

July 7th, 2017

**Chair and Members of the Planning & Environment Committee
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, Ontario
N6A 4L9**

Re: Concerns regarding Secondary Dwelling Units in the Near-Campus Neighbourhood

Dear Councillor Park and Councillors Cassidy, Helmer, Hopkins and Turner

The Secondary Dwelling Unit exception in Near Campus Neighbourhoods seems to us to be a reasonable one as landlords still reap enormous financial benefit from the neighbourhood-undermining intensification that they have already been allowed to achieve in the past. If the Province, in all its wisdom, has granted this exception, the City should do its utmost to follow suit. It really is high time that neighbourhoods that accommodate an enormous number of Western and Fanshawe's students were given some real relief.

I would like to refer you to an excellent letter by my colleague Dennis Pellarin who has outlined more of the background for you from a by-law history & Town and Gown Committee point of view. He makes the same argument and I thoroughly support his comments. My letter is more of a history of this particular near-campus neighbourhood.

I have lived in the community of **Broughdale** since 1976 and have been closely involved with near campus issues from almost our first year of residence here, being elected Secretary of the Broughdale Community Association in 1977 and ending up as President of the Association for over 7 years. I therefore know the history and breadth of the issues surrounding student housing almost as well as I know my own family!

For those of you who are new to council, it might help you to know that the small community of Broughdale was a village until as recently as 1961; it is bounded by the Thames river to the north and west, by Huron St. to the south and Waterloo Street to the east... it has approximately 500 houses and the series of tall apartment buildings along the west of Richmond all of which, when I moved into the neighbourhood in 1975, used to be occupied by long-term residents, but are now almost exclusively student residences.

It was our very strong and active Community Association that approached Western's administration and Student Union in the early '90s to initiate a street captain programme which eventually became the Off-Campus Housing Advisors programme. We strongly encouraged the Western administration to add more housing of its own. We felt that more students could easily be housed on campus where the housing stock is attractive and well maintained and the students are, by and large, safer and better behaved. It is largely due to our efforts that the Housing Mediation Officer was hired and Western was persuaded to look at its code of student conduct from the point of view of surrounding neighbourhoods.

These achievements would have made a large difference to our neighbourhood but for three facts. First is that Broughdale is literally on Western's doorstep, making it intensely desirable for student AND faculty housing (Mayfair Drive is home to 15 members of Western teaching staff). Second, the housing stock contains many smaller houses that do not any longer seem to appeal as the starter homes they often used to be, and are easily and cheaply divided into accommodation for 6 + students. Third, enrollment has continued to grow, so that all WU's efforts to house more of its students have not kept pace with the size of its student body. In the 1960's the student body tripled and by the 1970s there were 14,000 students. Today's enrollment now stands at well over 20,000. Western has almost doubled in size since the Broughdale Community association was formed in 1972!

I write this by way of background so you may be aware of the long and tiring journey we have been on in this part of London. The City's efforts to support long-term residents as they sought some form of neighbourhood balance honestly came too late in Broughdale to do any real good. There is now a majority of streets here that have 85-95% landlord-owned student rental properties. The infamous Broughdale Avenue is a case in point, with only two long-term residents left out of a street with 35 houses! The same now applies to Epworth, Brough Street, Huron Street west of Richmond, Raymond Ave and Bernard Ave with Richmond itself having only three long-term residents within the Broughdale neighbourhood.

Is it worth protecting the remaining streets where there is a better mix of occupants? We believe so, and would hope that the streets beyond Broughdale's borders, where intensification is not yet as great, may be helped to achieve the balance the City purports to endorse.

Perhaps I should at this point reiterate our long held-position that we are **not** anti-student, many of us in this neighborhood and those nearby are employed by Western, and happily teach its students! It is simply an issue of wanting one's neighbourhood to look respectable (not littered with garbage on every street) and have a good balance of long term and short term neighbours, so that every summer a whole street does not become an eerie empty wasteland of weeds and shabby unkempt facades.

This is all to demonstrate the very real need to continue efforts to achieve the elusive "neighbourhood balance" sought by the Town and Gown Committee (of which I have been a past member).

Yours faithfully
Susan Bentley (Mrs.)

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<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/current-topics/Pages/GreatNearCampus.aspx>