

Dear council members, mayor and city planning staff.

I wish to formally object to the proposal by Skyline to build a 14 storey multi-purpose building at 26-40 Carden St and 27-39 Macdonell St.

My reasons are the following:

- More than 10 years ago I was part of a staff/city consultation group which spent thousands of hours developing Downtown Secondary plan.

That plan directed the highest buildings to the lowest geographical areas along Wellington and beside the river and set a cap of 6 storeys in the core to preserve the heritage character of the City.

Our present zoning laws take that plan into consideration. What is the point of having zoning laws if they can be overridden by private interests?

- The Places to Grow plan of the Doug Ford's government is not sustainable. Firstly, because we will run out of water and no longer be able to meet our needs from the present source of ground water. This will result in solutions which are both unhealthy and costly
- Every decision we make must take into consideration the impact on the environment. Right now, both the Provincial government and the Federal Government are only paying lip service to the environment while continuing to wreak havoc on the natural environment. The results: worsening air quality, the warming up of the planet, the loss of species etc. This is negatively affecting our physical, emotional and mental health. This brings me to the next point:
- The Ontario Places to Grow" is also creating greater poverty. This city has seen a huge increase in highrise condominiums which are not solving the present housing crisis. It is simply pushing those with less income to leave the city or pushing them into homelessness.
- Every decision we make as city planners and council members must take into consideration whether it is improving the environment or continuing to destroy it. There is no middle ground. There can be no compromise. We cannot compromise with the very source of life. Covering the whole Earth with asphalt is NOT the answer.
- There are buildings downtown and elsewhere that could be retrofitted for housing. Tell Skyline to go back to their plan to add an additional 4 stories to the proposed building site instead of requesting to a change in zoning. That makes more sense. Encourage them to purchase the former TD bank building on the corner of Wyndam and Cork and retrofit it for housing.
- A 14 storey highrise on Carden street will be the last nail in the coffin for downtown Guelph. Carden is the only really nice street that exists. We need to do everything to create a welcoming environment. Building this highrise will change the face of the whole of downtown and will have negative repercussions for years to come. Who are they kidding with their one-time exception to breaking the building code? It will create a precedent and signal others to follow suit.

- A 14 storey high-rise on Carden will, quite frankly look ridiculous!

In conclusion, I do not want to live in the Ontario envisioned by Doug Ford. The “Places to Grow” mandate is anything but that...it is a recipe for increased and accelerated destruction of the planet. You, as council members and city planners, have a responsibility to life, the life of the planet, i.e., the animals, plants, humans, and all living creatures living on Earth. It is time we stood up and told the truth, stood up and said no to the bullies in government and the short-sighted decisions that benefit a few over the detriment of many. It takes one person to stand up and tell the truth. Others will recognize the truth; it will give them the courage to stand up as well. This can happen now. And it can start with you.

Thanks for reading my comments to the end.

Joan Agosta