

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

7. Properties located at 2605-2651 Tokala Trail (OZ-8500)
 - Greg Priamo, Zelinka Priamo Ltd., on behalf of the applicant – advising that as indicated by staff in what is a very thorough report, which they have had an opportunity to review as well as meet with staff, the local councillor and the neighbourhood; indicating that they are very pleased that by collaborating they have been able to arrive at an appropriate proposal that has merited the recommendation from Planning staff to this Committee; outlining that the issue that they wish to speak to is the matter of the permission to execute, as part of their office development, is the provision of paid parking; indicating that it is a unique circumstance in this instance; speaking to the Committee on this as part of a land use planning standpoint; pointing out that given the uniqueness in this circumstance he would like for the Committee to hear from Dr. Siddiqi, who is a Member of the medical group that is pursuing this project; giving the Committee a brief understanding of the nature of their function and why it is important for the development; outlining that as indicated by the user group, this is a unique situation and when we are dealing with this from a land use planning standpoint, he thinks that it merits some consideration; indicating that this is not a spec suburban office opportunity, it is not even a spec medical/dental building opportunity, it is very specific and designed to meet a specific need, a need that is not being addressed in the City of London; pointing out that this is a nationally significant type of operation; advising that the prohibition on paid parking in this instance came about as a result, as he understands, and he was involved in the project, being a single project that was constructed on Springbank Drive and as a result of the introduction of paid parking, there was a propensity by some of the users of the building to take advantage of off-street parking which, arguably, in that situation, it was like the perfect storm as parking was extremely convenient, it was directly across the street from the front door of the building and it was even facilitated by a signalized intersection so people did not have to worry about crossing a busy arterial road; because they were given the opportunity to do so at a controlled crosswalk; noting that it is understandable that that circumstance happened; advising that the City and the operator took measures and, as he understands it, the problem has largely resolved itself at this point; indicating that the response to that was that we should not be doing this; pointing out that on a site specific basis he does not know that that was an inappropriate thing to do from a zoning standpoint; indicating that the challenge that they have with the zoning regulation is that it was a blanket prohibition City-wide responding to a single circumstance and there was no mechanism built into the regulation that could be used if Committee and Council chose to assess whether or not relief from that prohibition is appropriate in circumstances that were not contemplated at the time that the regulation was designed; believing that, in the event that there was such a mechanism, this would be a candidate site; pointing out that as you can see from the air photo that is being shown at the meeting, the proximately of potential locations for people wishing to defeat the paid parking opportunity are reasonably remote from this location and ultimately would require quite a distance walking to the clinic; noting that walking a significant distance would be a challenge for people visiting the back institute; reiterating that it would be far less convenient than that which existed on Springbank Drive; pointing out that, given the significance of the proposal, the uniqueness of the proposal and the benefits that the Municipality will derive from it, he thinks that it is reasonable under the circumstance to consider relief from that prohibition and assist in the delivery of this service by acknowledging that paid parking is an important component of the viability of the project; urging the Committee to consider that and adopt the request of the applicant to include, in the amending documents, relief from that prohibition; (*Note: Mr. G. Priamo responds to enquiries relating to the financial element of the proposal.*); prefacing their comments on the fact that it is important to the viability of the project but the request is not an economic request, it is a land use planning request; suggesting that the relief from the prohibition based on the basis for which we understand that the prohibition was provided, when you look at the land use

