

**Statutory Public Meeting Report 1242-1260 Gordon Street and 9 Valley Road
Proposed Draft Plan of Subdivision, Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments
File: OZS20-004 and 23T-20001 Ward 6 - 2020-124**

General Correspondence

As a nine-year resident of Valley Road in Guelph (and one born and raised in the Royal City), I would like to comment on applications brought forth that will necessitate official plan and zoning by-law amendments for 1242-1260 Gordon Street and 9 Valley Road.

Guelph, to me has always had its own unique small-town characteristics, even through a steady population growth over many years. Along with my neighbours, I appreciate and enjoy the many nature trails, the parks and other green space, the quiet and peacefulness of small residential streets where neighbours look out for each other.

In the last few years, I have seen many older homes demolished to make way for higher density residences, in the way of multilevel condos and apartments. I understand that this is the means to accommodate the higher demand. But the road traffic on Gordon Street has been horrendous since this started. I dread going out (as a driver or pedestrian) on Gordon Street during peak hours. And, I've seen several accidents occurring at the intersection of Gordon Street and Edinburgh Road S.

This Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment should not be passed by our City of Guelph Council for many reasons. The 5 storey buildings in proximity to our community already appear massive in comparison to our single storey homes, and that limit of 5 storeys should not be surpassed in this area. In a neighbourhood of mainly single storey family homes, the addition of two 12 storey buildings will definitely not blend in well, and our views of trees and sky will be replaced by views of concrete towers. We want to keep that small-town atmosphere in our community.

Traffic and noise are major issues. We already have a "bottle-neck" slowing of traffic during peak times on Gordon Street in this area. I realize that a traffic impact study has been completed, but the reality, in my experience trying to get home, travelling south on Gordon St. and being caught in crawling traffic just south of the Kortright intersection, leads me to believe that this will be much more chaotic with hundreds more trying to turn left to their new 12 storey residence. Congestion and noise will be intolerable with the addition of 377 families and their vehicles. Street parking has already been an issue in this area, with cars from people visiting or living in the 5-storey building across Gordon St., parked on Valley Rd. or both sides of Landsdown. This will become a safety issue when emergency vehicles, service vehicles and school buses cannot navigate through the area due to its much increased, high density population.

I have very serious concerns, that are shared with all my neighbours, about what is happening to the city we love. Guelph is losing its identity behind an accelerating invasion of concrete towers. We don't want to be another community ruined by rampant development. A site-specific policy allowing a maximum density of 271 units per hectare (almost double the 150 per hectare permitted for "High Density Residential"!) should not be agreed to. Two 12-storey residential buildings will most adversely change our neighbourhood. Please do not approve Tricar's request to amend zoning to "Specialized High Density Apartment". We need to value the safety, aesthetics, architecture, urban design and neighbourliness unique to our beautiful city. Let's maintain Guelph's desirable qualities of distinction.

Thank you.

Maria Lammers

PS: Please notify me (to this email address) of the Council decision when one is made.

Dear City of Guelph & City Councillors,

Good evening.

I hope you are all safe and well.

Two weeks ago, I received a letter from the City regarding the proposed development at 1242-1260 Gordon Street and Valley Road.

I am all for growth and development in Guelph, but this seems beyond intense for this location?

I came to Guelph a little over 20 year ago and fell in love with the City's charm and well planned growth.

People continue to flock to Guelph for this very reason.

Building a 12 story high density apartment building in this location is not going to preserve the unique appeal of Guelph.

This is a residential area and very close to some of the nicest and most expensive real estate in Guelph.

Misplaced developments like these will destroy the beauty and appeal of Guelph, property values and play havoc with traffic! While I realize a traffic study was conducted, adding a 12 story building in this area "in reality" will not be good for the children or nearby residents

I see no positive value to this building as currently planned expect to the developers and apartment building owner!

This will be nothing more than a towering eye sore which will destroy the sightlines for many area residents in Ward 5 and Ward 6!

If the developers want to develop something with the look and feel of Mississauga or Brampton, then they should build the project there!

I am 100% for planned growth in Guelph. Its good for all of us!

