

From: VICTORIA DIGBY

Sent: Thursday, September 20, 2018 3:27 PM

To: City of London, Mayor <mayor@london.ca>; Cassidy, Maureen <mcassidy@london.ca>; Squire, Phil <psquire@london.ca>; Morgan, Josh <joshmorgan@london.ca>; Salih, Mo Mohamed <msalih@london.ca>; van Holst, Michael <mvanholst@london.ca>; Armstrong, Bill <BArmstro@london.ca>; Helmer, Jesse <jhelmer@london.ca>; Hubert, Paul <phubert@london.ca>; Hopkins, Anna <ahopkins@london.ca>; Ridley, Virginia <vridley@london.ca>; Turner, Stephen <sturner@london.ca>; Usher, Harold <husher@london.ca>; Park, Tanya <tpark@london.ca>; Zaifman, Jared <jzaifman@london.ca>; Corby, Mike <mcorby@London.ca>

Subject: Concerned Citizen: Rezoning Application of 230 North Centre Road File OZ-8874.

To: The City of London Mayor, Council Members, PEC Committee Members & City Staff:

My name is Victoria Digby, I have been a resident of London for 28 years and currently live at 1890 Richmond Street. I am writing to express my deep concerns over the recommendation found in the 82 pg. report from Mike Corby (City Planning Dept.) to the PEC that was filed and posted online Wed., Sept 19th regarding The Tricar Group 230 North Centre Road File OZ:8874.

In a few days this matter will come before some of you . . .and possibly within a few weeks this matter could come to all of you for a vote and it is with this possibility in mind that I am writing to formally voice my concerns.

The citizens that live in and around 230 North Centre Road (NCR) have only been aware of the Tricar plans for said property a little over 6 months; however, within that timeframe an impressive grass-roots movement has been formed by local residents to increase awareness of the matter. Although I knew how I felt (shocked) from the very first open house I attended in March, I wasn't sure if others in the area shared my views. But over time, it's become very clear that there is strong opposition for rezoning 230 NCR from its current medium density to a proposed high-density development. The list on pg 35 of Plannings Report is incomplete. I would like to offer a more indepth-complete list of reasons below:

- **SAFETY FOR SENIORS:** There has been no mention in the report from planning nor from Tricar regarding safety concerns for hundreds of Richmond Woods Seniors living next door who will share sidewalks, driveway and emergency exits/entrance w/development; seniors crossing streets who walk daily year-round are at serious risk.
- **SHARED ENTRANCE/EXITS ONTO NCR:** There is no mention in the report from planning of the anticipated traffic congestion near NCR @ Richmond Street because of the location of driveways. See pg 5 map: notice that if this development is built, four separate major developments will enter/exit onto NCR opposite from each other - two shared (230 & 200 NCR), the other two only several feet from one another (235 & 215 NCR) . . . all within 65-75 meters from Richmond. Bottleneck of congestion will ensue.
- **OUTDATED MAPS MISLEAD READER:** The maps (pg. 77 & 78) near the end of the report are seriously outdated and thus misleading - they don't show the current western arm of NCR as a true ring road linking Richmond to Fanshawe Pk Rd. It's heavily travelled now - with this application from Tricar, it will become over intensified.

