

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

14. Property located at 50 King Street (Z-8372)

- Tom Tillman, Tillman Ruth Robinson Architects, on behalf of the applicant – advising that they were retained in April, 2015, to further the file of what the design could be; believing that it was too thin when it first came through the Planning and Environment Committee; indicating that, after it was sent back, they were retained by the County of Middlesex to put together the potential of what this could be; pointing out that what they have put together, they think, is really an illustrative design of what could be; pointing out that what the Committee is looking at is an area, the area in colour on the presentation, that looks to be a whole project, a holistic solution, so it does look at the potential of involving City lands to the west, which is represented by approximately one and a half of the tiered surface parking spaces that are outlined; indicating that two and a half of the tiered parking spaces belongs to the County as part of their property; noting that approximately one quarter of the County site is occupied by surface parking; looking to remove the parking from the surface, which will end up below grade and above grade within the building form; noting that this is being written into the rezoning; advising that what is of some interest is what this site has gone through over the years; noting that they have taken two images from different periods in time and, interestingly enough, forty years ago, in 1974, the one area you are looking at, the site was probably more than fifty percent parking with some buildings at the perimeter so it has gone through transformations, that is not unusual; however, that does not necessarily mean it was right but it is a site that has had a lot of different developments on it; advising that what was important, when they were retained by the County, was that they ran a workshop with the County and looked at what the design goals were, what the vision was that the County had; reading the slide, “to add value to the Fork of the Thames, one of the Transformational Projects identified London’s Downtown Master Plan, by creating dynamic spaces for activities throughout all seasons and hours of the day. Draw people into and through the site to the Thames. Capitalize on the energy before and after Budweiser Garden events; create a landmark building which will redefine how people think about Southwestern Ontario; create a sustainable development that will make economic sense and appeal to potential public/private partnerships”; indicating that, with that in mind, there was a program that the County provided to them that looked at combining a mixed use development that would have commercial space, office space and residential space; advising that, for them as architects, it became important for how those things come together, where do they get placed in the site, what are the things that are driving building placement; stating that they were aware of some of the issues relating to site lines, about the engagement of a building onto Ridout Street; advising that, immediately, they started looking at breaking the building down; noting that it begins with a three storey base or podium that is occupied at the base level with the commercial space; indicating that that is not to say that it would become commercial space, it could be, through the partnerships that come in the future, it could be a public use; advising that the office component was broken down into two pieces with about half of the five storey office component brought towards Ridout Street and pulling the residential tower away from Ridout Street, bringing it closer to the River and improving the shadowing effect that would happen on the existing court house; indicating that there were a number of elements like that; pointing out that the design, while it is not a finished design, is not the final design but there are moves here that would be pursued as this project moves forward; stating that there is one level of below grade parking and two levels of above grade at the second and third levels that accommodates parking for about three hundred forty-four cars; discussing the connections made back through to King Street, the alignment of the atrium space, which is the yellow component on the presentation, does provide a visual link that does not currently exist and that is being written into the zoning; outlining that the great lawn that was talked about in Mr. Davis, File Planner’s presentation, was very much desired from the County and made a lot of sense to them as designers and architects, that there be an accessible public green space between the court house and the new development; noting that it is the smaller circle on the presentation; pointing

