

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

3.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING – Application – 945 Bluegrass Drive (Z-9020)

- *(Councillor P. Squire indicating that at the beginning of your presentation you mentioned affordable housing and he did not hear it again so can you tell him what that means or did he just miss it.); Ms. C. Lowery, Planner II, responding that the applicant is proposing for the site to be developed as affordable housing; they have initiated discussions with HDC, London for the status of those discussions; deferring to the applicant that they are not seeking bonusing as part of this application; (Councillor S. Turner enquiring about the thirty metre required setback from the railroad and then the wording in the report says an additional special provision requiring a thirty metre setback, is that an addition to the required thirty metre setback as normally required from a railroad so it will be sixty metres or is a different way of wording the setback already required.); Ms. C. Lowery, Planner II, responding that the intent of that is to carry over the special provision that currently applies to the site to ensure the thirty metre setback is upheld.*
- Harry Froussios, Zelinka Priamo Ltd. – indicating that he is here this evening on behalf of Gateway Church, a local faith based organization that you will hear from shortly as they would like to address the Committee this evening and give the Committee an idea of the goals and objectives as it relates to the project; thanking staff for their timely review of this application; thanking the public for their comments; noting they had a public open house on April 3, 2019 which was well attended and they received some very good comments; stating that they are happy to be in this position this evening; indicating that they are looking forward to moving this application forward to the next stages; advising that Ms. C. Lowery, Planner II, touched on a lot of the things which he was going to address, but he will go through the application briefly; noting that the two three storey apartment buildings proposed on the site will contain forty units in each building; stating that the front building, Building A, fronts on to Bluegrass Drive and will contain 40 units and the rear building, Building B, which is just southeast of the Building A and abuts Sunrise Park, will also contain 40 residential units; indicating that on the entrance of the rendering of the front entrance you can see from the front it is an angled building on each side and there is a purpose to that; noting that on the side rendering there is going to be a mixture of materials and colours that will make it an interesting building to fit in well with the neighbourhood and context of the existing development; point out the side view perspective, and again, the balconies backing on to the open space on the ground level units will have access to the ground level; noting that the details of the site plan which Miss Lowery already alluded to, 80 units at a density of 46 units per hectare, a total of 66 parking spaces including 6 accessible spaces; indicating that the surface parking area and the publicly accessible open space is located east of the property, tucked in mostly behind the building, and single access is provided from Bluegrass Drive; noting that the refuse collection will be provided internally to the side in-between both buildings and inside the buildings but there will be a temporary pick-up location between the two buildings on the day of garbage collection; stating that this is the site place that you have already seen this evening and couple of things to touch upon were the location and the configuration of the buildings; noting that the front entrance of the building directly faces the street, providing it an interesting enhanced street scape; stating that the angles configuration of the building was done so that we do not have direct views into the backyard of the neighbours to the west, as well as to a lesser extent to the neighbours of the east, and it takes away that concern about the direct relationship between viewing into the rear yards of the neighbours; indicating that there is a generous amount of open space landscaped area and,

additionally to that, which you do not normally see in a lot of these projects, is the introduction of space used for the general public as well; stating that, at this point there has been talk about incorporating tennis courts and at one point there was talk about a soccer pitch; noting that the reality is that these details will be dealt with through the site plan approvals stage and we will work with the community to see what best fits in with this neighbourhood and what can be used more efficiently and will not create a negative impact on the neighbours; stating that there will be a playground in the space between the two buildings that can be converted in to an ice rink in the winter time, so again, you are seeing a lot of things that you normally see as part of these developments; stating that this is something their client is very, very happy to provide to this community; indicating that the parking is positioned to the rear of the site to keep it away from the public streetscape and to keep vehicles away from public streetscape and leave everything towards Bluegrass Drive; noting that the rear portion, which consists of Sunrise Park, will be dedicated to the city as part of this process; indicating that the current zoning of the property already permits group homes, nursing homes, rest homes and retirement lodges, at density of 40 units per hectare, in addition to various institutional uses; stating that the proposed development, as noted, will be 46 units per hectare and that is to account for the land and dedication and otherwise the density of this project would have been slightly less than 40 units per hectare; expressing support of the staff recommendation before the Committee this evening, however, requesting that the holding provisions regarding the development agreement, and the completion of a noise and vibration study, not be part of the zoning amendment in this instance; indicating that these holding provisions are being carried over from the existing zoning that is in place but they don't necessarily need to be applied to this particular development; noting that the proposed development will be subject to site plan approval as part of the next phase, where all technical matters will be dealt with through that process and a development agreement will be entertained as part of that process; stating that CN rail has already provided their comments that they will require a noise and vibration study to be completed before a permit is issued, therefore, they will be circulated as part of the process; stating that if we cannot proceed to the next stage of completing the site plan approval, or even getting a building permit, we acknowledge that is the case; noting that he does not believe it is necessary to include those holding provisions, they can deal with those matters through site plan approval and that eliminates another stage in the process where our client will have to go through to get another approval and come back to Committee to get a holding provision removed, where otherwise it is going to be dealt with through the site plan process; indicating that the requested amendment to the staff recommendation, in his opinion, is consistent with the provincial policy statement, as was mentioned previously with staff, and it makes efficient use of underutilized lands for the purpose of providing a range of housing, including affordable housing; noting that it is consistent with the applicable 1989 Official Plan policies that are currently in effect and it reflects sound land use planning principles; enquiring as to whether the Committee has questions; *(Councillor P. Squire enquiring what is the affordable housing aspect to this.);* stating that there will be at least 40 units dedicated, purposefully, for affordable housing through the HDC program, the same that has been done with other, similar projects; *(Councillor A. Hopkins wondering if we know what the affordable housing will look like, the percentage in other words.);* Indicating that at this point the 40 units represent half of the units in the makeup, in term of the bedrooms at this point; noting that we have not gotten to that stage yet in term of the size, in terms of the layouts in the bedrooms, but that might be answered through the client when he makes his presentation; *(Councillor A. Hopkins asking for further clarification on the affordable housing part, is its sort of 95% below the market value, or is that still to be determined.);* indicating that that is still to be determined because we are not at the bonusing stage with this and have not gone into that level of detail yet; *(Councillor A. Hopkins saying she thought she*

