

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

8. Properties located at 1680 Richmond Street and 95 and 97 Fanshawe Park Road East (Z-8652)
 - Robert Dragicevic, Nott, Dragicevic Associates Limited (WND), on behalf of the applicant – expressing support for the staff recommendation for the allowance for the use; identifying that what is most significant here is the reuse of an existing space, it is wholly enclosed within a building and significantly separated from the surrounding uses, including the residential uses in the vicinity; advising that there were a couple of submissions made during the process to which they responded; noting that there were concerns about matters of what actually will go on in the building; advising that it is a contemporary entertainment facility, it is a significant sports bar; showing the large field of parking and the areas of landscaping and the extent of the physical changes is within the can of the building if you wish to refer to it that way; showing the floor plan which is what everyone is asking about in terms of what will happen inside the building; referring to a colour coded drawing which shows the one third, one third, one third descriptive that Mr. B. Turcotte, Senior Planner described in his presentation; advising that the large area in the lower portion of the diagram, lower left, in the grey-blue colour is a games area, an area where activities take place including billiards, simulator games and the like; noting that it is a form of entertainment that caters to individuals, larger parties, corporate type events; pointing out that there is a significant area within the facility that is shown in the purple colour which is what some people would refer to as the back of house which are the eating and bar areas in the purple, an area that is very much similar to what would be otherwise permitted within the by-law; outlining that there is a large area of washrooms given the size of the facility as well as a staff and office area; advising that the orange area is kitchen and storage areas which are relatively large given the potential capacity of this type of facility; outlining the entrance areas in yellow, there is one from the main mall in the middle of the diagram that allows for access from the mall and on the left side of the diagram is the new area that would accommodate the escalator, elevator and lobby areas for after-hours use after the mall is closed; stating that this is a facility that will have dual entrances, will operate on a 11:00 AM to 2:00 AM basis, it will operate during the hours of the mall and beyond that, seven days a week; reiterating that the matter of it being wholly enclosed is significant to the potential impact that it might have; advising that it is certainly not an issue of parking as the site has more than 3,400 car parking spaces available, about 150 in excess of what the by-law would otherwise require; pointing out that there is a substantial field in the immediate vicinity; advising that the presentations from the residents with respect to the concerns were related to noise and hours of operation and his clients are very much aware of the need to be a good neighbor; noting that the City does have noise by-laws and the fact that it is wholly enclosed he thinks is and should be significant to the Committee's consideration of the staff recommendation; relating to matters of traffic and parking, there is no change to access on the site, there is nothing that is really materially going to change to negatively affect what goes on around the roads; noting that there was one comment received today expressing some concern about improving access to the site from a transit perspective and he thinks that is all going to come out in the wash with the transit improvements that will be made by the city in the area. (See attached presentation.)
 - Rob Szabo, Palasad North – advising that he is a little unprepared today because he only found out about it at 12:30 PM today when his eighty-four year old mom called him to tell him that his business was named in the paper in today's article; asking for forgiveness if he is not completely prepared; providing a little bit of background, his family has been in business in London since 1959, he grew up basically living in Downtown London with retail stores here; remembering a time when he could walk out of his parents delicatessen to Robert Holmes and buy a book on Dundas Street; remembering a time when he could, if it was her birthday, he could walk down the street and buy a set of earrings for her with my dad; remembering a time when he was bored, in the summer, he could walk to the Odeon or the Century Theatres; indicating that he cannot do any of those things anymore, Downtown; stating that he has a competing business to this operation; advising that when

he has built his businesses, he has had to go out and find the appropriate properties to do so; outlining that what he has had to do is go to bowling alleys, where they were zoned with the proper zoning, of the proper size, to do what he wanted to do; reiterating that that is what he has had to do; however, he is not a billion dollar corporation; pointing out that he is here to talk about the effects of this because there are long term effects; advising that if we look at what has happened over the last forty years, what has happened, we have seen, first, the regional malls, the super-regional malls get built; noting that it used to be three of them but we can talk about Westmount, we can talk about White Oaks, we can talk about Masonville, first what they do, you know, they aim their giant lasers at retail; likening them to the death stars, they aim their giant lasers at retail, the next thing they do, once they cannot get any more retail, they aim it at the movie theatres; believing that Planning Committee and Council had good intentions thirty years ago of limiting it to ten percent; pointing out that what happens is that the malls get bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and ten percent becomes a lot; pointing out that we are not talking about ten percent, we are talking about hundreds of thousands of square feet and that is what we are talking about today; advising that this is a big deal; stating that, as you look, right now, the laser beams of the malls are focused on everything else, beyond restaurants, book stores, retail, movie theatres, the restaurants that have already gone there; noting that The Keg is moving there, they are going to leave Richmond Street to go there; wondering what is next; indicating that next is going to be entertainment; wondering if you think that London Music Hall, Mike Manuel's been building his business for the past twenty-five years Downtown; stating that Mike has built this business that brings in live entertainment, groups, to his venue; advising that what they do not tell you in this, what you should do is take a minute and Google the Rec Room; outlining that The Rec Room is a new concept owned by Cineplex; noting that there is no coincidence that Cineplex is in the Cadillac Fairview Mall, let us put two and two together; asking the Committee to Google The Rec Room and you will see that one of their main features is a huge live music hall; wondering what is going to happen to live music in Downtown London, here at the London Music Club; reiterating for Committee members to take a look; enquiring where are people going to go; wondering if they are they going to go to Downtown London at the London Music Hall or are they going to go to this new venue in the suburbs; pointing out that we have Fleetway, Palasad, and other venues for entertainment in the suburbs, spread out, so the economic impact, the economic benefit, is spread everywhere in the city; indicating that what Council, the Planning and Environment Committee and the staff is doing right now is focusing all development in London in the super regional malls; stating that is what is happening, if it is not in the mall, it is beside the mall and, right now, this decision focuses more of London's future in the malls which is why the Downtown is empty; advising that this is why you drive up and down Oxford Street and other main streets and you see all the "For Rent" signs in the stores; stating that you see that because there is a super death star at each end of the city, aiming its lasers at the next viable tenant for their properties and that is what has happened; saying that the City of London needs to look at, and not only benefit the billion dollar corporations, but to benefit all the landowners that are spread out throughout the city, that is what it is about; believing that Janette MacDonald does not know that there is going to be a 500,000 person live music venue in the middle of this place; wanting to know the answer to that; reiterating that the Committee Google The Rec Room as it is right on their website, Edmonton, opened a month ago; enquiring if it is going to be successful, no one knows because it opened a month ago; wondering why should the small businesses of London, why should myself, Mike Manuel, Fleetway, why should we all suffer because Cadillac Fairview and Cineplex want to try a new concept here in London; expressing opposition to the application because he thinks, once again, it focuses economic development in super regional malls; stating that if you want Masonville to be busier than it is, you can go ahead and approve it, if you want one more Downtown business to be out, go ahead; indicating that his Adelaide location is Adelaide Street and Oxford Street, it is not Masonville Mall but that was an old bowling centre that has been there since 1964 that he had to redevelop, re-concept numerous times to make it successful; reiterating that the Committee is once again making a choice of focusing development at the super regional malls for the billion dollar corporations and the City of London needs to decide what they are going to do in that respect.