

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

16. Properties located at 250, 268, 270 and 272 Springbank Drive (OZ-8279)

- Ric Knutson, on behalf of the applicant – expressing disagreement with the staff position; apologizing to Councillor D. Brown because they tried to set up a public meeting, there was one scheduled, there was a scheduling conflict and events from February to April overtook the project and they did not quite know what they were dealing with and it ended up under appeal; reiterating that he does apologize; indicating that this has been in the process for over two years now; indicating that the record of pre-consultation was July 17, 2012; indicating that there is an extensive list of studies and issues based exactly on this concept to be addressed; noting that those questions were all asked, answered and all of the documents have been filed; indicating that he was surprised to hear so many comments about the environmentally significant area; advising that Parks Planning was involved and they did file a Land Status Report; advising that Parks Planning and ecological staff absolutely agreed with the findings of that; indicating that, right now, the edge of the environmentally significant area is an asphalt parking lot; indicating that that would be removed and the proposal was to see a substantial portion of this property, the undevelopable portion, transferred to the City so that they could connect Springbank Drive up to a City-owned woodlot that is now landlocked; reiterating that that was a significant portion of that; hearing, in the Planner's comments, about there being inadequate open space; advising that, within the inclusion of that is that the open space not only goes above the 30 percent, but it is closer to 50 percent; indicating that what was not included is the 5 percent open space that would be included in the green roof that is proposed; advising that the sanitary sewer capacity study, and he has a hard time standing here and giving engineering advice to Committee, and yet, what he heard presented to the Committee was not, in fact, what the engineer's discovered; advising that, what was discovered, in a series of meetings, with your engineering staff and the engineer for Rand, was that, yes, there is a problem at Brookdale and no one wants to touch it as it is an old pumping station; indicating that the trailer park is currently providing flows far in excess of what anyone would think that they would be providing and, yet, that is what is happening for a variety of reasons, some understood, some not; advising that, what they did find was an opportunity to upgrade the Wildwood sewer; noting that this was a sewer that was adequate in 2007 when the road was replaced; indicating that it could be oversized and they could divert flows, they could fix a lot of the flow problem at Brookdale and the trailer park pumping station through the upgrade to Wildwood sewer; advising that the total cost of that has been estimated at about \$300,000; showing a drawing of the corridor, similar to the Planner's presentation; advising that the site is completely isolated from the neighbourhood around it; pointing out the City's woodlot, the Coves and Springbank Drive; advising that the entire frontage along Springbank Drive is designated and zoned in one form of commercial or another; advising that they do have height at Wonderland and Springbank, just off of the map shown at the meeting, but in a future map, you will see that there is a Tricar building, there is Springbank Towers which is at the crest of the hill and he believes that it is a 10 or 12 storey building, and other smaller buildings to the east; noting that Springbank Towers is the Y-shaped building that has been there for quite a number of years; advising that, in his presentation, he will be taking the Committee on an aerial tour of the City, to show a view of a lot of existing high rises in low density neighbourhoods; indicating that they are trying to demonstrate that there has been complete stability in those low-rise or low profile areas with the high density there, that has been established, in some cases, for quite some years, in other cases, under construction and we can also see the relationship between high rise and adjacent low density in some of the slides shown at the meeting; indicating that the Committee will see that some of the things that are being criticized on this site that really do not have the same type of application; providing a photograph of the location of high rise buildings in low density areas around the City; indicating that these are not being critical of decisions that have been made, these are to show how these can be integrated and

form part of a low profile neighbourhood; showing photographs of various areas in the City; indicating that he is not going to go into great detail on The London Plan; noting that there are a huge number of supporting policies in it; realizing that it is a draft and out for public comment right now; commenting that they are not on an identified rapid transit route but those do not exist yet; believing that the environmental assessment has not been done yet; suggesting that, when the environmental assessment is done, it will have to consider the possibility that Springbank Drive will become that rapid transit route so the Wonderland Road feeder system would create a transfer station on property that is City-owned right now, the Wonderland Gardens site; advising that there is an already improved roadway going into Downtown; believing that the City owns property between Thames and Ridout Street which could be another transfer station and people are right Downtown; and, going through the business case. (See attached presentation.)