- **INACCURATE REFERENCING:** Misleading as written within Pg 4 - '1.4 Surrounding Land Use' - the report states that West of the property is residential/commercial. That is not accurate - (See pg. 5) there is no commercial activity west - only residential PLUS another Continuum-of-Care complex at the far western arm of that road (that's right, two seniors complexes on the same road). For commercial retail you have to go south where Best Buy, etc are located.
- **OVERDEVELOPMENT:** The proposed height of the building is over development - it's excessive infilling which disregards gentle transitioning (see pg. 198 of The London Plan). If built, this will be the tallest building north of Oxford Street. Tricar has shown several designs over the 6 months, with the latest design actually increasing their density from 215 to 230. . .so much for compromise, community involvement and current land owner/resident consideration.
- **COMMUNITY VOICE MISSING:** Residents feel we are under siege by a developer with deep pockets with business objectives that don't include consideration of current land owners or local resident concerns. Where is our voice? Where is the community involvement in planning? The metrics provided in the report are misleading (pg. 8 - 3.3 Community Engagement). I never signed anything, so my presence wasn't counted and I've been one of the more engaged residents in this matter! What about the overflow of attendance to the Ward 5 open house - where concerned residents flooded the Hospice Care meeting room. . . was that counted? I've been involved early on in this process and I've never met with planning one on one. Also, the only time I've met or spoken to anyone at Tricar was at the initial open house when a salesperson wanted to sell me on one of the 'spacious floorplans' . . . and the other was when Mr. Carapella responded to my email about a Tricar employee stealing/hiding our signs and where we could find them. The count is flawed. The numbers are not accurate. Letters and phone calls from residents are missing. The system keeping track is full of errors.
- **DEVELOPMENT TOO LARGE:** The area is made up of stable neighbourhoods. The proposed scale is too large, not in keeping with character of the area - especially juxtaposed a major seniors complex (with considerable less storeys) and several acres of private University land to its immediate north which abuts wetlands where an abundant amount of wildlife live.
- **SHADOW CONCERNS:** Residents in area continue to be concerned about the impact of the shadows on the quality of their life. We have seen many shadow study's . . . With so many inconsistencies in this report, I'm not convinced these are from the current high density drawing. . .and thus could be misleading. However, based on the drawings shown near the back of the report, such shadows would be expected living in a downtown core but not on the edge of town in a stable neighbourhood.
- **PRIVACY CONCERNS:** The developer continues to emphasize the focus on privacy for new tenants over the loss of privacy for those that already live in area. Why don't we matter?
- **LACK OF GREEN SPACE:** Misleading drawing (see pg 7) shows a lot of green space around development - but realize that the boulevards on NCR are only approx. 25-30 inches wide between sidewalk and road. No where in the report from planning nor from Tricar is the limited green space in the application addressed adequately. If Tricar is allowed to build 230 units @ (coincidentally) 230 NCR, then where is the quality of life in the area for residents? Once again, the map on pg 77 of the report is misleading;

currently showing open green space to the immediate north side of property which is private land where UWO President lives - Gibbons Lodge. It is not open space for public use and according to Western spokesperson, Peter White, is not going to be changed any time soon either. The land to the immediate right of Gibbons Lodge is shown again as open - but that is protected environmental wetland area - again, not for public use.

- **BONUSING FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY:** According to the report (pg. 14), the bonusing that is being offered is predicated on a future Transit Station at Masonville Mall up to a limit of \$250,000. That's nothing to Tricar . . . one unit in the new complex they are proposing will sell for more than that. Also, the report states that 1 level of underground parking will also be included along with publicly accessible civic space (main lobby). How is this an exchange for the local residents in the area? According to urban planning expert Marcy Burchfield, Ex Director of the Neptis Foundation, "bonusing is an exchange of greater density for a public benefit that is worked out with the community". I'm not aware anyone from our immediate community was involved with the terms of this negotiated bonus. Not all cities allow bonusing (i.e. Oakville) - why does London? Bonusing transfers leverage away from Council and sells it for pennies on the dollar to big developers. London is in high demand - Council doesn't have to incentivize a developer any more to build a quality product that meets the needs of the market. Let market forces reign. London needs to get out of the bonus business and let it begin with rejecting the rezoning application for 230 NCR.
- **LIMITED SURFACE PARKING:** Pg 6 of report states the plan allows for only 5 parking spaces at grade. For a structure as large as the one proposed, how many visitors will travel underground to find 'the additional visitors' spot . . . and will choose instead to park in the shared driveway entrance of those spots currently paid for and reserved for senior residents living in Richmond Woods? The tower is being called 'apartments' which implies rentals . . . so, how many students who rent there will search high and low for visitor parking? They'll park on Richmond or NCR - just like they do now in front of apartments near University Gates. There is additional concern that the corner of NCR & Richmond will become a temporary parking spot for delivery trucks and service vehicles - adding to an already congested area, especially during rush hour.
- **HIGH WATER LEVEL AREA:** Water run off is a major concern to those living east, south and west of development. While I'm confident that Tricar will find ways to waterproof their own footings, the impact within this high-water table area presents a serious concern to those who already have major basement flooding issues. If the current infrastructure is challenged by high water levels, then how much more stress will a huge high rise building place on the system? Will the city be exposed for foreseeable insurance claims and lawsuits for damage caused from flooding?
- **HISTORY OF LAND PRECLUDES:** As it is stated in report (pg. 7) this land has a history that places it in a unique situation. It was under debate and appeal for many years - what is there now is the result of decisions made by previous councils and bodies. The area has been pre-zoned medium density. . . giving other developers since 1995 and residents moving in to area implied guidelines in terms of what to build and expect from inspectors. While the area can remain within the Transit Village area, there needs to be special labelling given to the allowed height on this development - held to the medium density zoning allowance. Special consideration within the Transit Village designated areas has just recently been granted, so this would not be a precedent setting act.