heard you say that the gathering area, the playground area, the tennis courts that will be open to the public.); stating that, yes, the intent is to have some of the open space features available to the general public. (See attached presentation.)

- Rick Boyes, Lead Pastor, Gateway Church – indicating that he has personally lived in the northwest end of London for twenty-one years; having raised his own children here in our community and in our neighbourhood he feels like a stakeholder to the northwest end of the city; advising that what began as a dream in 2004 became reality in 2009 when Gateway Church completed its first phase of our master plan to fully develop our parcel of land located north and south of Bluegrass Drive; noting that when they purchased it was one parcel of land and they proceeded with that intention, but in those early years when they were surrounded by corn fields and farmland on all sides they dreamed of the day when our neighbours could join us with so many others who formed our neighbourhood; pointing out he says dreamed of it because that is why we are here to serve our neighbours and be neighbours, we are here to offer ourselves and our facilities to bring value to all people that live within our community; advising that every week hundreds people from this neighbourhood and community come to Gateway for all kinds of activities and events and meetings and celebrations and as part of our site plan for the southern parcel of land was always intended to be used for housing and for recreational use for all ages; indicating that they took steps towards development as an intergenerational housing development with an emphasis on those aged fifty-five and up, but as we went through that process it became obvious that not only with an aging population, but with an ever increasing housing market that many people would find themselves out of reach for rental housing with dignity; providing a couple of examples, they recently had a couple of widows forced to leave our community and move into other locales within the city simply because rent prices are out of reach; believing and thinking others will as well; no one should have to choose between paying their rent or filling their prescriptions; advising that four years ago his daughter and son-in-law were married; noting that the is a barber she is an EA at the Thames Valley District School Board and together they struggle to pay high rental prices and save for their first home even hearing earlier this afternoon that housing prices have escalated by 42% only confirms to me that we are on the right page and it to these ideas that is the driving motivation to our plan; outlining that their desire to create housing that is affordable with dignity so that anyone would be happy and proud to say hey I live at 945 Bluegrass Drive; understanding that this a first of affordable housing in the northwest end of London and as the church as a non-for-profit are intention is to create homes for couples and singles that are reasonably priced; stating that the goal is not to maximize the value of the lands to the community and to not maximize the amount of money or earning potential that there lands could yield so that is why we arrived at only eighty units and we have plenty of space for a public splash pad, an outdoor ice rink, soccer pitch, parks, gazebos and walking paths; noting that if economics were the driving force then we would just sell it to one if the many developers that have approached us to sell and to build; advising that they want their neighbourhood families, the children and the grandchildren, to have a place to play, all of them; today we love people using our land with our permission and with our blessing to play soccer, to exercise and to enjoy, we just desire to create further something that all of us could enjoy at the same time making room for those who are older and for those just getting started and for those who need a little help along the way; indicating that their goal is to bring the generations together not to push them apart and our goal is to create something that brings community for all in a way that is equitable, affordable and with dignity for all.