out that it is also important as to what happens at the intersection of Ridout Street and King Street and by pulling the building back, creating a more pedestrian friendly environment at that location and looking west along the property where you see the zig-zag of space, the potential of doing something with City involvement that connects to the River that could work with the Back to the River projects; noting that it is just an idea that there needs to be something that holistically pulls the whole project together; indicating that, certainly the connections to the River, all the way back to Covent Garden Market, allowing that access to exist for public use was a very important part of the project; reiterating that the relationship to the court house, as he previously mentioned, was also important; stating that they purposely peeled back parts of the building so that views from the street were improved and changing some of the landscape around so that it is more accessible so that it is not as unfriendly as it might be but also using elements from the heritage, the old jail walls, those then become important features as part of establishing a good landscape solution; showing a diagram, at street level, the red components representing the commercial space, the light yellow space is the atrium space that rises all the way through the building to the eighth storey allowing light deep into the building, which is also important; outlining that they do think about what is happening inside the building even though a lot of the discussion today has been about what is happening outside of the building; commenting that the idea of creating a view to the River, a terminus where they show a water feature that is in line with the east-west connection through the site back to Covent Garden Market, they think, is a very important feature and so a number of the elements of this design are being put forward in the application through the bonusing as part of this rezoning application; stating that, from an overall site organization, the residential component, they did move the building west to help improve views from the other towers that currently exist but to reduce the shadow effect on the existing court house; pointing out that the other important element of this project is to introduce sustainability; noting that this project was looking to and will achieve a Leads Silver as it moves forward but it was activating things like roof terraces, creating places for amenities for people who live in the residential area or who will go here as part of their work day, that there was a number of places that would activate the whole development; showing an image of how the building and the development itself sort of links itself down to the River, a very conscious decision that it be a place and a development that operates on a twenty-four seven type of use so the introduction of commercial space; advising that, currently, there are a lot of folks who do park at the County lands for events at Budweiser Gardens and it just ends up being a transition space through this site but the intent is to make a bigger engagement, if you will, from the River, through the site, to Budweiser Gardens and then into the Downtown; showing images that talk more about form not necessarily about actual look but then again, what is being looked at for approval, there is discussion about amounts of glass, clear glass, types of materials that would be used; looking at the base component around the building, using that as a way to tell stories about what is happening with the County, what is happening in Southwestern Ontario as well as the City; showing that a look back from Covent Garden Market looking west across to Budweiser Gardens; showing an image of the office component in the foreground and the residential tower in the back; and, looking from Ridout Street and Dundas Street, a view looking south and west so the development acting as a back drop to the court house and then from the Dundas Street bridge looking across the River and a night shot with a view from the Wharncliffe Road South bridge. (See attached presentation).

- Alan R. Patton, Patton Cormier & Associates, on behalf of area residents, particularly from 19 King Street and other buildings in the area – pointing out that there are a large number of people in the Gallery and he is not presupposing that what he is suggesting limits the public in any way; advising that, for those people who have come forward, been the spokesmen, giving him instructions and retaining him, he is going to ask first that the Committee hears from Mr. Harris and then from Mr. Berry and then he will address the Committee on matters of land use planning and flaws in the staff analysis and where he is going; pointing out that the current zoning on this property is DA-1 with the height of four stories, fifteen metres, which is forty-nine feet, with the full range of DA-1 uses, it allows all of the commercial, residential, limited to the height of a four storey building; indicating that is what is appropriate for the historic Forks of the Thames; as you are listening to this, he hopes that you have in mind what you just heard about the Forks of

the Thames in the previous presentation; advising that he has severely edited his notes because of the comments already provided by Mr. Harris and Mr. Berry and the other members of the public; advising that there is not any justification for moving away from the zoning that is on that property now, a DA-1 Zone, a Downtown Area Zone, that allows residential development to an appropriate scale given the other uses that are on the property; saying to the Committee that, if you look at the height and mass of the buildings that are there now, a four or five storey building will blend in with the County building, it will blend in with the historic jail, it will blend in with the London and Regional Art Museum; pointing out that it is interesting when you go back to, and you know the history of the London and Regional Art Museum, that was designed by Moriyama, and, for quite a while, that was subject to a lot of criticism, and one of the criticisms shortly after it was built, was that it looked like the bus bays and the subway station where all of the buses would enter, drop off the people that would get into the subway station; noting that it did look like that for a while but, over time, it blended in and people realized what Moriyama was trying to do with his architecture, which was to blend in with the Forks of the Thames, it was the waves of the River and the greyish tone of the water; indicating that it is a low rise building with appropriate landscaping and facilities that let you look out over the historic Forks of the Thames; stating that you do not need a thirty storey building that dominates the skyline in that way; advising that there are many other opportunities coming in Downtown London right now; noting that there is a Tricar development underway that the Committee saw fit to provide bonusing for at Talbot Street and Dufferin Avenue, there are at least three other applications, there is one at the corner of King Street and Clarence Street that has not yet been submitted to the Municipality but there has been pre-consultation on it and he knows that one will move forward quickly as there was a little glitch for a while as to whether there was going to be a substantial taking at that corner for the bus rapid transit system but he understands that may not be the case now; otherwise the private sector will be fulfilling Downtown development there with a very impressive development; indicating that the private sector is moving forward to intensify residential development and some associated commercial development; pointing out that the other one, beyond the Art Gallery, Ivey Park was a gift to the City by the Ivey family to celebrate the Forks of the Thames; advising that it is an active area and it will be increasingly active; asking the Committee to find that the building that they see tonight and the County says is appropriate for this site; pointing out that they do not have a partner, we do not know who is going to step forward to develop it; indicating that that is a big problem; enquiring if ACME Developments is going to come along and say to the County and the City, we love the site but not that building and have an entirely different vision; advising that the planning that the City has had, through its Zoning and Official Plan, is quite sufficient there; reiterating that it is DA-1, with a range of complimentary commercial uses or office uses, mixed use development, at a scale that is appropriate, sensible and compatible with everything else in that block that the Committee saw in the previous presentation; indicating that he is normally here saying build it bigger, build it higher, build it faster, but not in this case; indicating that he has not had any clients come to him and say that they would like to partner with the County on that; noting that he has other developers eager to move forward on other sites in the Downtown, Tricar is underway, others are in the mill so this is not critical, this is not going to be the savior of the Downtown; and, stating that the zoning is appropriate and to stay the course.

