From: A. Johnson
To: The Chair and Members of PEC: Thank for the opportunity to present my ideas

RE. Item 3.6 934 Oxford ST.W. (Z 9678)

934 Oxford

Of the six projects on this agenda, one global warming wise is a concern, the development at 934 Oxford. "795 Windermere" could actually be replacing some pavement with vegetation, and that's worthy of some recognition, in our bid to reduce GHG emissions.

934 Oxford is another case of the 1-2 emissions punch. If completed it will bring 77 cars to town and by removing 25 trees, eliminate the means by which car emissions can be mitigated. I have objected to other 1-2 punch projects like this, which were all approved and there are lists of many projects like these in the city plans but the 1-2 punch of itself is not the main reason to reject these projects.

To explain. Developments completed in the last thirty years or so have eliminated thousands of trees and as a result hundreds of acres, show up on the Rainham emissions map[1] in a yellow colour and do an inadequate job at removing emissions because of lack of vegetation. Vegetation is being scraped off as we speak. And in the plans on file for development there are thousands of trees listed for removal.

Of 39 pages of development plans for London[2] on file, starting with page one and adding trees to be removed, after the first project on the top of page 11, the total is 1006 tree removals[3]. Significantly, some plans are not formatted to show removal numbers. On page 7, a project of 51 acres at Sunningdale Golf Club will undoubtedly from its appearance, have significant impact on trees and emissions and it is not in this counted mix. "Thousands" is a conservative picture of planned tree removals.

Whatever London's tree canopy current percentage is, the canopy grows over the course of year. We know that the mature trees are the real leaders in the growth process and contribute most to that overall growth. Protecting the existing canopy means ensuring that the number of trees removed don't exceed what normal growth[4] would be expected to provide in a growing season. Ensuring that the canopy might actually expand in that year would mean cutting back less than to that base amount prior to the years growth.

So, the real reason for rejecting this plan to cut down 25 trees at 934 Oxford is lack of knowledge. We don't know the impact of cutting those 25 trees on the tree canopy of London Ontario and we're in the same boat with a stack of plans for potentially removing thousands more.

Before plans for cutting trees are pursued, research is needed to determine the amount of removal from the existing canopy that leaves the base percentage unaffected. Then, a plan could be considered for tree cutting. To actually sanction the cutting of thousands of trees from the tree canopy without any effort to assess the effects on the health of the canopy is a flat out reckless endangerment of a public resource.

My sole ask of this committee is to find a way to fund that research.

While there are too many unknowns about the effect on tree canopy, the effect on emissions of cars coming to town is much clearer. As of this writing, 222 development plans, are filed for London, with 23660 new 'households'. Multiplying 23 660 by a .66 car dependency rate, X households of 2.4 people = potentially 37 477 cars, a 14% increase if the plans are realized added to a car population of 273 000. So vegetation, will be processing at least 14 % more 'on the rise' tailpipe emissions.

And what will that emission increase be added to? Here's Google Environmental's Transportation Emission Numbers for London[4]. Suggesting that last year in 2023 we may easily have exceeded the pre-covid 2019 high of 824000 $_t$CO2e.

2023 ?

2022   771000 $_t$CO2e (up 13 %)
2021   680000 $_t$CO2e (up 14%)
2020   596000 $_t$CO2e (down 28%)
2019   824000 $_t$CO2e (up 4%)
2018   796000 $_t$CO2e
Signeage? "Welcome to Unsustainable London…Light on Trees Heavy on Cars"

1.(see attached: "Rainham/Dalhousie Emission Map of London by Ward")

Planning Applications | City of London

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The official website for the City of London, Ontario.

[3] The invitation is open to anyone with the curiosity and more energy than this writer to continue this investigation for the other 29 pages and attempt to arrive at total estimate of possible removals.

[4] LiDAR estimations revealed that the average annual canopy growth from 2004 to 2010 was 0.26 ± 0.11 m m^{-2} yr^{-1} at the plot level and 0.26 ± 0.10 m m^{-2} yr^{-1} at the individual-tree level.

[5] https://insights.sustainability.google/places/ChIJC5uNqA7yLogRlWsFmmnXxyg?hl=en-US