

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING - Property located at 801 Sarnia Road (39CD-15516/Z-8549)
- Jay McGuffin, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, on behalf of the applicant – expressing agreement with the recommendations in the staff report; advising that they have worked diligently with city staff and the urban design group for almost two years now to come to a final agreed upon proposal for the property; indicating that the property is located west of the rail overpass on Sarnia Road, the new works that have been done associated with the bridge; pointing out the property outlined in red on his presentation; indicating that Council approved a site plan, approximately one year ago, on lands to the immediately to the south of this property for an expansion to the People Care so there will be a four storey retirement home being developed immediately across the road to the south from this property; advising that the property is being proposed to be divided into two halves, the vacant land condominium townhomes proposed on the westerly portion at 1.649 hectares and the apartment site in its gross area format at 0.9 hectares; indicating that the proposed plan of condominium lays out the seventy-two townhouses on the westerly portion of the property and a resulting block on the easterly portion on the property for the proposed apartment building; noting that, at this time, the apartment building is not proposed to be a condominium; *(Councillor Helmer discussing the apartment block, believing Mr. McGuffin said there is forty-one percent landscaped open space and wondering if that includes the part that is dedicated to the City for the pathway.);* Mr. McGuffin responds that no it is not; *(Councillor Hubert indicates that he is the Ward Councillor for this side of the tracks; confirming that there are fifty-seven townhouses and there are eight visitor parking spots and in the apartment block, there is seventy-two units and how many visitor parking spaces are there there.);* Mr. McGuffin responds that, with the required parking spaces associated with the townhomes, there would be two spaces per dwelling plus the additional parking spaces provided on the apartment building there are eighty parking spaces provided, which is above the one per which is requested within the zoning but rather than create the bizarre mathematic numeral he believes they have gone to one space per; *(Councillor Hubert confirming that there is a one to one in the apartment building plus eight and wondering how many spots there are with the townhouses);* Benita Senkevics, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, responding that there would be fifty-seven parking spaces in the driveway plus one in the garage and then there are eight visitor parking spaces in the townhouse side; *(Councillor Hubert enquiring about the twenty-two percent vehicular and pedestrian number, a road widening dedication is not optional, it goes with the territory and it seems disingenuous to include that as a percent like you are doing something; trying to understand what would be the percentage that is non-road widening dedication, not sure if they have that handy.);* Mr. McGuffin responding that he does not have that mathematical calculation handy and he is not suggesting that the request for bonusing is hinged at all on the road widening dedication whatsoever, he was merely trying to state the difficulty of designing a triangular site when you add to that that a significant portion of the frontage is removed on what would be the more standard portion of development together with the removal of the ten metre pedestrian walkway up the east side and around the north side, it begins to limit the amount of land that is there on the property; *(Councillor Cassidy indicating that she likes seeing all of the trees and the landscaping that is being proposed; enquiring about the side that fronts onto the railway tracks when she looks at the existing map from the aerial perspective you can see a lot of existing trees there and she is wondering how much of the landscaping plan is to preserve trees that are already there or will it be substantially replanting of new, younger trees.);* Mr. McGuffin responding that his understanding is that a majority of the trees that are existing are going to be remaining, the landscaped plan shows the new trees that are being added and the majority of that growth, there is some low-lying scrub growth that you are seeing on the site; understanding that a majority of the vegetation is within the right-of-way of the railway and not subject to being touched by the development proposal. (See attached presentation.).

- Patrick Trottier, Patrick David Trottier Architect, on behalf of the applicant – explaining that because of the bonus zone there was a need to bring a higher quality architecture in play; talking about the concept of the building so that the Committee gets what is behind it; pointing out that overall what you see is a composition, very structured, very ordered, it is also minimized in the quantity and types of materials just to have a nice running through of things in a subtle way but the concept of the building is essentially is a theatre, the black backdrop of the building is a corrugated metal, it is a wavy metal, it is very tight, it falls back in the background; the bright tall elements that you see are characters that are on the stage and the bottoms of the characters have the same colour siding and those would be like knee high socks, boots and shoes of the character and they are all intertwining with each other and they are playing with each other; even though it can be a large building on site and standing firmly on site, there is a playfulness about it that he thinks is really important that you would get when you walk by; showing some examples that he put against his shirt; asking the Committee to imagine a Charlie Brown and characters or a Sponge Bob and characters, with his shirt as the backdrop and the characters are playing with each other and they are talking and they are dancing and they all have their own personalities playing with each other on this elevation; some of the other things that help to keep them aligned with each other is the whiteness of the windows and the balcony lines which is another concept for staff lines on a sheet and it is like an overall theatrical production in a playful sense and that is really the intent of the building and it was a fun thing for them to come up with; stating that the overall proportions are very strong, the individual qualities of the characters are very strong, the quality of the materials are very good quality materials that are long-term materials and the building sits very well on the ground and is received very well by those walking by and driving by.
- Sandy Caplan, 7 Ridge Road, on behalf of the family that owns the westerly adjacent lands at 865 Sarnia Road – indicating that they own approximately 1.68 acres (4 hectares) that is presently being farmed there; expressing support for the application; requesting to receive Municipal Council's decision and notice of that matter; pointing out that they are in discussions with City staff now about similar medium-density housing proposals that would conform to the City of London Official Plan.
- Betty Anne Westelaken, 794 Queensborough Crescent – advising that her property is just north of the CP rail; pointing out that when they built thirteen years ago they understood that this portion of London would develop but they had no idea that it would explode; stating that one of the fine features about where they chose to live was the nice old rickety bridge on Sarnia Road which kept their backyard quiet and they could see stars at night; advising that that has all changed, which they accept; relating to the proposal of townhomes, she can accept; the proposal of a five storey apartment building she cannot accept especially when it has been stated that the maximum is four in this area to begin with which People Cares seems to have respected; pointing out that if you look just north of the apartment, you will see a pool and she is just to the west of that; advising that when they look out their backyard several of the trees that were on the CP rail property fell to the Ash Borer and even a lot of the tall trees are now Poplars that have grown over the last five years; reiterating that their view has diminished considerably, it is no longer green and she does not think any trees that will be replanted on the new property will be tall enough to disguise this five storey monstrosity; advising that she thought that they were moving into single-family dwellings and she could, in theory, support more townhouses but not an apartment building; given that it is on Sarnia Road she believes that the intention will be for student housing in those apartments and again, she cannot accept that.