- Mike Harris, 2401-330 Ridout Street North – advising that he was here in October, 2014 going through this; noting that some of the faces have changed and wanting to acknowledge that; going through what has been gone through before and pair the similarities of what they saw the last time; pointing out that the area in question is historically known as the court house; advising that what the County of Middlesex is trying to do is build a twenty-eight storey building there; advising that, in October, 2014, all fourteen Councillors and the Mayor voted a similar project down; noting that was a thirty storey building; stating that the message was that the Council would really like to hear from the resident and the applicant getting together and having a discussion and he would like to clarify that the County of Middlesex did not have any discussions outside of the plan that they already brought, namely, the project today; wanting to understand why this did not happen because this was the direction of the previous Council; noting that they would really like to get an answer of why there was not any discussion if this was the direction of the previous Council; comparing what was referred back, it was a thirty storey mixed use

building, this one is a twenty-eight storey mixed use building; pointing out that from the residents point of view, this is exactly the same building that they brought the last time that was referred back, fifteen to zero; referring to Mr. B. Rayburn's point, they are not even clear on what the final building will look like and they will not know until they know who their partners are; commenting that when the architect, Tillman, gets up here and he goes through what the building is all about, he is wondering if that is even going to be the building; advising that these are some of the questions that the residents are asking; providing a visual based on the information that was provided to them; noting that the 2014 request was a twenty-eight storey building and the 2015 request is a twenty-eight storey building but from where they are standing, clearly the one at 2015 seems like a much bigger building; indicating that the other thing that they are curious about was, on page 180 of the Planning and Environment Committee Agenda, the London Advisory Committee on Heritage was looking for the heritage impact assessment for the area; noting that this was a request from 2014 and the request is still outstanding; wondering why the Planning Department is allowing the County to submit another similar request without providing a heritage impact assessment as this was outstanding from the last session in October, 2014; advising that we all know a lot about the court house so he will not spend a lot of time on it, but he is advising that it is a Priority One heritage building; understanding that there are other Priority One heritage buildings, but given the beauty of this space, it is a great spot for a wedding; indicating that this is clearly the most important Priority One building that we have in London; providing a little bit of history, which he found interesting, the designer was John Ewart; advising that John Ewart designed the Parliament buildings in 1818, court houses, jail and home district in Quebec, the Ontario Court of Appeals; interestingly, all of these buildings have restrictions of what can be built around them; believing this to be a really important point when we look at this area; pointing out that we all understand that, in the history of Simcoe, he wanted to make London the capital of Canada; indicating that for the court house, itself, they wanted a top architect designing that; noting that there is a lot of press out there, he is not going to spend a lot of time on press and many of the Committee Members are quoted in the press saying what a great project the Back to the River is; believing that everyone in London is very excited about this project and everyone in London understands that this is really a cross roads for London of turning it into a great city; expressing excitement; commenting that we have got a lot of smart people that worked on this project; indicating that the beauty of it is that the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority is on side, the City of London is on side and we have got a great partner in The London Community Foundation really driving this; hoping that this application gets turned down so that Back to the River can move forward; pointing out that, in the immediate area, they have Ivey Park, Water Park, the Blackburn Memorial Fund who contributed \$450,000, the Forks of the Thames Beautification project, the Labour Memorial Park, the Canadian Heritage River System, Harris Park and the City Bike Path; reiterating that this is an important space; indicating that you hear time and time again that this is clearly the heart of the city and he does not think that anyone would disagree with that; reading some comments from leadership, we can do better, we need to reinvest in our riverfront, we need to imagine what that could be; noting that that was a comment made by the Mayor and this is where we need to get this right; indicating that a study has been done that for every dollar invested in the River brings \$30 back; expressing that building this building is short sighted; stating that, if we think that we are going to get tax revenue and they are going to do a good job, building this building, he thinks, will distract other developers from coming to the City; doing the Back to the River project properly will encourage private investment, will encourage infilling; advising that the residents of London Downtown want more infill, we want better buildings, we just do not want this building, in this location and we think that it is a great building but not for that spot; asking the Committee use leadership to turn down the planning request and acknowledge that the current zoning is sufficient and should not be changed; commenting that the Back to the River project has the support of the Upper Thames River Conservation Area, the London Community Foundation and the City of London; and, asking the City to recognize the amount of work and investment that has been put into this project and to provide the necessary support to ensure its success. (See attached presentation.)

