

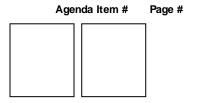
TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	APPLICATION BY: SIFTON PROPERTIES LTD. 221-225 QUEENS AVENUE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING ON APRIL 8, 2014

# **RECOMMENDATION**

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions be taken with respect to the application of Sifton Properties Ltd. relating to the properties located at 221-225 Queens Avenue:

- (a) The proposed by-law <u>attached</u> hereto as Appendix "A" **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting on April 15, 2014 to amend Zoning By-law No. Z.-1, in conformity with the Official Plan, to change the zoning of the subject property **FROM** a holding Downtown Area (h-3\*DA2\*D350) Zone, **TO** a holding Downtown Area/Temporary (h-3\*DA2\*D350/T-(\_)) Zone;
- (b) The request to amend Zoning By-law No. Z.-1 to change the zoning of the subject property **FROM** a holding Downtown Area (h-3\*DA2\*D350) Zone, **TO** a holding Downtown Area Special Provision (h-3\*DA2(\_)\*D350) Zone, **BE REFUSED** for the following reasons:
  - a permanent commercial surface parking lot within the downtown is not in keeping with the goals of the *Provincial Policy Statement*, 2005 for maintaining strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy;
  - i) the Official Plan discourages permanent surface level commercial parking lots within the Downtown Shopping Area;
  - ii) a permanent commercial surface parking lot at this location is not in keeping with the recommendations of the Downtown London Heritage Conservation District Plan, 2012;
  - iii) a permanent commercial surface parking lot at this location is not in keeping with strategies of SmartMoves 2030 Transportation Master Plan, 2013, and
  - iv) a permanent commercial surface parking lot at this location is not consistent with the Draft Downtown Master Plan.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER				
Z-5825	Staff report to the Planning Committee of January 10, 2000 which supports an application by Sifton Properties Limited to extend the temporary use of a parking lot on the properties.			
Z-6632	Staff report to the Planning Committee of April 13, 2004 which supports an application by Sifton Properties Limited to extend the temporary use of a parking lot on the properties.			
2010-2011	City of Opportunity: A Vision for Downtown London			
O-8024	Downtown London Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan, approved by City Council in March 2012			



May 2013 City of London New Mobility Transportation Master Plan for London. 2030

Transportation Master Plan: SmartMoves

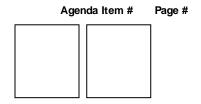
June 2013 City of London. Draft Downtown Master Plan, June 18, 2013

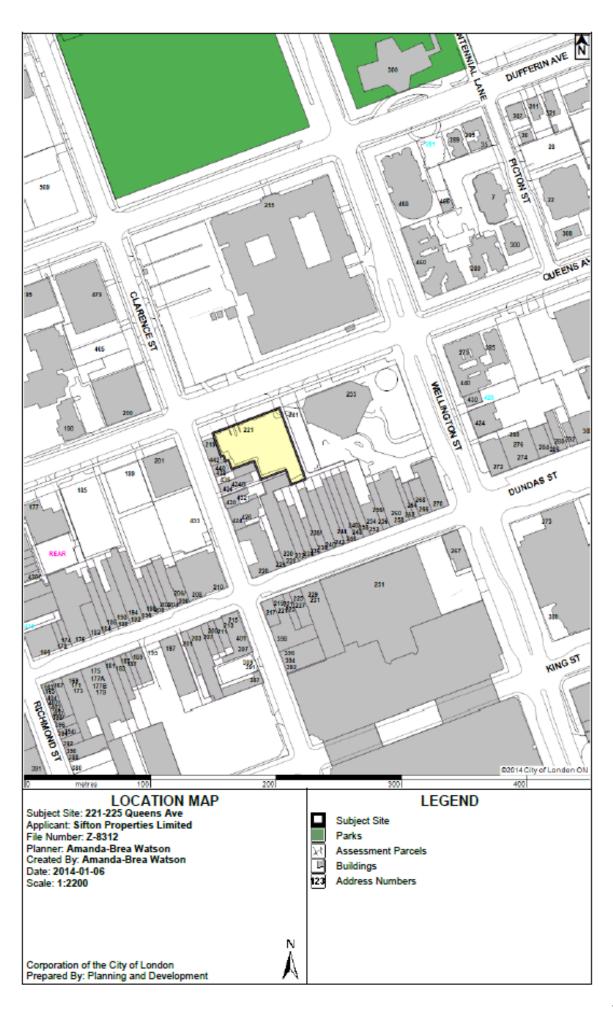
# PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

