

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

3.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING – Adult Live Entertainment Parlour – Location Substitution Request

- M. Quarcoopome, Weston Consulting – indicating that he is speaking on behalf of the owners of Townplace Suites and Southside Grill who own and operate businesses immediately adjacent to 802 Exeter Road; stating that he was brought in by these owners to give a planning opinion on the adequacy of the proposed location; noting the attached map he prepared to show the area surrounding the proposed location; stating that the properties belonging to his clients would be the most impacted by the relocation of the Adult Live Entertainment Parlour to 802 Exeter Road, however, there are many other businesses and hotels in the area; stating that it is also near the off-ramp of Highway 401 and can be considered a gateway into London; indicating that having this establishment relocated to the area may not give the correct impression to visitors; stating that along Bessemer Road there is an existing employment neighbourhood; acknowledging that the Parlour is a business and has a right to operate but a better area needs to be found for it to be relocated to; stating that the hotels in the proposed relocation area typically have forty percent long-term stay guests occupying them as well as families travelling for recreational tournaments, so there will definitely be youth in the area; indicating that having an adult entertainment facility in this area will affect the profitability and long-term sustainability of the other businesses in the area.
- S. King, General Manager, Homewood Suites and President of the London Hotel Association – stating that they welcome hundreds of families every weekend and thousands of families over the course of a year to all of the hotel locations in London; noting that three of the hotels in that area are extended stay facilities and forty percent of the guests are there for insurance reasons, etc. and that those people are, therefore, considered residents of the area; indicating that there are regularly children playing in the areas around the hotels and in the vicinity of the proposed Adult Live Entertainment Parlour which is a concern; stating that the Hotel Association has been working with the London Police Services Anti-Trafficking Unit for years trying to remove human sex trade workers from the hotels due to the type of business it brings to the area; pointing out that the prime time for the business wishing to relocate is late evenings and weekends and that is also the prime time for the hotel business, whereas in its current location the nearby businesses are typically Monday to Friday, nine to five PM, so they would not have the same safety concerns.
- B. Ainskill, General Manager, Townplace Suites by Marriott – stating that the hotels in this area do host tens of thousands of families every year in that neighbourhood and many of those families are extended stay; noting that these hotels are home for some of these families; indicating that Exeter Road is a major entrance to London and having an Adult Live Entertainment Establishment in this area will leave a bad taste in the mouth of visitors and he hopes that will be considered.
- C. Vitsentzatos, Vitsentzatos & Vitsentzatos – stating that he is counsel for the applicant in this matter; indicating that he is speaking in favour of the application for the proposed substitution request; stating that the new by-law has new signage requirements and allows for the mobility of this license; indicating that this application conforms to the by-law; stating that the present location is not beneficial to the residents of Argyle and East London, that it is near a daycare, library, residential dwellings, religious institutions, schools and shopping; stating that they heard from many residents of east London during the by-law process that they want it out of that area and this is an opportunity to remove the parlour from its present location to a place that will have minimal impact on the people of London; indicating that the current proposed location has a body rub parlour that is not being questioned or raising any concerns and is near an Ontario Provincial Police station and commercial establishments; noting that concerns have been raised, and the applicant is willing to work with the hotel industry on a solution; noting that one concern raised is with respect to hotel bookings decreasing and a loss of profitability, but there is no proof that will be the case; indicating that there have been no concerns raised regarding the body rub parlour in the area and he believes there has been no negative impact on the surrounding community; noting that another concern raised was with respect to human trafficking but stating that denying the request will not address the issue; indicating that there are no statistics or information in front of the Committee that indicates that moving the location to Exeter Road will worsen the situation; stating that there has not been any charges laid against his client with respect to human trafficking so the business does not foster that activity because it has policies and procedures in effect to detect, deter and combat such activity; stating that the applicant is a family-run business, not a big corporation, and they have been in business for twenty-two years in the industry with no ties to criminal activity; indicating that with

respect to the argument of Exeter Road being the gateway into London and that the Adult Live Entertainment Establishment will tarnish the view of visitors to London, this is just fear-mongering and there is no evidence to substantiate that; stating that the applicant is bound by the advertising component of the new by-law and they are committed to complying with the by-law, the signage and all of the other requirements; stating that not approving the application sends a clear message to residents of London, particularly east London, that City Hall values profits over people; requesting that the Committee approve the location substitution.