

August 12, 2020

To: Mayor Cam Guthrie

From: Tamara Baggio

RE: Application/File number OZS20-004 Property located at 1242, 1260 Gordon St & 9 Valley Rd

It is my understanding that the properties at 9 Valley Rd, 1242 Gordon St, and 1260 Gordon St are owned by the developer Tricar based in London Ontario. From posted signage and review of the City of Guelph website, there is an application from the developer Tricar seeking to *permit a residential subdivision containing a residential block with 377 apartment units in two, 12 story buildings, a municipal park block and an open space block* located on the above stated lands. I wish to voice my very strong objections to the unnecessary Zoning and By-Law Amendment set forth in this application. I have outlined below in length as to the reasons why a development of this magnitude is highly objectionable for this neighborhood.

As a concerned resident, whose property is adjacent to the land in review, I have been following the literature and attending the public meetings for this development. I have some concerns with the proposal for safety reasons and the preservation of our Natural Green Space.

Parking & Traffic-Safety Concerns

Parking within our neighborhood is currently a large issue, which will only be increased with buildings of this magnitude. Since the construction of the large unit located at 1219 Gordon St, Landsdown Dr has been inundated with the overflow of parking. See Appendix 1. This is a photograph of parking located along Landsdown Dr on a weekday in October 2019. As you will notice, there are multiple cars parked on both sides of the street. This presents a major safety concern, as Emergency Vehicles are unable to maneuver easily through this traffic, therefore delaying response time putting peoples' safety in jeopardy. On at least one occasion emergency vehicles have had to reverse and use the other entrance located at Valley Rd.

As part of my research and as it will apply to the current development, I reviewed the information presented in The Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Discussion paper, as well as the Parking Standards Discussion Paper. I was alarmed to find that this paper recommends reducing the parking minimums and capping maximums in intensification corridors ie. Gordon Street. Under the current bylaw an apartment building has to provide 1.5 parking spaces/unit for the first 20 units and 1.25 for every unit over 20. This includes visitor parking. Under the proposed recommendations from the Parking Discussion Paper, this falls to 1 parking space/unit and 0.1/unit for visitors. If a 100 unit building was built on Gordon this would mean a shortfall of 20 spaces under the new proposed bylaw. The application indicates that there will be over 500 parking spaces in the new building. Although this sounds like a lot of parking. It doesn't account for any visitor parking.

The parking on Landsdown Dr. will be an even larger issue as it will now have to sustain the overflow/spill over of these current buildings plus the overflow it is experiencing now. With this parking issue plus the fact that there will only be 2 entrances for the emergency vehicles to the current subdivisions plans, I feel you are putting the residents safety at risk. Landsdown drive cannot withstand the traffic that 377 units are going to produce.

Another major concern, with regards to parking and traffic is the safety of the children in our neighborhood and the school bus. Wellington Catholic Transportation services has stated on numerous occasions that due to the parking on Landsdown Dr, the school bus is unable to maneuver the turn at Valley Road and the bend on Landsdown. The result is the bus stop for our neighborhood children is located at Gordon and Landsdown which is a major traffic artery in our City. This bus stop is used for 3 different sets of students and therefore stops traffic 6 times a day on this major artery during rush hour traffic. Due to the stops location, you can sit and count the numbers of times a day that an individual vehicle fails to stop for the bus lights. The addition of 377 units in this neighborhood is going to add lots of extra traffic and parking issues to both Gordon street and Landsdown. Making it even more unsafe for the school bus to stop and pick up children.

Natural Green Space

As you will notice in the Subdivision plans, this area is surrounded by a lush, natural green space. In preparation for the development, a Tree study was completed by Natural Resource Solutions Inc. (NRSI) in October 2019 for Tricar Developments Inc. This report indicates that in the location of the proposed subdivision there are approx. 707 trees on the subject property and adjacent properties. Of which 606 will be removed in order to house the foot print of these 12 story buildings. I am truly disheartened to learn that 85% of this natural green space will be destroyed.

The City Of Guelph has an Urban Forest Management Plan which states:

“All of these trees form part of the City’s green infrastructure, which sustains the community by filtering air pollution, providing shade, contributing to flood control, reducing local energy use, sequestering carbon, and bringing nature to the City. These services are well documented, and trees are known to save municipalities millions of dollars in air pollution control and storm water management. Natural tree cover also provides a wide range of human health benefits that have yet to be fully valued. Contact with nature, and treed areas, has been shown to lower blood pressure, speed up recovery from surgery, enhance mental development and creativity, and reduce aggressive behavior. The shade, cooling and air quality benefits provided by trees also helps reduce the risks of skin cancer, heat stroke and respiratory ailments.”

The community in the South End of Guelph is fortunate enough to have this beautiful natural green space to help offset the intensification and high density developments that are happening. Why destroy it with even bigger buildings. If the building were smaller in size (i.e. 4-6) stories, similar to what has already been developed it would require less removal of this natural green space. The City and the developer needs to be conscientious stewards of this natural resource in our South End so that the trees can continue to provide many benefits.

Also of note, in the Fall of 2019, Tricar hired a company to start with the tree removal process without City approval. At this time By-Law and The City were notified by a resident and the tree removal was halted. I would like to know if the appropriate trees were removed, as it appeared that when they were clear cutting they were removing just about everything. Please see Appendix 2 for pictures of the affect area.

I strongly disagree with the proposed plan for 12 story buildings. I understand that the City has the vision for high density areas. What I am very concerned about is the need for the 12 story buildings alongside single story homes. Reading in the tribune on July 9 2020, I was surprised to see an article tilted, "Proposed Building is Too Tall, Dense for Downtown". This article explains that a building of 25 stories in the downtown area, "is incompatible with the character of the surrounding lower density neighborhood." I found it rather interesting that this point of view would be taken, as there are 2-3 buildings in the downtown area which are already 20 stories high and yet it is felt by some that a building with 25 stories will be too much. The same argument can be said when there is a proposal to develop a 12-story building adjacent to a residential area with single story family homes. You will note that the other buildings in our area are 6 stories at the maximum. I am in agreement that the proposal for the 25-story downtown development is too large, likewise is a 12 story building in a residential neighborhood.

I pride myself in the distinctiveness that the City of Guelph has to offer with its quaintness and small City feel. I would appreciate it if you would reject the proposal and keep us informed of the progress.

Sincerely,

Tamara
Baggio
Guelph, On

Appendix 1



Landsdown Drive on October 30, 2019. Note-Due to parking, emergency vehicles are unable to maneuver through the cars.

Appendix 2A



This area was a dense green natural space prior to the clear cutting of the area.



Trees which were removed by TriCar in preparation for the application to develop the land.