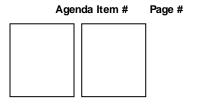
The purpose of the recommended Zoning By-law amendment is to permit the existing commercial surface parking lot use as a temporary use which requires renewal every three years.

#### **RATIONALE**

- 1. The recommended temporary use complies with the City of London Official Plan policies for temporary uses under Section 19.4.5.
- 2. The existing parking lot serves many of the business in the Downtown and is compatible with existing surrounding uses.
- 3. There have been no complaints regarding the operation of this facility since it was created.
- 4. The existing parking lot is an appropriate temporary use of land in the Downtown pending redevelopment.







#### **BACKGROUND**

Date Application Accepted: January 6, 2014 | Agent: Maureen Zunti

Sifton Properties Limited

**REQUESTED ACTION:** The purpose of the requested Zoning By-law amendment is to permit the existing commercial surface parking lot as a permanent use in addition to the other permitted uses currently permitted.

#### SITE CHARACTERISTICS:

• Current Land Use - Parking Lot

• **Frontage** – 56.9 metres

• **Depth** – 20.0 to 60 metres (varies)

• **Area** – 0.25 hectares

Shape – Irregular

## **SURROUNDING LAND USES:**

- North Parking Lot and London Life Office Building (h-3•DA2•D350)
- South Office, Retail and Restaurant uses with residential uses above (h-3•DA1•D350)
- East One London Place Office and Parking Lot (DA1•D350/DA2•D350)
- West Office, Retail and Restaurant uses with residential uses above (h-3•DA2•D350)

## **OFFICIAL PLAN DESIGNATION:** (refer to Official Plan Map)

Downtown Area

**EXISTING ZONING:** (refer to Zoning Map)

Holding Downtown Area (h-3\*DA2\*D350) Zone

#### **PLANNING HISTORY**

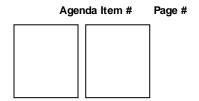
In 1995 the commercial building was demolished and removed from the subject lands.

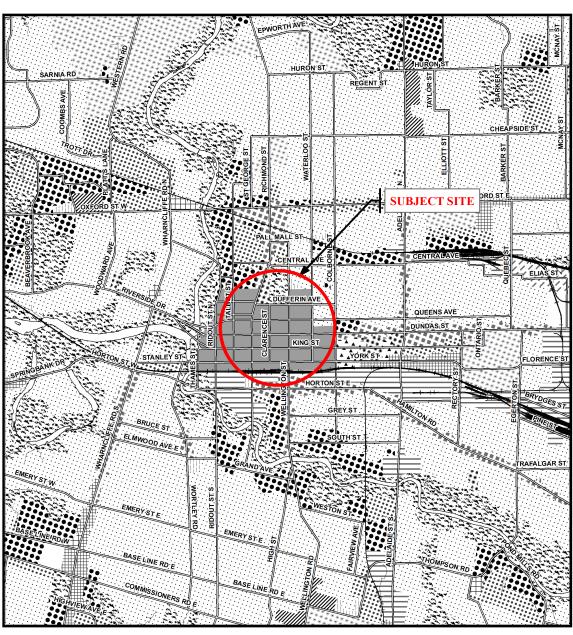
On September 5, 1995, City Council passed a Zoning By-law amendment to permit a parking lot on the subject lands for a period of three years. That temporary use expired in 1998 and was discovered after staff carried out a review of Temporary Zones in the Zoning By-law.

