

**Statutory Public Meeting Report 120 Huron Street Proposed Official Plan  
Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment File: OZS20-005 Ward 1 - 2020-117**

**General Correspondence – Revised Agenda**

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I LIVE AT [REDACTED] ALICE STREET 1 BLOCK FROM THE PROPOSED APARTMENT SITE I AM 100 PERCENT IN AGREEMENT TO DEVELOP THE 30 LOW INCOME HOUSING UNITS I HAVE WORKED WITH LOW INCOME HOUSING FOR 17 YEARS LOOKING AFTER THE COIN LAUNDRY FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE CITY THAT ARE RUN BY LOW INCOME HOUSING MOST OF THE PEOPLE LIVING IN SUBSIDIZED HOUSING DEFINITELY NEED THIS SERVICE MY ONLY CONCERN IS WHO QUALIFIES TO GET AN APARTMENT ON THE 5TH FLOOR PLEASE NO LOTTERY SYSTEM YOU MUST MEET CERTAIN CRITERIA OBVIOUSLY A PRIOR DRUG OR CRIMINAL RECORD MAY NOT BE A FIRST PRIORITY NONETHE LESS THAT STILL DOESNT ELIMINATE YOU FROM GETTING AN APARTMENT THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO HAVE REFORMED PLEASE CONSIDER WHAT I HAVE TO SAY BOTTOM LINE GUELPH CAN USE ANOTHER 30 UNITS THANKS YOU

Michael Silvestro

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Dear Councillor Allt:

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Audit Committee and copying members of Council.

I would like to request that our Internal Auditor conduct independent assurance on the 120 Huron and 104 Oliver files.

There are characteristics of these files which appear highly "irregular" to a casual observer. There may be perfectly reasonable explanations in the background, but citizens are entitled to transparency and accountability.

1) Why was the 104 Oliver St. purchase brought forward for Council approval on August 24th, just weeks before the development with which the parkland is associated is back at Council with revisions on September 14th? Doesn't this lock the City into one parkland conveyance scenario before Council can consider the updated development and parkland dedication as a whole?

2) Staff assessed that the 104 Oliver site was not appropriate for acquisition as parkland. Then we learn that it IS appropriate for acquisition. We are essentially purchasing the lot from the developer with money given to us by the developer.

Mercury-Tribune report Graeme McNaughton wrote the following:

<https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/10162731-guelph-s-new-ward-park-to-cost-466k/>

*According to a report sent to council when it first approved the development application for 120 Huron St., the developer had originally proposed using 104 Oliver St. as parkland. However, the report notes that the property "does not meet the city's standard criteria for parkland acquisition," and decided to take cash-in-lieu as opposed to having the property conveyed to the city.*

In contrast, the City press release states:

<https://guelph.ca/2020/09/council-directs-staff-to-purchase-104-oliver-street-to-become-a-future-park/>

*"We've determined that 104 Oliver Street is an ideal place to build a park and has significant community and Council support," says Heather Flaherty, general manager of Parks and Recreation.*

3) Staff has asserted publicly that the amount of cash-in-lieu received is equal to the value of parkland we could have received. This may have been the case before the 120 Huron properties were severed and before additional density was added, however I am not clear that this is still the case.

In her report on 120 Huron, Ms. Nasswetter documents that the applicant is requesting a density of 133 units per hectare on the 0.88 ha site.

<https://pub-guelph.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8550>

100 units per hectare is the density at which preferential rates for land click in under section 10 (d) of our Parkland Dedication By-law:

<https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/parkland-dedication-bylaw.pdf>

*(d) Where land is located outside of Downtown and is to be Developed or Redeveloped for residential purposes with a total proposed density equal to or greater than one-hundred (100) Dwelling Units per one hectare (1ha), the greater of:*

*i. a portion of the Land not exceeding 1 hectare (1ha) per threehundred (300) Dwelling Units, but in no case to exceed thirty percent (30%) of the total area of the Land, or;*

According to this section of the By-law, under normal circumstances, the City would receive greater value if we accepted a conveyance of land at the 1 ha/300 unit rate in combination with a conveyance of cash-in-lieu at 1 ha/500 unit rate.

4) In a September 3rd Mercury-Tribune article, Mr. McNaughton reveals that records show that the 104 Oliver property was purchased by the developer for \$1 million in August 2017.

<https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/10162731-guelph-s-new-ward-park-to-cost-466k/>

The developer is going to spend tens of thousands of dollars remediating the site and then putting in the landscaping for a park and we are going to purchase the whole thing for \$466,248.50? Why would the developer absorb more than a half-million dollar loss on this deal? Is there something happening elsewhere in the negotiations to off-set this loss?

5) The same Mercury-Tribune article indicates that 104 Oliver is potentially a heavily contaminated site. What role is this playing in land values and is it still a good deal for the City?

*[According to documents](#) filed with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for the land's remediation, the property had housed a transformer substation for the Northern Rubber factory across the road. The substation was removed in 1969, and the building housing it taken down in 1992.*

6) Normally park design and construction is carried out by the City. Is it in our interests to have it done by the developer? It is standard practice for Community Engagement to take place for the design of new parks in the City. Will Community Engagement be happening for the design of this park if it is executed by the developer?

7) Lastly, I was surprised to read that one of the initial reasons that 104 Oliver was not considered appropriate for Parkland Acquisition was that it was not on the development site. We recently spent tens of thousands of dollars to hire a professional parks consultant, The Planning Partnership, as part of the update of the Parkland Dedication By-law.

In recommendation #10, the consultant explicitly recommends that conveyance of off-site land be included in the By-law guidelines.

<https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Consultant-Recommendations-for-Parkland-Dedication-Bylaw.pdf>

*Recommendation 10: It is suggested that the Parkland Dedication Bylaw/Interpretation Guideline explicitly identify that for sites less than 1,000 square metres in size, the City may accept an on-site land contribution, an offsite land contribution and/or payment-in-lieu of land.*

Were there no changes to the By-law guidelines as a result of this whole exercise? Allowing conveyance of off-site parkland would provide greater flexibility and opportunity for the City to acquire land instead of cash-in-lieu - a practice that the consultant said should be prioritized.

Regarding 104 Oliver and 120 Huron, I'm sure that everyone would appreciate a robust review by the Internal Auditor to ensure that we are truly getting the best value for citizens in the transactions involving parkland and cash-in-lieu.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson