

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

### 12. Properties Located at 321 Central Avenue and 585 and 581 Waterloo Street

- Kate Ramsen, Chair, Woodfield Community Association – expressing that it is not often that Woodfield gets proposals like this, noting that since the unveiling of the proposal at the public meeting last spring, to now, it has become clear that residents opinions of this proposal vary wildly, needless to say it is an issue that has the community divided, some hail it as an opportunity to transform a dead lot to a vibrant corner of Woodfield, and others oppose the required demolition of the two adjacent homes at 321 Central and 581 Waterloo, arguing that these homes need to be protected, there are those who land in between these two views; indicating that the Woodfield Community Association discussed this position and in a unanimous vote approved it, the Association does not oppose the proposal for the redevelopment of this site but have cautions and concerns about the efforts to preserve the heritage homes; advising that she will speak about heritage in a bit but first go over a few things that some found promising about the development; expressing that the long time problem with the empty lot that residents have had to pass by in the last 25 years, empty lots, as we know, are detrimental to neighbourhoods, they serve no positive purpose and do not encourage residential integrity; further indicating that the rezoning application for this is purely residential not commercial, while opinions about the design vary, you will hear from those who don't like it as much, others admire the modern look; advising that the Association appreciates the efforts of the developer to work with an acclaimed architect to build a high design building; noting that there are no other empty lots in this community and there is an opportunity to do something great for the site; further expressing that other community friendly design elements based on the conceptual designs we have seen include a consistent front setback as seen on the adjacent streets, ground floor units that resemble townhomes with front doors and pedestrian approaches, a housing style found throughout the community, patio or open spaces on the front on the ground floor units that gives a neighbourhood feel, a step design to look at the massing of the building, accessibility features, offering housing options to accommodate everyone's needs, also the proposal shows underground parking, which would be the first in Woodfield, a below grade parking, of course, enables better land use especial in high density land use such as this; indicating that intensification, where appropriate, compliments many core values for walkable neighbourhoods, close to schools, close to work, places for new residents to live and for current neighbours to move in to when their desire is to downsize, vibrant streets with single families in multi-family developments that work to minimize our City's footprint; indicating that the Woodfield Community Association is very concerned about the demolition of the two homes, it is difficult for us to support this part of the plan; noting that at the public meeting last spring, we asked the developer to save at least one of the homes, the one immediately south of the property at 581 Waterloo, this is one of the oldest homes on the street, to our understanding, likely built in 1888, with Italian innate design and many features of the area, in salvageable condition, even today; noting that under the Woodfield Heritage plan the house bears just a C rating but has value and contents, it contributes to our heritage stock and streetscape; requesting that the City and developer work and try again to work out a means to save a part or all of these buildings; expressing that if these two buildings are allowed to fall with minimal resistance to the consequences to the development many more could face the same fate in the future; advising that demolition can lead to a frightening precedent for all heritage districts in the City, the City and the communities have invested heavily in to these districts and demolition should not be taken lightly; further noting that the Association also understands through conversations with the Architect, Developer and Planning, that this site is very unique, she had been advised and told that the likelihood of a similar situation in development could set precedent is quite slim, but she will look to clarify that with the Planners; noting that LACH approved the development, pending site plan and zoning approval, she expects this will proceed in some shape or form; further noting that she would ask the City to try and establish zoning and site plan provisions that would protect heritage buildings in the future and spell out the unique conditions of the site; further advising that the Woodfield Association advocates residential land use in our community in

general, when redevelopment issues come up we have a tract record with working with developers to reflect the Association and the immediate neighbours position, indicating that redevelopments of this particular scale are rare, but when they do arise we are looking for elements that are compatible and go with our values including heritage high design standards, single or no car family homes, walkability, density where appropriate and an efficient use of infrastructure; in closing we look forward to further discussion about this important redevelopment and hope we can reach a place to satisfy these heritage concerns.