- Alan R. Patton, Patton Cormier and Associates, on behalf of the applicant – pointing out the major issues that were identified at pre-application on July 17, 2012; indicating that every bullet point on the paper that Mr. Patton showed on the overhead had to be dealt with before a complete application was accepted; advising that they went through the whole list; noting that the list includes compatibility studies, bonusing, use of green roofs, urban design study, sanitary flows proposed; reiterating that this is the list that you do not get past pre-application unless you satisfy this in your application; going on to the second page, he is not familiar with the acronym for WADE, finding it interesting that studies, reports or background information to be completed and submitted with the application form; advising that all of those were done and submitted with the application; advising that other issues were to be dealt with, transportation was reviewed; noting that all of transportations concerns were addressed all the way through this; indicating that the stormwater management unit had several concerns; indicating that the stormwater management unit is not objecting to this; indicating that the City has the sanitary problem; pointing out the sanitary solution; indicating that Mr. Knutson went over that; advising that Parks and Recreation concerns have been addressed; indicting that if they are addressed for the high density, and staff is recommending medium density, you know that they have been satisfactorily addressed; indicating that the urban watershed comments have been addressed; indicating that, at this point in time, if you read through the staff report, there are no objections from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, there are no objections from engineering and there are no objections for traffic; advising that this application is consistent that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, which Mr. Knutson has taken you through very clearly; indicating that the point that they were making through his slide show was that there are many, many locations in this City where high density residential is cheek by jowl with low density and Council has approved them; either the previous Councils or this Council; indicating that Pomeroy Place is the most recent and you saw that cheek by jowl, the Committee approved that on the recommendation of the City staff; advising that there is no acceptable adverse impact from this development and what is proposed on the subject site or on adjacent lands; indicating that the matter was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board because staff had 180 days, they had all of their information, they could have written their report and brought it, now they do it and it is post facto; requesting that the Committee look at this matter on the merits of the application as it meets your Official Plan, the Provincial Policy Statement and this is the test that the Ontario Municipal Board will look at time and time again; enquiring that, with what the Committee has seen, will it cause an adverse impact to the subject property or adjacent lands; indicating that it will not; indicating that that is the test; advising that there will be no shadowing, no impact on services, and the applicant has said that if there is a localized problem from Wildwood, we can correct that and that will correct other problems; asking the Committee to recognize that the staff report comes late and is not consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, they had plenty of time to bring this forward and his client is not to be criticized for taking advantage of a provision in the *Planning Act* that is there for a very specific purpose; reiterating that staff had all this information and did not set it down; advising that this represents sound land use planning; and, requesting that the Committee not accept the staff position and asking that it be returned back to staff for an assessment of the high density residential as is before the Ontario Municipal Board.

- Daphne Lowe, 189 Trowbridge Avenue – indicating that she is a resident of the Southcrest area and she is also Nature London’s representative on the Local Advisory Committee for the Coves ESA Conservation Master Plan; advising that she is familiar with the Coves and the subject property; believing that most people who know the Coves think it is just a body of water divided by Springbank Drive, it is familiar, it is worn, but like most things that are familiar, it is taken for granted; indicating that the Coves ESA, with its three ponds, is a rare thing, not just a stormwater drain but the relic of the Thames River of another era, a peaceful refuge within walking distance of the Downtown core, home to a wide species of plants and animals that thrive in quiet sheltered places and a stopover resting place for the migratory birds in spring and fall; indicating that many species of birds frequent its wooded slopes in the summer time and the ponds attract waders like herons and egrets, green and also black crown night herons roost and forage here; advising that kingfishers can be seen from Springbank Bridge diving for food from the trees on the west bank of West Pond and turtles are often seen sunning themselves; migrating shore birds gather on the mud flats to feed in the fall; indicating that some species are rare, some are at risk, all are part of our natural heritage and are treasured for their tenacity in hanging on despite human incursions and destructive tendencies; indicating that they keep us grounded for what is really important in our lives; building a development with two-14 storey residential towers on top of the steep bank on a pond overlooking a beau colic environmentally significant area may be an excellent marketing strategy but it is completely unsuitable for this site; indicating that two-14 storey buildings that are within the 30 metre City guidelines for determining setbacks and ecological buffers will tower over West pond; advising that a look at the conceptual site plan shows that the setback is not 30 metres from the high water mark; indicating that there needs to be a substantial natural barrier to protect the pond and its environs; advising that lights from 240 dwelling units plus security lights will illuminate the night sky around the West pond and change the environment for night creatures and potentially cause confusion to migrating birds; advising that, what is not shown on the plan is that adjacent to the site, just to the west, is a city-owned significant woodlot, part of which lies in the environmentally significant area; indicating that, immediately adjacent to this woodland, which contains a rare stand of trees with apparently almost no buffer will be the access to the underground parking area, a mere three metres from the top of the slope; indicating that construction of this underground parking garage and access will be hard pressed not to encroach into the environmentally significant area and, also, you cannot just put a trail into an environmentally significant area as it is not allowed; indicating that this does not go anywhere, it is landlocked and there are gardens all around the woodlot; indicating that high rises on that tight plot of land, with a blight of constant activity, potential runoff from heavy rainfall on the surface parking area and bright lights are in conflict with the needs of one of London’s precious natural areas; indicating that they are out of keeping with the neighbourhood and the surrounding Greenway Parkland; expressing support for the staff recommendation and she urges the Committee to support it as well; asking that you please keep any developments that you approve to a minimum and bear in mind the requirements of the environmentally significant area and its inhabitants next door and ensure that they, too, have a future for all to share and appreciate; and, advising that to risk disturbing flora and fauna that may be sensitive and intolerant to habitat interference and change is a chance we should not be prepared to take.
- Gary Brown, 35A – 59 Ridout Street – indicating that he could not support all of the proposals tonight; indicating that just because we are showing a bunch of large apartment buildings next to single family homes does not mean that those were good choices in the first place and it does not mean that people were not up here in the Gallery saying no to them as well; reiterating that just because they are there does not mean it was a wise choice; thinking that as we evolve as a planning department and as a City, we realize where appropriate places are for those types of built forms; expressing support for the staff recommendation; indicating that these two towers are not an appropriate built form for this environment; indicating that he also sits on the Local Advisory Committee for the Coves and they are just finishing up the trail plan for Phase 2 of the Environmentally Significant Area Plan; advising that it has been his pleasure to see the passion for the Coves from so many Londoners; advising that he supports good