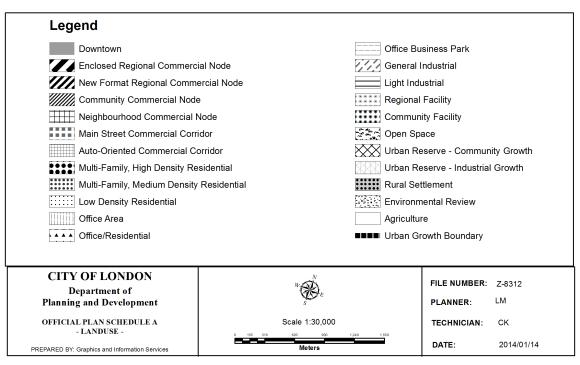
In 2000 City Council passed a Zoning By-law amendment to permit a parking lot on the subject lands for a period of three years. That temporary use expired in 2003. Respondents to Z-5825 noted "concern that temporary use will continue and not be temporary at all. Of the opinion that applicant should get one temporary use and then sell the property at fair market value for someone else to develop (especially in the Downtown)".

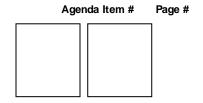
In 2004 Council passed an enacting clause to extend permission of the commercial surface parking lot for a period not exceeding 3 years.

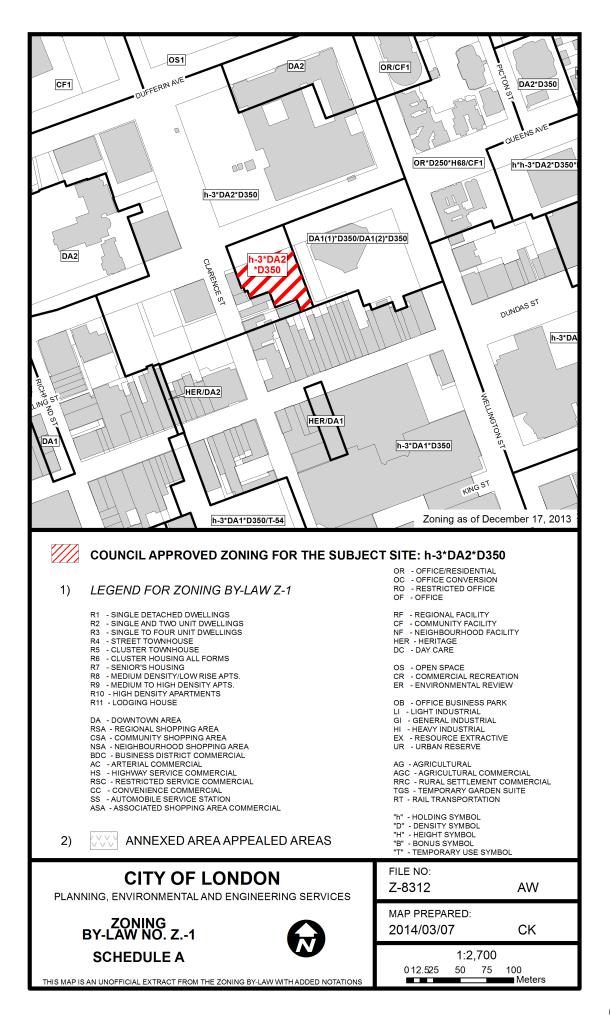
In 2013 the City provided notification that the Temporary Zone on these lands had expired on April 19, 2007 and requested that the property be brought into compliance.

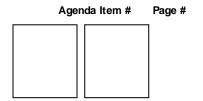














Aerial Photo Location Map
File No.: Z-8312

Date Prepared: 2014/01/13

CK

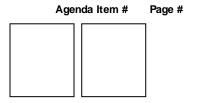
Prepared by: Graphics & Information Services, Planning Division, Corporation of the City of London Photograpy based on April 2010 flight info.

SCALE: 1:2,500

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Note: Parcel linework, when shown, is not for official or legal use.



#### SIGNIFICANT DEPARTMENT/AGENCY COMMENTS

# **Upper Thames River Conservation Authority**

The UTRCA has no objections to this application.

#### **London Transit Commission**

London Transit has reviewed the "Notice of Application to Amend the Zoning By-Law" reference #Z-8312 (221-225 Queens Avet.), and does not support parking lots in the central area, given:

• Creation of parking in the central area is counter to increasing transit mode share targets, as set out in the City's Transportation Plan, especially as this change would potentially make the parking facility permanent.

