

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

3.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING – Application – 240 Oakland Avenue (SPA18-098)

- Carol Wiebe, MHBC Planning, on behalf of Bluestone Properties – advising that she has a couple of slides that will help inform any members of the Committee and the public on the evolution of the site plan that is before the Planning and Environment Committee today; showing an air photo that shows the property with Highbury Avenue on the right hand side and, as staff has indicated, the CN Rail line is on the top part of the screen; advising that there are a number of low-rise apartment buildings that have been there for many years and there is still a fair bit of green space surrounding those apartment buildings; pointing out the main vehicular access is in off of Oakland Avenue and there is a very well used pedestrian connection over to Highbury Avenue; indicating that, as staff pointed out, this application was subject to a zoning amendment initiated in 2015 and ultimately approved by the Municipal Council in the Spring of 2016; noting that the purpose of the rezoning was to allow for additional uses on the site other than apartment buildings and at that time Bluestone was thinking that they were interested in providing both townhomes and stacked townhomes to appeal to a broader demographic than what was currently residing, people that were residing on the property; indicating that as part of that Zoning By-law Amendment, they conducted a neighbourhood information meeting in advance of the statutory public meeting and had a very good turnout; noting that they also had the statutory public meeting; advising that some of the concerns that were raised by the neighbourhood were traffic and the loss of green space but they explained at that point in time that they felt that the site was certainly large enough that it could accommodate additional intensification and that the form of development that was being proposed was still compatible and in keeping with the generally low rise neighbourhood; indicating that since that By-law was approved in 2016, Bluestone has been doing their own market research to try and really gauge what is the type of housing project that is most needed and the majority of the enquiries that they have been getting, not just on this site but on a number of their other properties has been for apartments and the primary reason, certainly as it relates to Oakland is the accessibility of the elevator and the single level housing; showing the site plan that was presented back in 2016 for the rezoning and you can see in the light tone are the existing apartment buildings and in the darker tone you can see building “D” which is the proposed apartment building which is generally in the same location as what is currently being proposed and there were a series of traditional two-storey townhomes as well as some stacked townhomes really interspersed through the balance of the site where it is currently open space; reiterating that the concern from the residents surrounding was the loss of green space, not so much that they used it but the visual impact of they were used to seeing very green and less denser developed site and they were just concerned that there was going to be more people and loss of privacy; advising that, since then, Bluestone has found is the majority of interest that they are getting on this site is for apartments, primarily because it does have an elevator, it is accessible and a number of the residents that are currently living in some of their existing buildings that do not have elevators would like to have that ability to stay here but are aging and want the ability to have that option; apologizing because the orientation is the opposite of the previous but you can see this is the current proposal that is before the Planning and Environment Committee this afternoon and you can see that there is still a single apartment building; advising that it has been increased in size over what was previously shown back in 2016 and really what that means is that all the residential units that were proposed in the townhomes, the stacked townhomes and additional townhomes have now just been consolidated into a single building and there has been some expansion of the surface parking but certainly the north half of the

site will remain undeveloped and this site, at present, cannot accommodate any additional units without exceeding the permitted density on the site; pointing out that there are a couple of dimensions on this site plan which are a little difficult to decipher but she can advise that from the new apartment building to the closest property line along Highbury Avenue, and those are really the properties that are closest to this building, to the property line, the closest is twenty-four metres or about seventy-eight feet and that is just to the fence line; the closest distance from the new building to the rear of the nearest house is forty metres or one hundred thirty-one feet; indicating that there is still significant separation distance both to the existing rear property line and, as you can see, those homes both along Highbury Avenue and Wilton Road both have ample backyards; reiterating that the concern that some people may have in terms of privacy and overlook are certainly mitigated by the separation distance and, as staff said, there will be a concerted effort to pay particular attention to perimeter landscaping and screening for this; showing a rendering to give an idea of the appearance of the building; advising that, as staff pointed out, there is half a level down so in total there are six levels of residential units but the building itself is five and a half storeys in total height from grade. (See attached presentation.)

- *(Councillor S. Turner advising that was going to be his question and he thinks that Ms. C. Wiebe answered it in saying that they cannot add additional units without exceeding the permitted density so the initial townhouses that were proposed back in 2016 with the apartment building, those units have been transferred into the apartment building and that uses up the density allocation; looking for confirmation from staff that that is accurate.); M. Pease, Manager, Development Planning, responding that that is correct, this maximizes the density without seeking further *Planning Act* permissions.*