- Cheryl Hogg, 332 Central Avenue – advising that they have been looking at this lot for a long time, it is a bit of an eye sore, and make the entire corner quiet unattractive and she wanted to mention that she does believe that the two homes up for debate on whether they should be demolished or not are rentals and if you live where we do, you can see that there is not a lot of pride of ownership in those buildings; expressing that she doesn't see any problem having them demolished; further expressing that she also believes that if Dr. Harding owns this plot of land and also owns both buildings; asking that if this doesn't go forward what will happen, is it just going to sit there and look exactly the same.
- Paul Woodford, 606 Waterloo Street – indicating that he agrees with my neighbor, that it is just a dead hole right now, he is all for preserving heritage where possible, but the tenant situation has not been good in that house; advising that he is all for it, please approve it.
- Arnon Kaplansky, 599 Maitland Street – indicating that we are calling it intensification but really trying to appease a small group of people; noting that he lives in Woodfield himself and those people do not represent him; advising that if you look to the building to the west, it is an eight story and sits up high on the ground, almost like a nine story look; expressing that if this City is calling intensification to do less then what we have done 20 years ago or 25 years ago, this is not the way to go; further if we want to revitalize the downtown, we have to bring people to the downtown, we are walking distance to the downtown; suggesting that this building be referred back to the Planning Staff and to come back with a proposal of a least 14 to 16 stories that will make the housing more affordable and more people will be able to be in the downtown; advising that his second observation is the use of the *Heritage Act* that this City is doing is quite disturbing; indicating that they are using the *Heritage Act* to combat the *Planning Act*; noting that his daughter was trying to demolish a house on Maitland Street and you people made her spend an extra \$50,000 to rebuild the front portion; pointing out that here you have two houses that you want to demolish and you have no problem, when you want to demolish a historical hospital you have no problem, so you are using the *Heritage Act* not for its purpose; and, indicating that he strongly recommends to the Committee to refer it back to staff and to come back with a higher density, we need people downtown, not only college downtown but we need the people to come downtown.
- Hazel Elmslie, 42 Palace Street – See attached comments.
- Dean Sheppard, 359 Central Avenue – Indicating that he and his partner are proud members of the Woodfield Community Association, even though some call us landlords, as we live in old south; indicating that he just want to say that they have great respect for the Architect involved with this project and is very impressed with the design features and those that have been well articulated here tonight; noting that he thinks that they are exactly the kind of design features that are important for the development on this site, further advising that he is also very supportive of the concept of intensification, and supportive of intensification on this site; although he does object to the concept of devaluing the two buildings because they are rentals and because they are in poor condition, in fact one of them may not be a rental; expressing that the condition of a house is temporary and he thinks we all know that, to demean that in a house which is 100 years old, it is unfair; further indicating that the part of this application that he absolutely has trouble with is of course the demolition of two houses within the Heritage Conservation District; noting that the reasons that have been given for the demolition for these two buildings, as I have heard them, could be applied to any house in the entire Heritage Conservation District; indicating that he has not heard anything that is very unique to these houses that would warrant their demolition and can easily foresee us here again and again and again hearing the same reasons for other parcels within the district; expressing that he has a great concern and he would not like to see the two houses demolished, despite the cleverness of the proposal design.
- Linda Whitney, 487 Dufferin Avenue – indicating that she has written a few letters to the Planners letting them know her concerns for the request for demolition of those properties; indicating that she does not object to a building going into that lot; further indicating that she

thinks it is important, it has been empty; advising that she was remiss at seeing the old Supertest being torn down, she remembers it happening, it was such a wonderful little place but that is gone; indicating that she understands the neighbours who have a problem with the tenants that are in there, but tearing down the buildings is not the answer to that problem; advising that she would like to address a couple of concerns regarding this Plan, she doesn't know where people drop people off, where they pick them up, it's very streetscape like and she understand that, but there is nowhere to come in and turn around, there is nowhere to drop her mom off with her groceries or to stop for temporary parking; indicating that she is not too sure how you address that particular problem in a very residential area.