We request our comments be appended to the respective staff report. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

#### London Hydro

No objection to this proposal or possible Official Plan/Zoning Bylaw amendment.

#### SWM Unit

The SWM Unit has no objections to the proposed above noted. Pre-Application Consultation. We note that pending further review, additional and/or revised comments will be provided at a future date.

#### **Urban Forestry**

[Advised that they have] no comments for this application

#### Wastewater and Drainage Engineering Division

The Wastewater and Drainage Engineering Division has "No Comment" with respect to this application.

PUBLIC LIAISON:	On January 16, 2014 Notice of Application was sent to 52 property owners in the surrounding area and also published in the <i>Public Notices and Bidding Opportunities</i> section of <i>The Londoner</i> . A "Possible Land Use Change" sign has been posted on the site.	Zero (0) replies were received	
Nature of Liaison: The purpose of the requested Zoning By-law amendment is to permit the existing commercial surface parking lot as a permanent use on the property. The commercial parking has been permitted as a temporary use which requires renewal every three years. The effect of this application would add a commercial parking lot to the other existing permitted uses.  Responses: N/A			

#### ANALYSIS

## **Subject Site:**

The subject lands, known municipally as 221-225 Queens Avenue, are located on the south side of Queens Avenue just east of Clearance Street. The site is vacant and has been used a commercial parking lot since 1995. The lands are part of a Downtown Area designation which essentially encompasses lands from Ridout Street on the west to Colborne Street on the east, northerly to Dufferin Avenue and southerly to the CN Railway corridor. The lands have a direct access and approximately 57 metres of frontage on Queens Avenue comprising an area of approximately 0.25 hectares. The site is fully paved and contains landscaped screening and



wrought iron fencing along the full frontage of Queens Avenue with the exception of the access lanes into the parking lot.

The temporary (T-14) zone, which permitted a temporary surface commercial parking lot on the site expired in 2007. That said, the lands continue to be used for surface commercial parking.



Figure 1 – View of subject lands from intersection of Clarence Street and Queens Avenue.



Figure 2 – South facing (front) view of subject lands and entrance from Queens Avenue.



Figure 3 – South facing (front) close up view of rod iron fencing and landscaping taken from Queens Avenue.





Figure 4 – East facing view of rod iron fencing and bushes showing existing landscaping as visual buffer.



Figure 5 – South facing (front) view of subject lands and exit onto Queens Avenue.



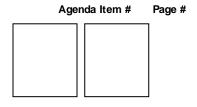
Figure 6 – Image from Google Street View showing subject lands and landscaping in summer season.

#### **Nature of Application:**

The purpose of the application is to permit the existing commercial surface parking lot as a permanent use on the property. Commercial parking has previously been permitted as a temporary use on these lands which requires renewal every three years. The applicant is now seeking to add a commercial parking lot to the other existing permitted uses.

# **Provisional Policy Statement, 2005**

The *Provincial Policy Statement, 2005* (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS promotes healthy, liveable, and safe communities by: encouraging efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the municipality; accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment and other land uses; and, promoting cost effective development standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.



The requested zoning By-law amendment, which seeks to permit the existing commercial surface parking lot as a permanent use is not consistent with the PPS as it is not promoting efficient development and land use patterns or optimizing the use of land. The subject lands, located within the Downtown with municipal infrastructure and public service facilities available, are suitable for a range and mix of residential and employment uses. Commercial surface parking as a permanent use of these lands for is therefore not appropriate.

Staff's recommendation for a temporary zone however allows for the commercial surface parking lot to remain in use on a temporary basis. The temporary zone recognizes that in the future a more intense and appropriate use of the land will be sought. Appropriate long term development for these lands will be in line with the aforementioned policies of the PPS.

#### Official Plan:

The Official Plan contains Council's objectives and policies to guide the short-term and long-term physical development of the municipality. The policies promote orderly urban growth and compatibility among land uses. While objectives and policies in the Official Plan primarily relate to the physical development of the municipality, they also have regard for relevant social, economic and environmental matters.