However, this is inappropriate for this location and I pray the City realized the impact and damage it can do!

Thank you for reading.

Regards,

Walter Urban

President

Urban Dynamics Inc.

Hi,

Guelph is a special, unique city , so please keep it like that. Don't let built high density residential.

Thank you,

Derya Salter

I would like to offer the following comments and observations on the file. Please include me in future correspondence and notifications of public meetings.

I wish to point out that I am writing as an individual home owner. However, I am also the President of the adjacent vacant land condominium on Valley Road.

Recognizing that the City is under some pressure to accommodate growth, I insist that the growth is managed from within and not due to external forces from Queens Park or commercial developers. What this means in principle is that we should design the growth to acknowledge future needs while respecting current lifestyles, urban aesthetics, and character which promotes and represents Guelph.

The "canyonization" of Gordon Street is running antithetical to the character of Guelph, which subjectively is acknowledged by current residents and people moving

here. The proposed development in the file is symptomatic of this unappealing direction, in that tall and ever taller buildings don't bring life to the streets. There is much missing when housing is simply stacked up for density's sake. Neither is it effective in that many of the individual units in high-rises are occupied by students for only part of the year. Annualized calculations of occupancy and relative housing density would be revealing. To be clear, I am completely in support of student housing, off-campus.

Following the development thoughts over the last years I have seen renditions of mid-rise buildings at the addresses in the file, none of which were higher than six stories. Now the zoning suggests even greater heights. I would like to express that this project should not exceed six stories because that has been what was shared with us prior to this point (meetings at Salvation Army, October 2019) and for example, the recently developed taller buildings on Gordon (from Kortright to Clare) are all that height or less (from Solstice at Edinburgh...5 stories to Carousel at 1300 and Heritage Drive...4 stories). Even in illustrations in the City's own documents this is the case. I reference page 20 of Gordon Street Directions Document of March 09, 2018. The visual aesthetics of a sky scraper above single-family dwellings is not appealing. As I've heard said, it's like the developer is giving the proverbial finger to Guelph on our skyline. Since height seems to be the order of the day, concentrate it in the Maltby corridor since that has already been accomplished. I don't want to see an awkward mistake made because it's pushed by the developer and pulled by the provincial authorities.

I am concerned about traffic safety as well with the additional vehicle traffic that will accompany any development. Gordon Street is fast flowing. Its intersection with Edinburgh is already the scene of numerous vehicular accidents, despite not making the "Top Three" for Guelph. The future occupants of these buildings are likely driving to the 401 as commuters or north to the University and downtown. More high-speed traffic is not what should be intended.

A little bit of extra parkland, as suggested, is hardly a decent compromise either.

So this needs to be scaled back, re-thought, and re-considered relative to the aesthetics, quality of life, safety, and character of our City.

Thank you.

Bruce Wilson

we are writing to you in regards to the notification we received recently.....

We assume the application from the developer has not met with any approvals from the City as yet, so we are not shocked to see the size of the buildings proposed...Fair to assume the developer is trying to maximize the return on their

investment and we understand that the previous speculators that owned this property will be compensated based on the size of the buildings erected....

Fair to say we strongly object to this proposal.....

1..the size of these buildings will have a significant negative impact on the enjoyment and use of our residence along with all other residents of Valley Rd, Emeny Lane and Lansdowne Dr....

2..we are very concerned about the impact to traffic in and around usnot only from this proposed development but the other condo developments being proposed for Gordon St.....Gordon St is already a very busy road...Adding this additional volume will make it more dangerous for those using it on a regular basis.....

3...we already experience parking problems along Lansdowne and the bottom of Valley Road once the students return.....This will only magnify the problem.....

4...the newly proposed Lansdowne /Edinburgh corner will be a nightmare at peak traffic times.....With almost 400 units proposedHas a traffic study been done yet?....and if so, where can we view a copy??

We attended, the public meeting at the Salvation Army in the fall of 2018.....at that meeting the City indicated their plans for the Gordon St corridor included "a pedestrian friendly street framed with **MID RISED buildings**, continuous rows of healthy trees,"....

