

October 2, 2020

To Mayor Cam Guthrie and Guelph City Council

Re: Baker Street Redevelopment

### Library

I am strongly in favour of approving the new library and prefer the detached building to one incorporated into a condo tower. I moved to Guelph in 1993 and it feels like we have been discussing a new library since then (and probably before). The library is the cultural centre of the city and provides a vast range of services to cardholders.

I use the central library at least weekly. I've used it as a workplace away from home, to get book club sets, to do genealogy research and of course to take out reading material.

Aside from the obvious uses, the library also provides services to those at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum in Guelph. People come to access the internet, for homework help, for tutoring and just as a warm or cool place to get out of the weather.

Wellington County has recently renovated all of its branch libraries. Cambridge has done some spectacular renovations of library buildings – the Carnegie library in Hespeler and the Idea Exchange in the old Post Office on Water Street are prime examples. Our old, inefficient and inaccessible main library is an embarrassment.

I ask that you approve the library in its new form.

## Affordable Housing

There has been no discussion I can find of how affordable housing will be incorporated into the Baker Street redevelopment.

The last reported vacancy rate for the city is 1.4% well below the 3% considered balanced. It's been at about that rate for many years. It's extremely difficult for renters to find appropriate rental units. Rents are rising much faster than inflation because of the short supply.

Issue 2 on page 14 of the city's affordable housing strategy from 2017 states "a lack of available primary rental supply makes it difficult for people to find affordable rental housing." This statement is still very much true today. While some purpose built rental has been constructed in the last few years in Guelph, it is very expensive and there is still substantial need for more units.

This site is ideal for affordable rental housing. It's walking distance to all the downtown amenities and social services. Given City ownership of the land, leverage should allow for the requirement of a percentage of affordable rental housing in the development. Council needs to pay more than lip service to this need in the city.

I urge you to carefully consider this important decision.

Sincerely

Jane Londerville

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