The requested amendment does not include any amendments to the Official Plan. The subject property is designated Downtown Area in the Official Plan. The planning objectives for Downtown Area land use designations have certain criteria which should be maintained, including:

#### 4.1.1 Downtown Planning Objectives

- i. Promote the continued development of the Downtown as the primary business, administrative, institutional, entertainment and cultural centre for the City of London and as a regional centre for Southwestern Ontario
- ii. Concentrate the development of major office buildings, hotels, convention facilities, entertainment and cultural uses, major indoor sports facilities and government buildings, having City-wide or regional significance, within the Downtown
- iii. Encourage growth in the residential population of the Downtown and adjacent gateway areas through new development and the renovation and conversion of existing buildings
- iv. Encourage the consolidation and enhancement of a compact, pedestrian-oriented shopping area within the Downtown.
- v. Facilitate vehicular and pedestrian movement into and within the Downtown through improvements to the network of transit roads, parking areas and pedestrian facilities.
- vi. Support the development of services and facilities in the Downtown that will attract and support tourism.
- vii. Encourage the provision of a high level of transit services in the Downtown
- viii. Enhance the attractiveness and accessibility of the Downtown for residents and visitors, with particular attention to attracting seniors and families with children.

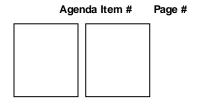
The Official Plan is clear on the uses permitted within Downtown Area designations. While parking is a permitted use the Plan has restrictions on both the type and location of parking facilities.

#### 4.1.6 Permitted Uses

Commercial Parking Structures and Surface Parking Lots

viii. Commercial parking structures are a permitted use in the Downtown and are encouraged to locate in peripheral areas of the Downtown. The design of these structures along the street edge should be addressed through consideration of the Downtown Design Guidelines specifically requiring enhanced landscaping and consideration of pedestrian connections.

The long term intent of the Plan is to improve the aesthetics of existing surface parking lots and to discourage new surface parking lots in the Downtown, especially where they involve the removal of buildings.



#### 4.1.10 Parking

Surface Parking Lots

The creation of new surface level commercial and/or accessory parking lots within the Downtown Shopping Area will be discouraged. Surface parking lots outside of the Downtown Shopping Area that require the demolition of significant heritage buildings will also be discouraged

The proposed Zoning By-law amendment is not in keeping with the Planning objectives of the Official Plan. It is intended that the Downtown Area would develop and function as the primary business, administrative, institutional, entertainment and cultural centre for the City of London and surrounding area. The lands are of an adequate size and shape to accommodate building forms in which retail, service, office, entertainment and/or residential uses can be developed. The Plan also encourages the provision of adequate and well-located off-street parking facilities that are sufficient to meet the demand generated by existing and proposed land uses in the Downtown. Surface parking is not recognized as an adequate form of parking for the Downtown Area. Further, based on the location of the subject lands, connectivity to municipal services and development of the City's rapid transit system, commercial surface parking on a permanent basis is not the best use of the subject lands.

#### 19.4.5 Temporary Use By-laws

Provided the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan are maintained, Council may pass by-laws to authorize the temporary use of land, buildings or structures for a purpose that is otherwise prohibited by this Plan, for renewable periods not exceeding three years, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act.

The recommended temporary zone is in keeping with the Official Plan in that it has regard for the following matters:

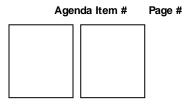
- the existing surface parking lot has been in place since 1995 and shown to be compatible with the surrounding land uses,
- the zone does not require any additional buildings or structures in association with the use,
- there are no changes to the existing surface parking area and therefore there are no short term impacts on transportation facilities or traffic in the immediate area,
- there are no changes to the access locations to the subject lands, and
- the short term use does not impede the potential for potential future long-term development which is of a higher and more appropriate use.

Staff's recommended temporary zone recognizes that the surface parking exists and allows for the commercial surface parking lot to remain in use on a temporary basis while acknowledging that a higher and better use, reflective of the downtown location and available municipal services, is appropriate on a long term basis. Such uses would include office buildings, hotels, convention facilities, entertainment and cultural uses, and government buildings, and possibly parking structures, as described in the Official Plan.