planning considerations in this location, it does not create, in their view, the circumstances that led to that prohibition; reiterating that providing relief from the prohibition does not defeat the spirit and intent of the original prohibition which is similar to all land use planning amendments; pointing out that we start with why do we have the current policies, what is the nature of the amendment that they are providing and are they maintaining the spirit and intent of the original policies and maintaining good planning; indicating that he does not have an accounting presentation to present to the Committee and he does not think that the Committee necessarily wants to see that but we are advising you, as part of our request, to consider the land use planning that the financial considerations are significant and have the ability to affect the viability of this project; emphasising that it is important that the Committee understand that no parking is free, no matter where you provide parking; pointing out that if you are buying land and constructing parking lots, that gets factored into the cost of the development; suggesting to the Committee here is that the proposal that is being presented is challenged in its ability to build in the cost of that feature into the economics of the building itself because it is not like a retail plaza where you can increase the rent to the tenants by a certain amount and that covers the cost of building and maintaining the parking lot; responding to the question, yes, it is important to the viability of this project to be allowed to do the paid parking, without it, the viability of this project is extremely threatened; reiterating that this is a very significant component to this project otherwise they would not be bothering with the efforts that they have taken to advance the proposal through staff and to the Committee; (*Note: Mr. F. Siddiqi responds to enquiries relating to the boundary of the clients that will be assisted at this location.*); indicating that the current boundaries extend from Brantford to Chatham/Kent, including Sarnia, as far north as Tobermory; noting that most of their patients are coming from Owen Sound, Sarnia, Chatham and as far east as Brantford.

- Dr. F. Siddiqi, applicant - advising that his group is the London Spine Centre, based out of Victoria Hospital; outlining that they are a group of four spine surgeons who are actively treating patients within Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) two but they are also receiving a lot of patients coming out of other LHIN's such as LHIN one which comprises Sarnia; advising that their catchment area is approximately 1,600,000 to 1,700,000 individuals; noting that their clients are from Brantford, Chatham/Kent and up to Tobermory; indicating that the issue, both within Ontario and throughout the country, unfortunately, with spine disease is the wait times are required to see a specialist; advising that they are receiving approximately 600 to 650 referrals a month for four surgeons, which has ballooned to approximately 18 months for a consultation; facing a crisis; pointing out that many of them have been advised to close their practices, which they have decided not to do, because it does not provide adequate care to the patient population; indicating that the solution to this is very clear, the literature is very clear; pointing out that the Cochrane Database has done a very thorough review of best care practices for the spine which concluded that an interdisciplinary spine care model is what is required to push this forward; noting that it not only reduces wait times but it improves standard of care and standard of practice; advising that that is what is being proposed for the site currently; outlining that they have been actively recruiting; bringing in physicians from Calgary, Ottawa and Toronto to participate in this plan, they have an active physiotherapy as well as radiology group that is coming in; reiterating that it really is a very unique model; indicating that this is the first model that is not funded by the government; pointing out that it is an OHIP based practice, there is not any "private medicine" or two tier medicine being provided; providing adequate care for this patient population; advising that they have looked at a number of public avenues, both within the hospital, government funding agencies and the LHIN; saying that, in the current environment, there are none; indicating that they have been left with an orphaned patient population that is not being responded to; contextualizing the desperation of the population, five percent of patients on an annual basis will develop some sort of severe, debilitating back pain; noting that by debilitating back pain, he means time off work and lost productivity based on the medical description and that is about 75,000 patients per year for our region, for that 1,500,000 patient population; becoming very dire; pointing out that the issue is funding any of this and the physicians themselves are prepared to put their own incomes in the way; looking at substantial expenses that they

are assuming compared to what they are taking on at the hospital, which is essentially, a free overhead structure to provide patients with this opportunity; indicating that the controlled parking really does figure in to the economics of the sustainability of such a model simply because the expenses that go along with providing these services, whether it be the infrastructure expense or the operational expense, is substantial and without governmental funding sources, municipal funding sources or LHIN funding sources, the only source that they can rely upon is the population that is visiting the clinic; advising that it is no different than what the hospital does, the hospital charges fairly exorbitant parking fees which have been criticized roundly but unfortunately, in the current funding environment, it is the only available opportunity for income stream to support such a clinic operation; hoping to set up a world class facility, it is a Fowler type model for spine care; advising that it has worked in the past and has worked elsewhere and there is no reason why it cannot work in London and really provide a substantial boon for the population, both in London and within our region.

- Ryan Wagner, 1791 Brown Drive – advising that the Notice does not outline what other types of businesses or shops can set up at the proposed location; and, enquiring as to what the effect could be on property taxes. (*Note: the Civic Administration respond to the questions.*)