Those mid rise buildings discussed at that meeting were 4-6 stories.....

I would seem that if the City was being **honest and genuine** at that public meeting that this proposal would not be accepted as is by the City

Tony and Tiziana Campagnolo

As homeowners living at ■ Landsdown Drive, we would like to support the comments made by Valerie Gilmor and Bruce Wilson regarding the proposed development at 1242-1260 Gordon.

We are out of town on September 14 and unable to participate in the meeting.

We believe that the City should not approve an amendment to permit 12 storey buildings and an increased density of 271 units.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Anne (Jantje) and George Harauz

To underline the issues for us:

1. Parking is inadequate. Look at the recent development at 28 Landsdown. Even with 2 car garages, the development's visitor parking spaces are always occupied. 28A Landsdown currently has 4 cars in the driveway.
2. Traffic is already heavy. Gordon has become a nightmare. Large apartment buildings will lead to more accidents.
3. This was a quiet neighbourhood for the 27 years we have lived here. Increasingly, it is becoming a student ghetto. Speculators buy cheaply and rent. This doesn't make for a neighbourhood of concerned citizens.
4. Environmental concerns : we are still on well water. There has been shifting of the ground and changes to the ecosystem. More trees and hedges have been destroyed/compromised by the recent building than originally planned. We can assume that will also take place at 1242 - 1260 Gordon.

Anne H.

I would like to offer the following comments and observations on the file. Please include me in future correspondence and notifications of public meetings.

I am writing as an individual homeowner living on Valley Road.

The proposed development in the file is symptomatic of an unappealing, in that tall and ever taller buildings don't bring life to the streets. There is much missing when housing is simply stacked up for density's sake. Neither is it effective in that many of the individual units in high-rises are occupied by students for only part of the year.

I would like to express that this project should not exceed six stories because that has been what was shared with us prior to this point(meetings at Salvation Army Oct 2019).

Even in illustrations in the City's own documents the recently developed buildings on Gordon are all the height or less. I reference page 20 of Gordon Street Directions Document of March 09, 2018.

I am concerned about traffic safety as well with additional vehicle traffic. Currently insufficient parking at 1236 Gordon (Solstice) has pushed cars out to Valley Road and Landsdown.

It is a safety concern now on one of the steepest slopes. As a current homeowner when having guests the only option for guests to park is on Landsdown. Bottom line, visitor parking for this development is short of the Guelph Parking By-Law. A little bit of extra parkland, as suggested, is hardly a decent compromise either.

So this needs to be scaled back, re-thought and re-considered relative to aesthetics, quality of life, safety, and character of our city.

Thank you.

Michele McDonald

A concerned friend sent me the details of the proposal for redevelopment in the Gordon St South area. I have been a resident of Ward 6 since returning here over 30 years ago. I currently reside on Megan Place and am reminded of what we, the Rolling Hills residents have gone through to stop the City planners from attempting to destroy property they had no right to. We have spent a lot of money on legal fees in order to keep our neighbourhood intact.

The redevelopment of the entire south end has grown at an incredible rate. I understand the need for urban intensification but our by-laws and zoning laws need to be adhered to. Gordon Street is already an extremely unsafe artery which I avoid using at all costs.

As city planners and members of City Council and staff it is your duty to adhere to the Official Plans for the city. Giving into developers only ensures that they will return time and time again with "deals" for the city which are detrimental to the citizens of Guelph. We need to stop building for Students and "out-of-towners" who find Guelph more affordable. The Hanlon "parking lot" is just one example of the City giving in or cutting corners. The citizens of Guelph wanted an Expressway!

Please follow the Official Plan!

Judy Pavlis

Official Plan and Zoning Amendments

As a homeowner living at [REDACTED] Valley Road, I believe the City should not approve an amendment to the Official Plan to permit a site specific policy to allow, either a maximum building height of 12 storeys or an increased density of 271 units per hectare. The Official Plan designation of high density as 6-10 storeys with 100-150 units per hectare should be followed.