#### Other Plans:

Further to the Official Plan the City of London has undertaken the completion of a number of Plans which address parking in the Downtown Area. Such Plans include: the **Downtown Heritage Conservation District 2012**; the **2030 Transportation Master Plan 2013**, and the **Draft Downtown Master Plan**. All of these documents provide consistent recommendations which discourage the placement of surface parking while supporting commercial parking structures within the downtown.

The **Draft Downtown Master Plan** identifies a rapid transit loop that circulates on Queens Avenue and speaks to how, "the interchange will provide for a new transit hub via a public plaza in a central location. The hub's proximity to Richmond Row, Victoria Park, Budweiser Gardens and other Downtown attractions will help to connect the central city with the surrounding neighbourhoods and the City at large. The project will provide for a central location that connects transit to the Downtown. It will further enhance retail opportunities along paths that



connect central city attractions to the Interchange. Additionally, this project will create a central meeting point and focus for the Downtown".

City Planning Staff are incorporating policies of these Plans into the City's new Official Plan (**ReThink**) which is intended to build upon nodes and corridors to be serviced by the future rapid transit system.

A permanent commercial surface parking lot at this location is not consistent with the Downtown Heritage Conservation District 2012; the 2030 Transportation Master Plan 2013, direction of the Draft Downtown Master Plan or the vision of ReThink as a commercial surface parking lot in the central area is counter to the goals of increasing transit-oriented usage and an enhanced pedestrian environment. Recognizing it may however take some time to establish the rapid transit system, commercial surface parking on a temporary basis is deemed appropriate at this location given that it is already established. It is however expected that a permanent development proposal, in keeping with the City's is objectives for the Downtown Area, will be submitted for these lands sometime in the future.

#### Zoning:

The Zoning By-law is a comprehensive document used to implement the policies of the Official Plan by regulating the use of land, the intensity of the permitted use, and the built form. This is achieved by applying various zones to all lands within the City of London which identify a list of permitted uses and regulations that frame the context within which development can occur. Collectively, the permitted uses and regulations assess the ability of a site to accommodate a development proposal. It is important that all three criteria of use, intensity and form must be considered and deemed to be appropriate for the approval of any development proposal.

The property is currently with the holding Downtown Area (h-3\*DA2\*D350) Zone, which permits a wide range of retail, office, commercial, and residential uses. The lands have previously been zoned Temporary Use (T-14) to allow for a commercial surface parking lot which requires renewal every three years. The proponent is seeking a Zoning By-law amendment to permit the existing commercial surface parking lot as a permanent use on the property. The effect of this application would add a commercial parking lot to the other existing permitted uses.

Staff's recommendation is to re-instate a Temporary Use (T-#) Zone to be added to the existing holding Downtown Area (h-3\*DA2\*D350) Zone which would be subject to renewal every three years. The temporary zone allows for surface parking to continue as it exists presently and is indicative of the fact that these lands can serve a higher and better use in the future. Whether the future use be a different form of parking such as a multi-level parking structure, residential and/or office building, it is expected that the future use of the subject lands is a permitted use and is a greater intensity then currently exists.

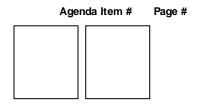
# CONCLUSION

The recommended Zoning By-law amendment is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 which promotes healthy, liveable and safe communities by encouraging efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the municipality. Permitted commercial surface parking on a temporary basis allows for continuation of an existing use, while encouraging responsible adaptive reuse of lands in future.

The recommended Zoning By-law amendment permits use, form and intensity of commercial parking on a temporary basis notwithstanding the Downtown Area policies of the Official Plan for the City of London which discourage the creation of new surface commercial parking lots.

The recommended Zoning By-law amendment allows for a temporary use that, while not consistent with the concepts, policies and guidelines of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District 2012, 2030 Transportation Master Plan 2013, Draft Downtown Master Plan or visions of Rethink, will not conflict with these Plans as it is not a permanent long term use for the lands.

