

Presentation - 520 Speedvale Ave – Watt

Honourable Mayor – Members of Council (Slide 1 – Front Angle)

My name is Mike Watt. I'm one of the developers of this project. I have lived in Guelph for the last 50 years. My parents moved here in 1970. I'm a married father of 5 children that were all born in Guelph.

I love Guelph, I've always loved Guelph and I never plan on leaving.

I strongly believe that we live in one of the best cities in the country and the best country in the world.

I feel a strong sense of civic pride in this city and anything I do I want to be sure that it leaves a positive impact behind.

I am a partner in the development of 2 successful projects in the south end of Guelph – Arkell Lofts and Gallery Towns. The Arkell Lofts is a stacked-townhouse project which won municipal and provincial design awards and was nominated nationally for the best multi-residential design in the country. Gallery Towns won Project of the Year.

My partner and I are currently building a site in the south end on Gordon St called Pulse Townes. Its an 84 unit stacked townhouse project that sold out in 6 months.

The site at 520 Speedvale is a 64 unit back to back stacked project.

Our goal is to build another beautiful, successful site that creates a wonderful neighbourhood and meshes well with its surrounding community.

The main reasons we believed this property was the right choice for our next project are because it offered good access to public transit, affordability, and sufficient density.

The issue of affordability has been an ongoing topic in this city for many years. As we are all aware, there are many young graduates, single parent families, and married couples with children that are struggling to be able to find or afford a place to rent or buy. **(Slide 2 – Side Site Elevation)**

I believe that our layout of the site with its compact design and efficient use of land will allow us to be able to offer these units at a more affordable price per foot than what is currently available. It will allow many people to get into the housing market who otherwise would not be able to.

At 2 acres -this is a uniquely large infill site on an arterial road – giving the city an opportunity to fulfill one of its mandates of intensification along major corridors. This project will not add any additional traffic directly to any local neighbourhood streets.

Although this property was marketed as a potential apartment site, we felt that the more sensible and sensitive choice was to develop it as a low-rise townhouse site.

We carefully considered the neighbourhood when we started to layout the site plan. What we were sensitive of was the fact that there were 6 neighbours to the west on Carmine Place that backed onto the property. These properties were at an elevation that was about 3m below our elevation. Due to the elevation change, we felt that these neighbours would be impacted the greatest.

The last thing we wanted to do was locate our buildings close to their property line and have our units tower over their rear yards. Our initial idea was row townhouses – which would have required us to locate the units much closer to their property line. The upper bedrooms of the units would have had a clear view of their back yards and shadowing may have been an issue.

As a result, we felt strongly that the best plan was to stay as far away from their backyards as possible. That's why we located the parking next to the property line. This allowed us to put the most distance between their backyards and the buildings. We have managed to locate the closest point of our building approximately 35m away from the rear walls of the 6 houses on Carmine Place.

The property to the east of our site is a single-family house located on a 1 acre parcel **on** a heavily treed lot. The front door of this house is approximately 40m away from our nearest building. As well, the property line is heavily treed almost entirely obscuring any view of their house and vice versa.

We have been extremely sensitive to locate our buildings at the absolute maximum possible distance from most of the surrounding neighbours.

In our Initial Pre-consultation Meeting with the city – David DeGroot, the city's Urban Designer – pointed out that he would prefer that the building at the rear of the site not have any entrances or private amenity spaces facing the rear yards of the 3 neighbours on Dakota Drive. We achieved that request by turning the rear building 90 degrees.

We have attempted to be very efficient with our use of the land by providing compact – yet spacious – units in a small footprint – while still maintaining a neighbourhood friendly built form of only 3 stories. We have also met the required front and rear yard setbacks and in our next submission we will be sure to meet the side yard setback on the east side of the property. It is currently short by 0.25m – or about 10 inches.

We are asking for a variance on the side yard setback for the parking area of 1m rather than 3m. We are planning on planting a wall of tall, thin junipers, cedars and pine trees – so that they extend above the privacy fence that is required. This will give the neighbours on Carmine Place an added level of privacy and will almost completely obscure any view of the buildings from their rear yards.

Our site plan exceeds the common amenity area requirements by over 60%.

It also exceeds the parking requirements by 10%. **(Slide 3 – Private Amenity Areas)**

We are asking for a variance on the required size of the private amenity areas for the lower units. The city requires a minimum of 20m² for both row townhouses AND stacked townhouses. The city doesn't currently have a separate zoning standard for the back-to-back stacked design for private amenity space.

I looked up the City of Mississauga's Urban Design Guidelines to see what the requirement is for Private Amenity Space for back-to-back stacked townhouses. They have had more of an opportunity to study this product than Guelph.

As a reference, they require each unit to provide a private amenity space with a minimum contiguous area of 6m². Guelph's requirement is more than three times this at 20m².

We are currently proposing a private amenity space for the lower units of 13m² - which is more than double what Mississauga requires. The dimensions that we are providing are approximately 12' x 12' which is a good sized outdoor private amenity space.

Our lower private amenity areas are sunken below grade by 2-3 steps and will be screened with a landscaped buffer of shrubs. They will be very functional for the residents – while also providing privacy for both themselves and their neighbours. **(Slide 4 – Front Elevation)**

Furthermore, we are requesting a variance to allow 4 of the 64 units to be able to have their private amenity space in the front yard facing a public street. If you look at the front elevation of the building, you will not likely be able to tell that it even has a private amenity space.

An example of another successful stacked townhouse project that has been approved to have its private amenity space located within the 6m front yard and facing a public street I would point to the Arkell Lofts. These are beautiful spaces that are well used, beautifully decorated and very functional. They face onto Arkell Rd and work well with no apparent issues.

In addition, we will be incorporating rainwater recapture to be used for irrigation. We are pre-wiring the buildings for solar panels. We will be installing 4 electric car charging stations as well as future proofing the site by pre-wiring the parking lot for additional electric chargers.

We will be using the highest quality exterior materials – including stone, brick and aluminum siding – in order to create buildings that will not only look beautiful but will also stand the test of time.

This project will be able to provide for municipal waste and recycling pickup with the use of the Earthbin system.

This site is also public transit supportive – with **4** different bus routes located within a 2-minute walk. These routes would allow residents to access the hospitals, grocery stores, the Victoria Rd rec center, the downtown core for work and entertainment, the west side industrial park for jobs, the Walmart Smart Center, several long term care homes - as well as schools, churches and everything in between.

Development is always a challenging balancing act – especially infill development. You need to balance good planning and design with what the market wants and needs as well as what works with the surrounding neighbourhood and what city staff and council's mandate is and what they will ultimately approve.

We feel strongly that we have met this challenge.

Thankyou for your time and I look forward to hearing any questions, feedback, and support.







