

29 August 2017

Councilor Anna Hopkins, Ward 9

By e-mail, cc to London City Council

Re File Z-8789, Application for Rezoning at 32, 36, 40 York Street and part of 330 Thames.

Dear Councilor Hopkins:

I was one of the London residents who made a statement opposing this application at the Monday evening of the Planning and Environment Committee. While the 4-1 vote in favour of this application was a disappointment, I take some comfort from the position you took. It reflected careful listening and understanding of our own commitment to sustainable and neighbourhood-friendly residential intensification with preservation of the city core's public green space. The **green space is irreplaceable**, so any steps that would shrink it are of critical importance and warrant an extra high level of due diligence by our planners and elected officials. **Our parks are used by all Londoners and become ever more valuable as downtown populations increase.** So I would like *to thank you sincerely for the position that you took*, and I am sure the other residents who intervened on this issue would echo this.

I would like to make some additional comments. **After the public participation meeting was closed, the City planner, Mr. John Fleming, chose to provide the committee with entirely new information** to which the residents present had no opportunity to respond, and **which likely had a direct influence on the committee's vote.** Three items are particularly troubling.

First, the parking garage that occupies part of the northern half of 330 Thames Street. When the condo at **19 King Street was built in 1988, the developer negotiated a long term lease with the city permitting the construction of an underground parking garage. The lease conferred no rights whatsoever to the surface land, which would continue as landscaped parkland for use by the public.** To this day the Condo corporation pays an annual rent to the city. **The land is maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation.** There are two small visible signs of the structure that were the only aspects of the garage that were stressed in the photograph produced by Mr. Fleming. One is an emergency exit door, the other is a ventilation shaft; both required by law. Parks and Recreation maintains shrubbery around them to mitigate the minor intrusion. **The overall landscaping was never shown. The argument made, that "The northern half of 300 Thames Street is developed, so the southern half might as well also be developed" is biased,** and is contradicted by the facts on the ground!

Second, as noted, the Condo corporation pays annual rent according to the lease for the underground garage to the city. There is a **mystery here if**, as Mr. Fleming maintains, **the land is owned by the UTRCA. Throughout the life of the lease, 19 King Street has had no dealings with UTRCA, pays rent to the City, and deals exclusively with the Department of Parks and Recreation.**

Third, there is **confusion about the status of 330 Thames Street.** Mr. Fleming maintains that it is not part of Ivey Park. Well, either it is or is not, part of Ivey Park! Here is the **City Map. It shows Thames Street running THROUGH Ivey Park, not along the edge of it.**