- John Berry, 901-19 King Street – indicating that 19 King Street is the very last building along King Street, west of where this proposed development would be; stressing that he is not here to complain about his view being blocked, he has a beautiful view of the River already and this will not change it in the slightest; advising that he stresses that because he looks out every day on Ivey Park and he probably has a better idea, in the four seasons of the year, how that park is now used than anyone else in this room, it is his daily view when he gets up in the morning and he is so thankful to live there; thanking everyone for the excellent discussion on the Back to the River project which he watched via the live streaming; advising that, like Mr. Harris, a year ago he stood before the Planning and Environment Committee and, with many other London residents, he voiced objections to the initial rezoning proposal for 50 King Street; indicating that those objections covered a long list and he is not going to go into any of that level of detail again; noting that it included history, heritage, wind effects, traffic, shadows, impact on access to the River and Ivey Park, inappropriate use of public land and gargantuan architecture that was totally out of scale with the heritage buildings around it; incidentally, that last issue appears to have seized City Planners in Wortley Village now but it does not seem to have had any impact on the Downtown; indicating that the current proposal before us adds detail to last year's submission but, as Mr. Harris has pointed out, it is essentially the same concept and the additional detail only serves to increase the seriousness of last year's objections which led City Council then to withhold approval in their wisdom by a unanimous vote; pointing out that this afternoon the Committee discussed the Back to the River project which is an incredibly significant development and he would like to thank Mayor M. Brown and Councillor P. Hubert and others for the strong support that they have provided for that; noting that it is really welcome and appreciated; advising that it gives a vision of what could be, not what is, but what builds on what is and makes it even better; indicating that it has already attracted several hundred thousand dollars of private and tax payers money and this is only the beginning; pointing out that it is in the same city block as the 50 King Street development and today the Committee has seen two very different pictures, both conceptual pictures, which start at the River and look across Ivey Park up the slope to King Street and present an idea of what it could be; noting that one of those pictures is in the Ribbon on the Thames as well as in Mr. Harris's presentation, the other is on the cover of the urban design brief that has been presented by the County; stating that those two pictures could not be more different and the Committee is going to have to choose which one of them that they want; parenthetically, he thinks that the Committee already did choose this afternoon when the Committee voted unanimously to proceed with Back to the River; wondering if maybe this whole discussion this evening about rezoning is pointless as you cannot do it; explaining this thinking, in the Ribbon on the Thames proposal, quoting "their vision will allow for the earliest access to the River, the creation of new events and gathering spaces that can be programmed for planned activities and opening up the front of Downtown to the Forks"; stating that, when you go to the Urban Design Brief, on the other hand, the vision here is to create a development in terms of a twenty-eight storey apartment block and commercial space that anchors King Street and creates a strong visual terminus from the Covent Garden Market; pointing out that that vision is not Back to the River, standing in front of Covent Garden Market is back to a shopping mall, offices and an apartment block; indicating that where the service corridor for that development, they have been told, is going to be on the west side; commenting that Back to the River will not open up visual space Downtown, it will instead look up to the back alley of a shopping mall; revitalizing Downtown, creating urban buzz, those things we all want to happen; creating increased densification of residential development, this will only happen if Downtown is an attractive place to live; stating that people expect public amenities, they expect parkland, public spaces and a sense of the history and heritage that anchors the city that we should be so proud of in London; indicating that a good development should add to this, not remove priceless public land from the iconic site beside the Forks; pointing out that this rezoning proposal, by that argument, represents bad development; frankly, the design in the urban design brief is a stunningly beautiful piece of architecture; commenting that he would love to see it built but not on the proposed site; advising that it is inappropriate on public land in the most iconic heritage protected city block in London; indicating that Mr. Harris talked about the London Advisory Committee on Heritage and it has already been noted that we have been waiting for more

