

Greetings Councillor Stephen Orser,

I am writing to inquire if you are planning to take a position or make any presentation at the City of London Land Use By-Law Amendment Public Meeting, today, Monday, June 18, 2012. Re: File # OZ-8013: (Western Fair demolition of buildings on Rectory Street and King Street.)

Beyond demolition of structures to create parking, The Western Fair District's additional proposed use for this property---for a 'temporary recreational vehicle compound' or an area where vendors, temporary employees and performers can set-up campers, trucks and trailers during Fair time and other special events---raises many issues of concern.

Such a plan, creating in effect a 'camp-ground facility' on site, together with the image of end-to-end parking for large tractor-trailer trucks and assorted vehicles, all 'in plain view' from the street, is problematic. This will have a significant detrimental impact to the entire neighbourhood, affecting residents, businesses and leaving quite an unfavorable impression to all visitors and passers-by.

Creating a parking lot is one thing---creating a living area/cooking area/staging area/ or 'transient's encampment' is quite another.

As one of your constituents, and a stakeholder/owner of seven properties across the street from this proposal, it must be emphasized, and it cannot be overstated: This is a very bad idea.

The WFD's idea to plop their parking/and "temporary" housing problem in such a prominently visible location with utter free-reign and abandon, is a colossal negative to the development aspirations of the whole community. It goes against hard-won efforts to spruce up the neighbourhood and attract investment such as we've seen with classy construction projects (from the new dental offices, to storefront renovations, to high-rises etc).

The look and feel of our neighbourhood must not be sold-out for the expediency of letting WFD solve its parking and housing problem in what should be described as a selfish and ill-conceived way.

The Western Fair can easily locate its 'Carney Town' as it had in previous years, shielded behind the Grandstand stage or behind the skating rinks south of Florence. It needn't be a prominent eyesore feature steps from the main Old East business section, Aeolian Hall entrance, main traffic and mass transit arteries.

In recent past years the WFD similarly promised that its enclosed-area employee-campground at the SW corner of Rectory and King was just "temporary". Each year though, it has expanded, and with its massive chain-link fencing, it has taken on the look of a sprawling 'refugee-camp.'

The community's rights cannot be negotiated away just to further the WFD's "temporary" business needs. We deserve to have a pleasant, attractive, livable environment like any other neighbourhood in the City.

The neighbourhood demands at the very least that the WFD proposal include a design for a border-wall element. Only this would be the most effective way to disguise and contain what is still truly a 'noxious' 'incompatible' use.

The WFD must create a shielded separation and camouflage against the "refugee village-look" of a RV trailer camp grounds, and "highway truck-stop" presence chock-full with WFD vendor trucks and trailers, from dominating the look of the neighbourhood.

Therefore, incorporated into the WFD proposal must be an attractive well-designed architectural wall, a proper fencing design (bricks, stamped concrete-type barrier, a distinctive entrance) and as such, it can create a prominent feature and give necessary attention to aesthetics, safety, security, noise, and privacy considerations.

Alternatively, perhaps a well-designed parking garage with setback and landscaping would be preferable over a chain-link fence around a parking lot and campground. Chain-link fencing cannot be acceptable under any circumstances.

Please present these issues on our behalf at the City meeting for full public airing: Simply stated, the WFD's current proposal, is about paving over an entire neighbourhood with asphalt and chain-link fencing and just moving their problem to this site at our doorstep. It is a poor, misbegotten deal and it is definitely not the answer. Unchecked, unsupervised by the public in this way, without direct input, strict oversight, even marked opposition, it will certainly result in more of WFD's short-term ugly sprawl and a continuation of their history of poor decision-making.

Further, the WFD at this juncture, should not be allowed to set up a trailer camp-ground, nor do what any other neighbours or entities would not be allowed to do on their property. Clearly, if the Western Fair District can get away with it now, then it's anything goes around here to dismal consequence.

With any further capitulation in this direction, then all that you have worked hard for, all that the neighborhood is striving for, all this is being jeopardized.

Sincerely,

Arch Angelus Sturaitis