

**From:** Whitney Leon

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 20, 2024 4:50 PM

**To:** Maton, Catherine <[cmaton@london.ca](mailto:cmaton@london.ca)>; Pribil, Jerry <[jpribil@london.ca](mailto:jpribil@london.ca)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 613 Superior Drive Development Plan

I attended the council meeting on March 19, 2024 specifically for the 613 Superior Drive agenda item. Having never attended a Council meeting before I was interested in the process and excited to be a part of it and have our neighbourhood's collective voices heard. Upon reflection of this experience, I am shocked and disturbed at how decisions in this city are made and how our residents were treated. I along with at least 15 of our neighbours spent 4 hours listening to the public share their concerns about various development proposals only to be met with what sounded like selfish, scripted responses that lacked any genuine empathy. The attendance of our neighbours versus the 5 Council members voting on our future showed the lack of regard the city has to actually listen AND act when the public has something to say. Most agenda items had the Council thanking "the Staff" and the Applicants for all of their hard work. Not a single person on Council recognized the fact that a significant number of public participants have been preparing for this meeting for several months. Taking time away from their jobs, their family, their personal time etc. to do our due diligence and come together to speak intelligently and passionately about the neighbourhood we live in. After hearing from the public, the Council directed questions to "The Staff" who referenced outdated generic information despite the public sharing our reality. For example, the wetlands at the front had a report done several years ago which is what was referenced by the staff but the reality of the wetlands at the front is very different now. The Staff was not questioned about the comments made by the residents or the age of the data used to report. These actual facts from residents were provided to the Council and completely disregarded in favour of the Staff's information. When the floor was open for discussion after the public's feedback was provided the "discussion" was completely one sided, in favour only of what the Council deemed to be important. The public was left to listen to the Council determine our future without being afforded the respect to respond to the misinformation taking place in the Council's "discussion".

Specifically regarding 613 Superior Drive, The Staff cited outdated data (storm drainage capacity) yet the public was told over and over again that the data we had access to (The London Plan) was outdated and could not be used for decision making. I watched and listened as the council made contradictory statements in their own favour completely disregarding the individuals who showed up and spoke out. An example of this was when Deputy Mayor Lewis said that Powell Park met the regulatory requirements for a park in this type of neighbourhood and then said that concessions are made all the time for development proposals because of the outdated London Plan. This tells us that you are only willing to bend the rules when it is in your interest and not the interest of your constituents.

Listening to this “discussion” and amendment process unfold told us in the gallery that our interests are not aligned despite the fact that you are in a public position. In this case the majority (the residents of the neighbourhood who cared enough to show up despite there being only 5 Council Members present) who have a vested interest in the outcome of this decision, who stand to lose more than anyone in council were left without a voice.

There were several points brought forward by the gallery that were never addressed by Council who zeroed in on 2 of the many concerns from residents: the neighbourhood safety and the developers plan for a park/green space. Deputy Mayor Lewis side-tracked the conversation by speaking about school board decisions versus Council decisions and city versus developer responsibility for recreational space which shouldn't have been the focus of the conversation. The public at no time asked for the development to be scrapped or for a school to be built instead. As stated several times, residents are on board with development taking place. What was asked of the council was for you to consider making the following amendments:

1. Development should not take place at 613 superior drive until there is a solution and timeframe for the safety of the neighbourhood by way of a second entrance alleviating traffic pressure off of Canvas Way and Sunningdale Rd.
2. The developer's vision is for the new builds to be for neighbourhood residents to retire to. This would be much more likely a desirable location for that demographic if there were fewer number of units that were one storey units. (The Council didn't comment on the neighbourhood request for this or the fact that current zoning is for half of the proposed number of units (please don't say that is under the outdated London plan - it is evident that any rule can be amended to suit - this is a matter of your willingness to do that for your constituents or not).

The only agreements made on March 19 were:

1. that there would be “discussion” about park/green space
2. there would be “discussion” about paving the unassumed roads (despite the fact that that would not alleviate any pressure off of canvas or Sunningdale)
3. there would be “discussion” about extending Sunningdale to Adelaide (this discussion would be taking place with a bankrupt developer that has stopped construction for the last 4 years).

It was not clear who is responsible for any of these items or timeframes that they should be completed by and reported on. Who will be following up with these “discussions” and their outcomes before the final vote on this? Will we as the public have any assurance that should these discussions not provide the desired outcome that the development will be paused? Is the council's desired outcome from these discussions the same as the people who actually live in the neighbourhood and pay their property taxes? Why will the council not speak to any of the other concerns raised or push their staff for more robust, timely data?

No one is asking for this development to not be built. We are asking for it to be THOUGHTFULLY built by taking into genuine consideration the feedback and requests of the people who actually have to live here, the people who WANT to live here, the people who care enough about their neighbourhood to use their voice and believe that their Public Council is there for them.

The people in this neighbourhood don't have the time or money or resources that developers have. We rely on our city Councillors to support us. We shouldn't have to pool our money to hire lawyers, we shouldn't have to take time off work or away from our kids to ask for what is fair and right. When we are faced with this disregard it tells us that Councillors and developers are banking on us giving up and it breaks the trust we are supposed to have in the people that are supposed to be running this city.

Please consider revisiting the development plan for 613 Superior Drive to keep this neighbourhood one we are proud of.

Thank you,

Whitney Leon