bedrooms**, with the intention being that these bedrooms be rented out to individuals i.e. **creating 40 rooming-house rooms**. This sudden and jarring introduction of what are essentially “rooming houses” in the midst of established neighborhoods hardly seems to support the goal of “**gently enabling** densification”.

**Recommendation:** modify the proposed by-law to remove opportunities for developers to maximize profit at the expense of existing neighborhoods by their creating “rooming houses” i.e. 40+ unrelated individuals living on one property in the midst of a residential neighborhood.

**Concern 2:** Safety exposures for pedestrians, implicit in the residents’ of these intensification projects reliance on on-street parking to accommodate more vehicles than allowed for on-site. e.g.

“All of the comments related to parking suggested that the parking requirements for this housing type should be reduced (for example, two parking stalls instead of four parking stalls.) ... **Suggestions to alleviate parking challenges included allowing on-street parking.**

From: Pg. 13 of the report: *Exploring Opportunities for 4+ Units on Residential Lots in Guelph: What We Hear Report.*

Allowing on-street parking to accommodate increased densification may well be the appropriate solution in some neighborhoods (in particular, those neighborhoods with sidewalks for pedestrians). However, assuming such on-street parking will be allowed **by default** for all such “**gently enabling densification**” projects creates very significant dangers for pedestrians in those areas where the road / sidewalk layout **does not support** on-street parking in the volumes these increased-density developments will require.

Once again Ridgeway Avenue provides a good example of the safety dangers. Like Malvern Crescent, Ridgeway Avenue is narrower-than-city-standard width, has no sidewalks, and is bounded on both sides of the road by ditches. Consequently, resident and visitor pedestrians alike (e.g. children, families, seniors, etc.) have to walk on the road itself, dodging parked cars and oncoming traffic. This dramatic increase in exposure for pedestrians by allowing on-street parking to support intensification hardly seems consistent with the goal of “gently enabling densification”.

**Recommendation:** modify the proposed by-law to ensure such densification projects do not permit parking requirements, exceeding what is accommodated onsite, to be met by default by relying on on-street parking. **In cases such as Ridgeway Avenue for example, the road structure and lack of sidewalks do not allow accommodating this reliance in a safe manner for pedestrians.**

The above is respectfully submitted by:

Loreen McCaskell

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Peter McCaskell

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]