

From: Terry Sicular

Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2024 4:17 PM

To: Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>

Cc: Trosow, Sam <strosow@london.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] regarding Item 3 Scheduled Item 3.6 c on page 412 of the agenda from September 10th 2024: Permit stacked townhouses up to four storeys high along neighborhood connectores

I would like to have my letter added to the agenda regarding Item 3 Scheduled Item 3.6 c on page 412 of the agenda from September 10th 2024: Permit stacked townhouses up to four storeys in height along all streets classified as Neighbourhood Connectors.

Dear Council Members, I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed bylaw permitting four-storey stacked townhouses on neighbourhood connector streets. While I understand and support London's efforts to intensify housing, the proposal to permit stacked, 4-storey townhouses along all connector streets has not benefitted from sufficient, thoughtful planning and adequate community consultation. Rapid approval risks hasty implementation, which could result in outcomes that do not achieve the aims of the bylaw while at the same time damaging a vibrant heritage neighborhood. Old North, despite what many people think, contains a mix of low and high income housing, and a mix of rental and owner-occupied housing. I support intensification, but streets/blocks/plots where intensification occurs should be chosen carefully and deliberately, not via a bylaw that gives blanket approval for 4-storey builds on all of Waterloo St., Colborne St., etc., simply based on old street designations.

Old North already faces challenges with traffic, parking, and also flooding. The building of larger, multi-family structures will require extensive paving in backyards to allow for parking, which is likely to be insufficient. This paving will reduce permeability in the neighborhood, which will lead to increased flooding in neighboring properties and onto the streets.

The bylaw is likely to result in the construction of buildings with small rental units that are not suitable or accessible to families, and so will reduce the supply of smaller family homes and duplexes that are currently quite abundant in the neighborhood, many

occupied by families. Thus it will diminish opportunities for families and negatively impact the sense of neighborhood and community.

I and others in the city urge the council to consider better alternatives, such as: 1. Utilizing parking lots and already vacant lots that are better suited to new housing without displacing heritage homes or altering the existing communities and streetscape, 2. scaling developments of new builds to be in line with the neighborhood's scale, preserving the character that makes these areas attractive in the first place, 3. Requiring the construction of new rental or sale builds to be appropriate for families, for whom good housing options are scarce, rather than for student housing, for which numerous housing options already exist. 4. Targeted development should be used. Instead of allowing developments on all connector streets, carefully and deliberately select areas where higher-density housing would have minimal impact on heritage homes and obliteration or damage to natural spaces (such as the north side of Huron that backs onto the ravine above the Thames).

These alternatives will allow increased supply of housing in a way that will support families without destroying communities and neighborhoods. London's Old North, Old South and Old East neighborhoods are unique, precious places with historic homes, neighborly families, and close communities. The proposed bylaw will demolish historic homes, small and large, and it will damage irreparably the communities that make London so unique and such a wonderful place to live.

Sincerely,

Terry Sicular

Resident of London

Professor Emerita of Economics

Western University