

December 5, 2024

To: The Committee of Adjustment for the City of Guelph

I write this letter as a 17-year resident and homeowner in the Old University neighborhood here in Guelph.

I oppose the proposed infill development that includes a plan to demolish the existing residences at 302 and 306 Edinburgh Rd. S., which are located north of College Ave. Similar projects have recently gained approval in the Old University neighborhood, including on Forest St. – just west of Talbot St. – and plans to demolish dwellings at 94 University Ave. W. as well as 67 and 71 College Ave. W. Moreover, adjacent to the corner of University Ave. W. and College Ave. W., the University of Guelph has announced plans to build a residence that could accommodate up to 1,500 first-year undergraduate students. The rapid rate of approved proposals by the City of Guelph in the Old University neighborhood prompts the reemergence of concerns about a “student village” and has further implications in areas such as parking. With the proximity of the Old University neighborhood to the University of Guelph campus, congested on-street parking is already a concern among existing residents. With no parking available on Edinburgh Rd. and College Ave., there will be notable parking congestion moving further within the Old University neighborhood. The increase in density will also have notable implications for traffic congestion on Gordon St. and College Ave., which is already being observed.

While there is high demand for new housing that is more affordable within Guelph, these proposals serve to primarily benefit a small number of corporate land developers rather than the typical resident. The result is not subsidized housing; rather, rental housing where a limited number will be profiting. And, if these proposals did serve to drive down the value of housing, the City of Guelph would have a liability for existing homeowners and should be lowering property taxes.

Corporate land developers have the time and resources to buy properties, which are often not visibly for sale, and develop proposals that the typical citizen does not. It’s starting to feel like a game of Monopoly among corporate land developers in the Old University neighborhood.

The proposal and approval process for the City of Guelph appears unfair. For example, as a resident of the Old University neighborhood, I learned about this Edinburgh Rd. infill project through *GuelphToday* ([Edinburgh Road infill project would turn two units into eight or 12 - Guelph News](#)) on Monday, December 2, 2024, merely three days before the deadline for written submissions. This is clearly an insufficient amount of time to prepare coordinated opposition to the proposal. Further, I have concerns that corporate land developers and the City of Guelph are developing cozy relationships. Soon after gaining approval to demolish dwellings at 94 University Ave. W. as well as 67 and 71 College Ave. W., for example, it was observed that these dwellings were being used for training purposes by the City of Guelph police force.

Old University represents one of the nicer neighborhoods in Guelph. I urge the City of Guelph to reconsider the rapid approval of infill projects that will change the character of the Old University neighborhood.

Thanks for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area, obscuring the name and any handwritten notes.

Tim Dewhirst