

June 15, 2016

K. Tonkovic
58 Essex Street
London, ON N6G 1B2

RECEIVED JUN 17 2016

Mr. Leif Maitland
Planner
City of London Planning Division

FILE NO _____
REFERRED TO _____
SUBSEQUENT REFERRALS _____
 FOR ACTION FILE
 FOR INFORMATION B.F.
 FOR REPORT OTHER

RE: O-8478 – BIGS NEIGHBOURHOOD SECONDARY PLAN
AMENDMENT / ADOPTION OF THIS PLAN

Mr. Maitland:

I strongly oppose the Beaufort/Irwin/Gunn/Saunby (BIGS) Neighbourhood Secondary Plan.

The BIGS Plan describes the **Central Neighbourhood Node** as being at the centre of the BIGS Secondary Plan Area consisting of the properties which border the intersection of Wharncliffe Road North, Western Road and Essex Street. The Central Neighbourhood Node is to function as a gathering space and provide the most intensive residential and commercial components within the BIGS Secondary Plan. This area will permit low-rise apartments and mixed-use buildings with commercial at grade. Within this area the **buildings are to be between 3 and 6 storeys and no more than 8 with bonusing.**

The BIGS Plan describes the **Civic Corridor** consisting of the Wharncliffe Road frontage from the Canadian Pacific tracks to the southern limit of Grosvenor Lodge, excluding the Central Neighbourhood Node at the intersection of Wharncliffe Road/Western Road and Essex Street. The Civic Corridor provides for the highest intensity residential uses outside the Central Neighbourhood Node. This area will permit stacked townhouses, fourplexes, low-rise apartments, emergency care establishments, lodging houses, and supervised residences. Within this area the **buildings are to be between 2 and 4 storeys and no more than 6 with bonusing.**

There are many aspects of the BIGS Neighbourhood Secondary Plan which do not make sense. For example, the idea of the Central Neighbourhood Node which proposes constructing low-rise apartment buildings with commercial space. Currently, commercial space exists in this area. Double Double Pizza & Chicken and Hi-Yi Mini-Mart exist on Essex Street. Complete Health Solutions and Scizzorhands Hair & Esthetics exist on Wharncliffe Road. The idea of new construction in the Central Neighbourhood Node and the Civic Corridor is completely unnecessary. Given that adequate commercial space and rental housing now exists in the neighbourhood, why is the City trying to re-invent the wheel. In the area there are plenty of places to live, buy food, get medical care, etc.

The mass development that the BIGS Plan proposes is not required. University students with limited funds who are receiving financial assistance from the government and international students cannot afford to rent in the proposed new apartment buildings. The rent would be high and in many cases, tenants would be required to pay rent plus utilities. Whereas the rental housing is more affordable in the existing smaller dwellings such as the duplexes and the bungalows. In many of these existing rental properties, the student is just paying rent and not utilities. Also, students desire a backyard where they can have barbecues and socialize with other neighbours.

The BIGS Neighbourhood Secondary Plan states that the Central Neighbourhood Node and the Civic Corridor would accommodate the most intensive form of development. This idea does not sit well with the neighbourhood residents. We will suffer from the most intensive form of development envisioned for the Central Neighbourhood Node and the Civic Corridor. Why? Because many of our homes are in close proximity to these areas. The BIGS Plan allows for a wide range of building heights in these areas. This will have a negative impact on adjacent or nearby properties. No doubt, the residents would be able to view buildings that are up to 4 or 6 or 8 storeys high. This undesirable view would destroy the original pleasant character of the neighbourhood. The view would be quite an eyesore since it would not be in scale with the other buildings.

The City plans on widening Western Road to decrease traffic congestion and increase safety. However, the BIGS Plan to add new construction at the Central Neighbourhood Node and the Civic Corridor will only further bombard the intersection at Western Road and Wharnccliffe Road North with enormous congestion to an already busy and dangerous intersection. On the one hand, the City wants to solve the problem of traffic congestion and lack of safety by widening Western Road. But on the other hand, the BIGS Plan would bring back and increase all the traffic congestion and lack of safety by its plan of intensive new construction at the Central Neighbourhood Node and the Civic Corridor. It is senseless to defeat the purpose of widening Western Road.

The BIGS Plan describes the **Neighbourhood Area** consisting of the residential lands on either side of the Civic Corridor. **The intensification will be in forms and at a scale compatible with the existing character**. The area is to recognize existing low-density residential in the area as an integral component of attracting a varied and diverse resident base. Neighbourhood areas will maintain their existing character while allowing for low impact forms of intensification. The Neighbourhood Area will permit uses such as 3 and 4-plexes and street townhouses. Within this area the **buildings are to be between 2 and 3 storeys**.

I am a homeowner in the Neighbourhood Area. My neighbours and I strongly oppose the construction of townhouses in the Neighbourhood Area. Townhouses will not maintain the low-density residential character of the area. Constructing townhouses will just provide a dormitory-style appearance to the neighbourhood. This unappealing look will not attract a varied and diverse resident base as stated in the BIGS Plan. Certainly, the view would not be pleasant. We already have enough new monstrous sized townhouses in the neighbourhood which are in stark contrast to the other homes. The residents' homes are dwarfed by these townhouses. Obviously, these townhouses do not blend in with the character of the neighbourhood. These townhouses appear far too institutional with their huge parking lots filled with cars and very little green space.

The BIGS Plan will not appropriately serve the families, young professionals and students who live in the area. The residents would rather live in the peaceful neighbourhood that already exists rather than the concrete jungle proposed by the BIGS Plan. We have enough townhouses and apartment buildings in the area. The BIGS Plan would only result in over intensification, more noise, more traffic congestion and more safety problems.

In conclusion, I do not see any real benefits for adopting the BIGS Neighbourhood Secondary Plan. We already have enough housing, commercial space and parks. Our needs are met. Therefore, I strongly oppose adopting the BIGS Neighbourhood Secondary Plan.

Sincerely,



K. Tonkovic