than one year for a heritage impact assessment; advising that the land at 50 King Street could be so much more than yet another high rise; thinking that the proposed rezoning is a failure of vision, it would erect a tombstone to a missed opportunity, the once in a lifetime opportunity to develop a stunning river destination that would put London on the map just as the Forks development did in Winnipeg some time ago; advising that that development took place on private land, it was a CN yard previously and it is now the premier public attraction in the city, it is rated #1 by Trip Advisor as the place to go in the City of Winnipeg; commenting that 50 King Street is, in fact, public land so we have a head start if we can get the County on side rather than opposed to Back to the River, its development can and should contribute to creating the most splendid public space Downtown, space that would be a credit to London; commenting that we can do as well as Winnipeg, we should do better even; expressing that this rezoning proposal should not be sent back for further adjustment, it should be rejected outright; stating that Council wisely decided some years ago that the current zoning with its height limitation was the most appropriate in relation to the adjacent heritage buildings; advising that the City and County need to work together with leadership and vision to find a win-win solution within the current zoning that would involve integrating the County lands at 50 King Street into the Back to the River design; commenting that he is an old man, this is a 20 year project, and he probably will not live to see it so he is speaking for his children and his grandchildren; and, advising that he does not want them to look back and say what on earth were they smoking in 2015; and asking the Committee to please reject this application.

- Murray Kelly, 1201-19 King Street – expressing support for Mr. Berry's comments; commenting that this City Council has to make a decision and, in his opinion, whatever decision is made is going to become this Council's legacy; pointing out that there is no rush about this, there is lots of time; advising that he does not understand why a meeting is being held tonight and a final decision is being made in one week; indicating that this is too important for that; reiterating that this is Council's legacy; encouraging Council to get it right; advising that they are with the Council as much as they can be, they are not against it, but they have to make sure as this is a great opportunity, this land could be a gateway to the Thames River; and, reiterating that we get it right.
- John Palmer, 602-19 King Street – indicating that he is also trying to do this for the sake of posterity and not for his own benefit; advising that he also appeared before the Committee in October, 2014 and one of the big issues that he raised in his presentation then was that the material that they were provided showed that the shadows from that building that was planned would not really cover the court house; indicating that the material that he presented showed that the shadows from the planned building then, the thirty storey building, would more than cover the court house and his problem with this proposal is that even though the building has been moved slightly to the west, it is still going to cover the historic building for much of the time; stating that, if you move the building a little to the west, that means you do not get the noon sun, you get the afternoon sun with even longer shadows and that is going to cover that building; furthermore, moving it to the west means that the morning sun is going to cover Ivey Park and the splash pad and so the shadow issue has not been addressed despite what people have said in their very Orwellian tones; expressing concern by what he thinks of as duplicitous presentation from the planning body, it really bothers him that they give us these drawings and then say, well it might not look like this; noting that he is reminded of people who say that you have to vote for it and approve it before you find out what is in it; commenting that he does not think that that is the way that governments ought to be run; providing one very trivial example, the market link which appears in what he saw in Diagram 3.1 in their site plan, there is an arrow that goes from the Budweiser Gardens parking lot to this thing called a great lawn; stating that he does not know how that is called a market link at all because if you try to go from the market to what would be the great lawn, you have to go up and down a bunch of stairs at the Budweiser Gardens and then you have to wend your way around the trucks that are parked there unloading at the back of the Budweiser Gardens, then you have to climb a fence at Ridout and you have to jaywalk across Ridout Street; reiterating that that is not a market link, that is an arrow that someone drew there and said that it is a market link; furthermore the great lawn that is planned there, he challenges people to try to grow grass and call that a lawn when you have a building that tall with that little space there; outlining that the way the building is set up there now with the County

health building, there is grass, there is trees, the stuff that is closer to the health building is paving stone because grass will not grow there, that is not going to be a great lawn, that is going to be a great tunnel and it will not be much different from the great tunnel that is between the court house and the Bell building downtown where no one is willing to go after dark; reiterating that it is not going to be a great lawn, it is not going to be any kind of a market link, it is going to be something that is very dark and that is going to overshadow the heritage building that we have there; and, commenting that he would really like to see if someone has some sort of a contract with someone who has spray green paint and they are anticipating that they will get the contract to spray that lawn green because it is not going to be green otherwise.

- Mohamed Moussa, 155 Thornton Avenue - feeling like he is very much in the minority, if he is not the only person in attendance who looks at this as another piece in the puzzle to revitalize Downtown; expressing support for the staff recommendation and any of the design cues that are required are dealt with at a later stage, during site plan; and, reiterating that it is one more piece of the puzzle of revitalizing Downtown.

Note: Questions were asked of Mr. A. Patton, Patton Cormier and Associates and Mr. Tillman, Tillman Ruth Robinson Architects, with respect to this application.