- **TRICAR'S OVERPAYMENT WAS A BAD BUSINESS DECISION:** Let's admit what this is: a developer trying to maximize their profit. But, what Tricar is attempting to do, flies in the face of all good reasoning and solid planning. They over purchased for that land from Sifton with the belief that they could get their intended return on investment through a simple rezoning application . . .all in the name of servicing the Transit Village designation. What they didn't anticipate or perhaps care about was the voice of the community and how Council (being the elected voice of the people) would question their development plans - insisting on 'working with the community' (as the PEC motioned July 16th). Maintaining the medium density will still allow Tricar to exploit that land . . . just not physically assault it as they are intending.
- **PROTECTION OF WETLANDS & NATURAL HERITAGE:** If Council is concerned about the number of high rises in downtown London that impede airspace for flying birds, then how can it turn around and agree to rezoning so as to allow building a large high rise on one acre (approx.) of land? There are falcons, owls, eagles and numerous birds living to the north in the Western/wetlands property. Animals don't follow zoning guidelines. Consistent application of concern over wildlife in this city would be prudent and appreciated at 230 NCR, which sits on the edge of the Masonville watershed. We are concerned for possible loss of habitat for the many animals that live literally next door to planned development.
- **REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN CORE:** Concerns are that planning and Tricar are trying to make Masonville the new downtown. If this happens, then our current downtown really will become the "Old Downtown" by virtue of creating a new one! The name 'old downtown' will imply 'less-than' 'out-dated' and 'old-fashion'. That's developing on too many fronts - not sustainable. If revitalization of the core is desired, then why isn't one developer encouraged to free-up their vacant buildings to tenants?
- **INCONSISTENT NOTIFICATIONS:** The timelines and details as set out early on in the report (pg 7 & 8) are inaccurate and incomplete. Ask any resident if they have been receiving regular updates and notifications from Planning and/or Tricar. They would say 'no'. Even when our Ward Councillor was attempting to get facts, the developer played her by giving old designs and information to share with community. If it wasn't for our persistence sending emails to Mike C., Maureen C. and asking questions to many sources throughout the City, we would be nowhere. From the outset, it's been hit and miss . . .and more misses in terms of letting the community know what's going on. *Example #1: It began with people living within 120 metres being notified - the problem with that? 230 NCR abuts UWO land (1 private residence) and Richmond Woods Seniors complex (the office was notified but not the hundreds of residents). It didn't include those living in 145 NCR, Chantry Place or Foxborough Chase and others. Example #2: July 3rd open house - residents from 145 NCR never received notice. Example #3: July 16th PEC meeting - even those that wrote letters over the prior months weren't informed.*
- **TOO MANY OFFICIAL PLANS BEING USED AS GUIDES:** I'm feeling the affects of 'rough justice' that favours the developer over concerns from residents. I'm still not sure which Official Plan is being used as the legal document guiding Council on this matter. It's not fair to Council. It's not fair to constituents. I would welcome more transparency in this area as so many aspects of the new London Plan are still under appeal.

I understand that City Planners have a vision - their behaviours are consistent with what a city planning dept would do. I also understand that business are out to maximize profit. Again, I get it. But what Tricar is doing now is placing council in an unfair and tough position because they came in with an outrageous design upfront followed by little to no compromise. Council needs to hold the line and be the voice of compromise and reason between city staffers and big developers to consider the needs of those that currently live (and plan on living) in the area. But know that in the end, it'll be Council members that suffer the consequences of of an outcome that favours big development . . . not Tricar, nor city staff that approve it. Please reject the application for rezoning 230 NCR and send a message loud and clear to the residents of this city that they still have a strong voice in how this vision of London unfolds.

I thank you for your consideration and time reading this letter.

Victoria Digby
16-1890 Richmond Street
London, Ontario N5X 4J1