

August 17, 2024

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London Ontario

Re: Huron at Audrey St. (M-065)

Dear Sam:

While Marjorie and I are deeply concerned about the lack of affordable housing in London and elsewhere, we are strongly opposed to Mr. Kaplanski's application to build two more "towers of shame;" or "towers of spite" at Audrey and Huron. Residents view this construction as an architectural abomination and believe that these buildings (like the three existing ones he built) are incompatible with neighbourhood architecture, and - more importantly - will have a negative effect on the neighbourhood.

Given the University's plan to build two new large residences and the possibility of the city granting permission to build apartments along nearby Richmond St., we fear that this will further increase the density of the student population in an area derisively called the "student ghetto."

When we moved into our home at ██████████ (some forty years ago) our neighbourhood had a pleasant balance of seniors and students. Some seniors provided affordable accommodation while students provided companionship and often helped around the house. In time, however many seniors passed away, or moved into rest homes and speculators bought the homes cheaply, expecting substantial profit later. Meanwhile, speculators had scant regard for the condition of their property while charging exorbitant rent.

For some student residents, however, some free of supervision for the first time, saw their new accommodation near the campus as an ideal party place and staged many rowdy, noisy parties. When asked to turn down the music, we were usually informed curtly that our neighbourhood was a 'student area' not subject to municipal By-Laws such as PW 12, or the *Sound By-Law*. Students therefore felt at liberty to do as they pleased. In this context, one student informed us that municipal By-laws were "not real laws". Even university administrators said that if we were unhappy, we should move.

What many Londoners do not understand is the potential for violence in the near campus neighbourhood. After fifty years of combined teaching at Western in two different faculties, my wife and I believe that most students are law abiding and respectful, but the over densification when combined with heavy drinking and drugs at area house parties can bring out the worst in students.

For example, a bottle of vodka was thrown through our living room window. As well, a drunken student who lived nearby forced his way into our home and rampaged through our living and dining rooms before four policemen could subdue him. On another occasion, about half a block away from our house, one very angry student clubbed me to the ground splitting my scalp open

and causing a mild concussion. Seventeen stitches were required to close the wound. A month passed before I could resume lecturing.

There are other dangers arising from a densely populated student area. FOCO, or Fake Homecoming (an illegal street party, located steps away from the proposed Kaplanski construction) dramatically increases the student presence by several thousand, and consequently endangers the community. Renaming FOCO and changing the date has not made any difference.

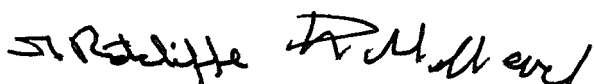
That we know of, two students have died at this event over the years; one by "broofing" (jumping off a roof drunk). One neighbour who works at UH, says many more have been brought to the hospital in serious condition over the years. This is something the University and probably London City Hall does not want to acknowledge.

London police could easily put an end to this illegal gathering by stopping it before it got underway. Presumably fearing a repeat of the 2012 Fanshawe College riot, extra constables have been hired from other municipalities, incurring an extra expense to London taxpayers.

Fire is another danger. Some residents on Broughdale tend BBQs on their front porches, while students wander through the area smoking various substances and sipping from open bottles of liquor. A fire could not only damage Western's residences along University Drive (just a few metres north of Broughdale) but, given the right wind conditions, could wipe out the closely spaced wooden frame houses on Broughdale and then spread to Huron Street and beyond. Firefighters and their equipment would have difficulty making their way through thousands of students to extinguish a fire.

We urge City Hall to reject Mr. Kaplansky's application. As an individual, he has the right to make a profit on construction, but not at the expense of the wider community. And, while it may seem sanctimonious, we expect London city authorities to uphold our constitutional rights to "Peace, Order and Good Government".

Regards



Marjorie Ratcliffe and Rod Millard

Professors Emeriti, Western University

Cc: Planning Committee