Official Plan Amendment

The proposed development of **two 12 storey towers is an anomaly** amid the single family homes and medium density apartment buildings immediately adjacent the site, even though the developer claims their development is compatible in scale, height, setbacks, appearance and site. This is blatantly not so. **Two 12**

storey towers will dwarf all buildings in the vicinity, be they 5 storey, 2 story or 1 storey.

Furthermore the **topography** of the site **means that buildings will appear even taller** than they are, **totally inappropriate aesthetically, out of character with existing neighbourhoods and their quality of life and incompatible with the city's Urban Design Concept Plan** which states, *"Gordon Street is envisioned to become a vibrant pedestrian friendly street framed by mid-rise buildings, continuous rows of healthy trees, and active at grade uses that engage the street and the sidewalk"*.

Two 5 storey buildings would be much more compatible to existing forms and still **enable the city to meet its goal of increased density and well scaled intensification.**

Attached are drawings, to scale, and prepared by Jack Humphrey, Conestoga APFM Student, which provide a picture of a 12 storey tower in context.

The city's density requirement for this rezoned site is 100-150 units per hectare. However in asking for 271 units per hectare, the **developer is actually seeking a minimum increase of 81% up to 171% in density,** beyond the by-law. Maintaining the City's current standards should be the order of the day and will ensure compatible building forms in this area.

Zoning By-law Amendments

The developer wants to **decrease all setbacks** (front yard, exterior side yard, rear yard), **minimize distances between buildings, reduce common amenity areas by almost 50%** in order to maximize the buildings' footprints. In addition **angular planes** from the buildings to the park and street **are 60% to 92% greater** than required by law, creating a canyon like effect at street level, unsympathetic to a pedestrian environment. How can life be best lived and enjoyed by residents of any new building or by neighbours when physical distances and vibrant and attractive areas are minimized?

Parking is an **ongoing concern.** **Neighbourhood streets,** Landsdown Drive and Valley Road, **already act as parking lots** for the townhouses and apartment block on the west side of Gordon. **This will only get worse** with this development as **visitor parking is 40 spots shy** of what is required and **some residents of the towers** simply **won't have parking spaces on site.** How will this be addressed?

Perhaps the city might **institute parking permits** for those using streets as parking lots because insufficient on-site parking is provided. Interestingly, over **400 parking spaces** have been allotted to **bicycles.** Where is the research that indicates, vehicle use will decrease in this time of electric cars and bicycle use will increase as a means to get to work, go to dinner or grocery shop in Canada's climate?

Traffic will increase even more. The proposed road will spill many of the 377 vehicles onto Gordon Street, either at the new intersection or where Landsdown meets Gordon at the north end. The intersection at **Gordon and Edinburgh is already deficient in managing both traffic volume and flow.** The developer estimates 92 outbound trips will occur in peak AM hours, only 24% of the buildings' capacity. This is hard to believe.

There is **no left-turn lane** at the new intersection, an obvious omission, which means extra long wait times to simply enter the intersection, never mind turning right or left or going straight ahead. **Critical corner lot sight lines are not in compliance** and will result in reduced visibility.

Additionally, Landsdown Drive North will see a dramatic increase in traffic volume and safety issues will arise for residents. The Urban Design Concept Plan clearly states, "**design Landsdown Road as a two-way residential street, not as a service lane**", and yet a service lane is exactly what is being planned.

Environment 707 trees now. 101 trees left standing. 606 trees destroyed, removing habitat for a variety of birds, creating erosion issues and potential for invasive plant species on neighbouring properties, all for ease of construction. Can we not do better?

Intensification is one driver of development in Guelph's south-end. **But it should not be the most significant one.** I also believe **people**, their desires and the communities they create **are an essential and critical driver** to determining the future housing options, residential environments, small businesses and green space. How we shape our physical world directly affects how we see, experience and know our neighbourhoods, our cities and ourselves.

The challenge here is to refine this proposed development into a well scaled intensification plan that creates meaningful, human scale and quality residential and inviting public spaces, that contribute to people's health, happiness and wellbeing. By doing this, we can preserve, enhance and protect the high quality of life which, historically, has been one of Guelph's greatest strengths.