

Dear Mr. Lehman and Members of PEC.

Re PPM January 30th, 2024

I believe you will have seen the Broughdale Community Association's written response to Planning Staff following their consultation with neighbourhood groups on the proposed **By-Law and OP amendments. OZ-9661**. Our response, of necessity, focused on our reaction to the amendments, and we didn't need to provide any context, because staff are well aware of the situation in our neighbourhood.

However, for any Committee members who are unfamiliar with our community, I would like to provide some background.

As a Near Campus Neighbourhood (NCN) situated literally on the doorstep of Western University, we host an almost overwhelming amount of student housing in "low density" residential homes. The neighbourhood of Broughdale itself now has about 80% of its houses and approximately 95% of its high-rise buildings occupied by student renters. Consequently, the balance in the community between long-term residents and short-term renters has shifted almost to the tipping point. I am sure I don't need to remind you of the many issues this has generated, with by-law infractions and the like stemming from this imbalance.

There are members of the development community who say that NIMBYism is rampant close to campus, and that may well be true, but when you see what has happened over the last three decades, you might agree that at least some form of NIMBYism in Broughdale is actually justified.

The modest two-and three-bedroom homes have, in large part, been bought up by investors and by many out-of-town parents who buy a house near campus for their son or daughter to live in with friends while attending Western. They then use the house as income property for several more years, managing it from afar, with all the local problems and lack of maintenance that entails.

The value of this rental housing stock is ridiculously high, and many of these previously modest homes are now income-producing properties of at least 5 bedrooms. That so many of what used to be starter homes for families are now out of reach for families needing affordable housing is a real shame. Many of these houses were home to people who worked at Western or at University Hospital. It was a diverse and homogeneous community. However, since the advent of David Peterson's legislation in the '80s, allowing more than three unrelated people to occupy a house as-of-right, our neighbourhood has been transformed.

From living in people's spare rooms and basement apartments in owner-occupied homes, students now occupy entire houses, with all the attendant problems of upkeep etc. that negatively impact their long-term neighbours. What used to be a one or two car driveway for a family, may now accommodate four or even five cars - not the most attractive urban landscape!

Over the years, we have lost our public school, we have lost our post office, we have lost our library, and we have, consequently, lost hundreds of neighbours, particularly those with children. We have almost, but not quite, lost our own sense of community.

We are gratified, that over the last **35 years**, due to the local impact of huge and steady (and I must say ongoing) increases in enrollment at Western, Planning Staff and Council have tried to introduce measures to keep the balance more even in near-campus neighbourhoods (NCNs), and one of these measures is the bedroom limit.

We were pleased to see that, in their review of this policy, Planning Staff have recommended retaining a bedroom limit ONLY in NCNs.

We well understand that the review of this policy was suggested last fall by Councillor Franke, because she wanted to make sure that opportunities for affordable housing and intensification are fair across the city, a wholly admirable reason.

Our Association would like to suggest, however, that as we have already been subject to an enormous amount of intensification and infill in Broughdale, it would be fairer to **maintain a five-bedroom limit**, as recommended by staff.

We do understand the need for affordable student housing. We are gratified that Western intends to build two new **student residences**, one of which is very close to the Broughdale neighbourhood. We are constantly encouraging them to build more. We also believe that **more purpose-built, safe and affordable student housing** in apartment buildings near campus would be a viable option to help ease the housing shortage.

We note the very recent decision by the Federal Government to put a cap on international students, which may also take some pressure off the local housing supply.

We therefore hope very much that the Committee will see fit to follow Planning Staff's recommendation and retain the five-bedroom limit in Near Campus Neighbourhoods. Most of the other by-law amendments we can live with.

We suggest that limit should apply to all types of housing in Broughdale, except for Richmond Street, which, as a major arterial road, has been targeted for intensification under the London Plan.

Thanks so much for your time and attention.

Yours respectfully

Susan Bentley
Interim President, Broughdale Community Association
and
Resident of Broughdale for 48 years.

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