

**Attention Mayor Josh Morgan and Elected City Councilors,**

We are writing to express our deep concerns regarding the proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment at 415-421 Boler Road, which would allow for the construction of a six-storey residential apartment building with 62 units and 63 parking spaces. While development is necessary for a growing city, this project raises serious issues that have not been adequately addressed. Most concerning is the fact that the expertise of city staff—those whose knowledge and recommendations should guide responsible decision-making—has been disregarded in favor of an approach that benefits the developer at the expense of the community.

Although City of London staff supported the development, they did not support the special provisions requested by the applicant, recognizing that these provisions would further strain the integrity of the existing neighborhood. For instance, the applicant has requested a setback of just 1.5 metres, despite the bylaw requiring 8 metres and city staff recommending a compromise of 3 metres. During the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC) meeting, which I attended virtually, the applicant stated that the building would be deemed “not viable” without these special provisions. This raises serious concerns: If the project is not viable within the framework of responsible planning regulations, should it proceed at all?

It is troubling that PEC members who voted in favour of this development did so while disregarding the recommendations of city staff—the very professionals whose expertise they are expected to rely upon for informed decision-making. If the opinions of these PEC members outweigh the careful analysis and recommendations of the city’s planning department, it calls into question the purpose of having such expertise in the first place. After all, why employ knowledgeable planning professionals if their insights are ultimately ignored in favor of development interests?

Beyond these concerns, we urge all city council members to thoroughly review the recommendations of city staff, as well as the *many* letters submitted by Byron residents from 2022 to 2025 before voting on April 1, 2025. These letters outline critical issues, including:

- The significant impact this development would have on the character of one of the main streets and hubs of Byron, a community long valued for its village-like charm.
- The precedent this approval would set for further high-density buildings along Boler Road, fundamentally changing the nature of the area.
- The worsening traffic congestion due to extensive development in surrounding areas, including Westdel Bourne, Riverbend/West 5, Southdale and Colonel Talbot and how it is imperative that the city consider the limitations of our existing infrastructure and the ability of our roads to support further intensification before approving such a significant change.

We understand that the City of London is working towards increasing the housing supply to meet its 2031 target of 47,000 new homes. However, given the multiple developments already approved in the Byron area, we question the necessity of forcing yet another large-scale building—especially one that has been overwhelmingly rejected by the community.

For reference, recent developments in the area include:

- Park West (1200 Commissioners Rd. W.) – 128 units (2019)

- Village West – Two buildings totaling 102 units (2020-2021)
- Commissioners & Reynolds Rd. – 22 approved units
- Commissioners & Stephen St. – 62 approved units
- The upcoming Gravel Pits Secondary Plan, which will add hundreds more units

We will not repeat all of the concerns outlined in the resident letters here, but we strongly urge council members to take the time to read and consider them carefully. Responsible development should be guided by a balance between growth and the well-being of existing communities, with careful attention paid to the expertise of those entrusted with planning the city's future.

We urge the city to reject this proposal in its current form and ensure that any future developments align with the thoughtful recommendations of city staff and the voices of the community.

We trust that you will give this matter the thoughtful consideration it deserves and recognize the lasting impact your decision will have on our community. Your attention to this issue and commitment to making informed, responsible choices are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Claire Arcsott & Matthew Leduc

**We consent to our letter being on the Public Agenda.**