infill projects but all he can think of this is the great blue heron flying into these two twin towers followed by many birds and wildlife that live in this environmental gem that is in the heart of London; indicating that, from a purely selfish point of view, he cannot imagine the point of view from the quiet Coves with these two giant towers towering over them; reiterating that just because we have built buildings like this in the past, certainly does not mean that we should be continuing to build them in the future; enquiring as to who would pay for the sanitary sewer upgrade if we have to upgrade the pumping station and oversize the pipes.

- Stephen Turner, 463 Tecumseh Avenue East – expressing support for the staff recommendation; indicating that a couple of comments that he heard from the proponent were troubling and it seems that a lot of their refute of the Provincial Policy Statement provisions in there could have applied to anything on that site; noting that it was very generic and was not specific to the building at hand and to the circumstance; and, agreeing with Mr. Brown’s comment that just because we have done something in the past does not mean that we have to forever, in perpetuity, do that same thing over and over again if it was not necessarily right in the past.
- Thomas McClenaghan, - advising that he has been familiar with this area and this site for almost his entire life; requesting the Committee watch a very brief video; identifying that he has been involved with Friends of the Coves for approximately 15 years so he has some knowledge of their work; guessing that, to some degree, the concept of an environmentally significant area may be new to some of you; indicating that all Committee members have a copy of the movie “Crusaders for the Coves”; noting that what he showed the Committee was the trailer that begins that particular movie made by Phil McCloud; advising that, what it attempts to do is to show people why these areas are intrinsic to our quality of life in this City; believing that the Committee has heard from some of the previous speakers, and if you watch that video again, you will hear from more than 20 people, many of whom are residents in South London and near about to the Coves who speak unscripted, they speak from the heart and you heard people a few moments ago speak from the heart as well; advising that this is important and is imperative to his quality of life and to many other people in South London; hence, the concern about what it is happening on the banks; advising that, in the first report that was commissioned by the Friends of the Coves, about the state of the subwatershed, the report cost \$150,000; noting that that was 15 years ago; outlining that the report identified one area, which was the first time the area was identified, the importance of historical vistas; noting that historical vistas are views that have been there forever; advising that the Coves is full of historical views and one is about to disappear; saying to yourself, ok, we have invested money, the City created this environmentally significant area in their plan in 1996; reiterating that not only did the City create the environmentally significant area, but the City has invested in it; indicating that the City bought two pieces of property and own the third; enquiring as to how much they cost; answering a staggering amount; indicating that the City has also done some remediation; noting that there is more to be done; indicating that the City is also in the process of creating a Conservation Master Plan; noting that the City is paying for that as well; enquiring as to what is happening with the Conservation Master Plan; answering that the Plan for the way forward that clearly defines where the boundaries of the environmentally sensitive area are; advising that he repeatedly hears reference to a woodlot; advising that it is not a woodlot, it is part of an environmentally significant area and probably the most important environmentally significant area in the city of London; indicating that, not only is it badly damaged and in the process of being repaired, it also has the richest cultural heritage of any environmentally significant area in the City; advising that if you listen to Dana Poulton in the movie, every history of London begins on March 2, 1793 with the arrival of Governor Simcoe at the Coves, not at the Forks, at the Coves; indicating that this is where London’s true beginning is; believing that, as a Council, what you need to ask yourselves is, here is a development proposal that is surrounded on two sides by an environmentally significant area; believing that what you should be saying to yourselves, is what is this development going to bring to this staggeringly rich asset of this City; outlining that that question has not been asked; reiterating his query as to what this development is going to bring to this environmentally significant area, this important intrinsic part of the heritage of the City; advising that his thought would be that it should

be bringing invisibility; indicating that the City Planner stated that the site needs developing and he could not agree more, but it should be invisible to those people walking within the environmentally significant area, to preserve the historical vista; indicating that people may not think that this is a big deal, but he returned from Ireland last month and it is interesting to see how they are continuing to demand, even restorations of historical vistas because they know it is important to tourism; noting that they are moving ahead with this in a very dramatic way; indicating that this place could be an eco-tourism destination if we get it right; and, indicating that this may be the first wrong step.