- John Nicholson – advising that with respect to the drop off specifically, there is a shared front door that is facing Central, there is a downstairs area inclusive of guest parking for a longer term drop off and turn around, it is a question of where one puts the gate; advising that this is something that needs to be fully worked out, the intent is to face the street as the street faces all the houses along it; further advising that just one quick question about the access to the drive to 311 Central granite house; noting that the driveway does go straight in right now, it is important to know that the driveway goes in and drops about 4 ½ feet as it goes along and its really how that space operates, also advising that it is a separate holding that is a separate property as we are looking at than this, the house on the Waterloo Street property is continuous and part of the ownership of that driveway, that is a key part of how this all works; noting that we have been very mindful on how that all goes in as the project is being developed.
- Dan Curry, MHBC – indicating that he wants to speak to two points that were raised by the community, Mr. Davis spoke to one of them earlier on and that was the issue of precedent and whether the demolition of the two residential properties would set a precedent that would lead to potentially further demolitions in the neighbourhood, and the other one, he will speak to was referred to as demolition by neglect; advising that in the first case of precedent, this application and proposed demolitions of the two residential structures would not be a precedent that would lead to further demolition in the rest of the neighbourhood, and the reason for that is that the policies of the heritage conservation district regarding demolition are very specific and limit demolition to really very, specific situations; noting that the policy says that demolition could be considered if there was a catastrophic event, such as a fire, if there was severe structural instability of the property, and of course neither of these two exist in this situation, and thirdly, could be considered on occasion if it is a situation where redevelopment would be appropriate and consistent with the City's policies, so that is the situation here, one out of those three situations where demolition would be considered; noting that this situation is in a location where redevelopment is appropriate, consistent with City policy and other policies that plan, require that justification be undertaken on a site specific basis, so it looks at the site specific location and the other contextual factors in each situation where demolition would be proposed; reiterating that Mr. Davis touched on those and will briefly revisit those, one is the specific context where you have a corner site, a vacant lot, and a corner site that is adjacent to a tall residential apartment building, and notwithstanding that the building is appropriate for the district or not, it exists, it's a fact, and it is part of the context of the site, the adjacent site proposed redevelopment and the second part is also the context or the specifics of the building proposed to be demolished, Mr. Davis mentioned that the building is in this heritage conservation area are grouped into categories, A, B, C and D; advising that these two buildings are group C and their contribution to the District is not because of their individual architectural character or historic associations, but because of where they are located and how they contribute to the streetscape and as was mentioned in the Heritage Impact Assessment; advising that there are a number of similar type buildings represented in this neighbourhood, so its loss of particular note-worthy design or architectural merit; indicating that in short, this application is consistent with the policies of the Heritage Conservation District plan; also reiterating that he mentioned that the plan sets out very specific criteria by which demolition could be considered, and this application meets those criteria; further expressing that there are few, if any, other situations within this district that would be analogous to this, of course if any development or demolition application came forward for other areas of the neighbourhood, as one of the previous speakers suggested that there might in fact be other landowners that are looking at this, it would have to meet some of

those similar criteria, are they an intensification site that is appropriate and would it be consistent with the City policies for intensification, he doubts it; expressing that there are very few vacant sites, as well as what is being proposed to be demolished; advising that the majority of the properties are grouped A and B, about 70 – 75 percent of the buildings in the District are A and B, and those are the ones with the most significant heritage value, only 22 percent are the D class buildings so it's very unlikely you will see a similar situation as this; lastly, speaking about demolition by neglect, the two residential buildings are not owned by Mr. Hardick, they are owned by a different owner, so whatever the state of repair it is not the result of Mr. Hardick's ownership, that is important to understand; further noting that the second important piece is that regardless of their structural integrity or maintenance, it is not a factor for demolition, that is not a factor that we considered in terms whether demolition is appropriate or not, because it is not a valid justification for demolition, as you can appreciate why; further indicating that what they looked at was a number of factors that was just outlined before, but structural stability, maintenance and the upkeep of the houses were not one of them; further expressing that in their view, to come back to the precedent, the Heritage Impact Assessment was completed, supported by staff and ultimately supported by LACH, recommends demolition because it is consistent with the policies of the HCD plan.