The recommended use for the subject site is a temporary commercial surface parking. Given that the subject site has previously held a temporary zone and the commercial parking lot is



currently active, the use can be considered complementary to the community and compatible with surrounding uses.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:	
AMANDA-BREA WATSON, MCIP, RPP PLANNER II, CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION	MICHAEL TOMAZINCIC, MCIP, RPP MANAGER, PLANNING REVIEW CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION	
RECOMMENDED BY:		
JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP		
MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER		

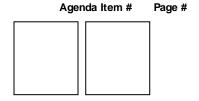
March 10, 2014 ABW

<sup>&</sup>quot;Attach"
Y:\Shared\implemen\DEVELOPMENT APPS\2014 Applications 8309 to\8312Z - 221-225 Queens Ave (AW)

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# Responses to Public Liaison Letter and Publication in "Living in the City"

<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Written</u>
N/A	N/A



# Bibliography of Information and Materials Z-8312

#### **Request for Approval:**

City of London Zoning By-law Amendment Application Form, completed by Sifton Properties Ltd., December 23, 2013.

#### **Reference Documents:**

Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.13,* as amended.

Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Provincial Policy Statement, March 1, 2005.

City of London. Official Plan, June 19, 1989, as amended.

City of London. Zoning By-law No. Z.-1, May 21, 1991, as amended.

City of London. Draft Downtown Master Plan, June 18, 2013

City of London. Downtown London Heritage Conservation District Plan, March 2012

City of London. Smart Moves 2030 Transportation Master Plan, May 2013.

Sifton Properties Ltd. Planning Rationale Report, December 2013.

# Correspondence: (all located in City of London File No. Z-8312 unless otherwise stated) City of London -

Moore R., Wastewater and Drainage Engineering Division. E-mail to A.-B. Watson. January 20, 2014.

Postma R., Urban Forestry. E-mail to A.-B. Watson. January 20, 2014.

Clavet Y., Storm Water Management Unit. E-mail to A.-B. Watson. February 10, 2014.

# **Departments and Agencies -**

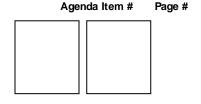
Creighton C., UTRCA. Letter to A.-B. Watson. February 6, 2014.

Dubniak P., London Transit. Letter to A.-B. Watson. February 6, 2014.

Dalrymple, D., London Hydro. Memo to A.-B. Watson. January 20, 2014.

#### Other:

Site visit March 10, 2014 and photographs of the same date.



#### Appendix "A"

Bill No. (number to be inserted by Clerk's Office) 2014

By-law No. Z.-1-14\_\_\_\_\_

A by-law to amend By-law No. Z.-1 to rezone an area of land located at 221-225 Queens Avenue.

WHEREAS Sifton Properties Ltd. has applied to rezone an area of land located at 221-225 Queens Avenue, as shown on the map attached to this by-law, as set out below;

AND WHEREAS this rezoning conforms to the Official Plan;

THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

- 1) Schedule "A" to By-law No. Z.-1 is amended by changing the zoning applicable to lands located at 221-225 Queens Avenue, as shown on the attached map compromising part of Key Map No. A107, from a holding Downtown Area (h-3\*DA2\*D350) Zone, to a holding Downtown Area/ Temporary (h-3\*DA2\*D350/T-(\_)) Zone;
- 2) Section Number 50.2 of the Temporary (T) Zone is amended by adding the following Special Provision:

(T-\_\_) Lands located at 221-225 Queens Avenue, south side, between Wellington Street and Clarence Street, as shown on the attached schedule comprising part of Key Map No. A107, may be used as a surface commercial parking lot for a temporary period not exceeding three (3) years from the date of the passing of this bylaw beginning April 15, 2014.

The inclusion in this By-law of imperial measure along with metric measure is for the purpose of convenience only and the metric measure governs in case of any discrepancy between the two measures.

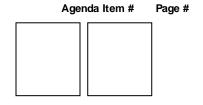
This By-law shall come into force and be deemed to come into force in accordance with Section 34 of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P13*, either upon the date of the passage of this by-law or as otherwise provided by the said section.

PASSED in Open Council on April 15, 2014.

Joe Fontana Mayor

Catharine Saunders City Clerk

First Reading - April 15, 2014 Second Reading - April 15, 2014 Third Reading - April 15, 2014



# AMENDMENT TO SCHEDULE "A" (BY-LAW NO. Z.-1)