- Anna Foat, 792 Redtail Trail – believing they are so fortunate to live in a lovely neighbourhood in Deer Ridge; advising that she moved there about thirteen years ago and it was mostly dirt with only a few trees and not very many houses; over the last decade a lot of developments has occurred, both in their subdivision proper and in the areas around including Gateway Church; Gateways has been a great neighbour over the years planting grass and even putting soccer nets up for the community; wondering if she mentioned that they hand out full size chocolate bars on Halloween; how awesome is that; thinking it is wonderful that they will develop and offer affordable housing as part of their mandate, as much as she thinks some neighbours would like the field and its perpetuity we all know it was set for development from the outset and it is now our turn to be good neighbours; expressing dismay on Father's Day to find a letter at her door alluding to homeless and drug users; noting it did have the intended effect, however, it worked; pointing out that many neighbours are worried and their fears are around security; advising that she sat previously on the board of an affordable housing project in Kitchener, Waterloo, before moving to London called Hartwood Place and once she moved to London she joined the Family Selection Committee for Habitat for Humanity both working with our homeowners as well as homeowners where houses were being built; knowing her neighbours are hardworking decent people who have community pride and she also has experienced the positive not negative impacts that these developments can have on existing neighbourhoods; imploring people not to take the bait of fear and rather consider how new neighbours will add to our community's character, not to detract from what is a great neighbourhood in London, Ontario.
- Christina Copeman, 1845 Cherrywood Trail – representing a large group of concerned neighbors regarding the nature of the development on Bluegrass Drive; beginning by stating that they are not concerned about the land being used for long term low income housing; advising that they have been told by the Pastor at the Church that the intent of the housing is to create affordable housing for seniors; being clear, they think this plan is an excellent and necessary endeavour and support this plan; advising that when they bought their home they were aware of the open space behind the street that was zoned for CF1 and CF3 uses again, to be clear, this is not about green space, they are aware it has never been zoned as such; expressing concern with the fact that the request for rezoning includes lodging room class 2 and emergency care establishment classifications; believing if the development is to be used to create low income housing for retirees there does not need to be an inclusion of lodging house class 2 and emergency care establishment; pointing out that the City Planner has stated the reason for lodging house class 2 being left in is because it allowed for two unrelated people to lease a single apartment; lodging house class 2 is a broad category that allows for a number of uses including short term stay; advising that if all that is desired is an allowance for two unrelated people to lease an apartment the Planner can write a new definition that allows for this, there is no necessity to leave lodging house cost 2 in in order to achieve their stated purpose; additionally Catherine Lowery stated these uses referring to lodging house class 2 and emergency care establishment were considered to be less intensive than certain uses currently permitted in the existing community facility zone which include group home type 2; advising that the Ontario Community Rights Commission states the group homes and other supported housing are homes for the residents and should be allowed as is right in residential neighbourhoods consistent with the same land use principles as any other housing; pointing out that essentially it is a human rights issue to zone a building as a group home class 2 in singles out a particular group of people as only being able to live in designated areas; indicating that it is her understanding that group homes classifications are being written out of by-laws in many municipalities; using this as a justification for not taking out lodging house class 2 and emergency care establishment is invalid; advising that if the request for the

zoning by-law amendment goes through as it is written now, there is a broad sweeping regulation that allows for everything from the proposed low income housing for seniors to emergency care shelter used as a warming or cooling station, one night stays or crisis centres; indicating that the planning justification report falls short of investigating these possible uses in three important ways; the first, imagine that there are not any housing within two hundred metres, imagine it is farm field, this is still a bad location, it is isolated from all the supports needed for a lodging house or emergency care establishment which are all primarily 7-9 km away, too far to expect people to walk, expensive to cab and bus services are limited and take more than forty-five minutes; secondly, they have heard push back from Gateway members that they do not want to use all the units as temporally shelter yet they are requesting to zone it as such; stating that the way it is being requested to be zoned is the potential for over 30,000 people moving through those eighty units in one year; indicating that the infrastructure of the neighbourhood is not set up to support that; thirdly, Gateway had reassured its neighbours and City Council that they will take this project on, fund it and care for those that need the extra care through the Church community; wondering if they are guaranteeing that they can maintain this level of care and control over development in perpetuity; no, of course not, it is not possible to do so, but if it is zoned as a lodging class 2 and emergency care establishment that will continue and perpetuity; expressing agreement with the need for low income housing and they support the plan as described to them by Gateway and their City Councillor as long-term low income housing for seniors; indicating that the plan, as described, does not need to be zoned for lodging house class 2 and emergency care establishment; leaving this in allows for a number of further unintended uses in the future and they ask as a neighbourhood, they are asking City Council to require lodging house class 2 and emergency care establishment to be taken out before moving this forward; requesting that the Committee defer a decision and allow for additional consideration of this report.

- Paul Hubert, 1107 St. Anthony Road – stating that is has been an interesting discussion; thanking staff for their work on this; indicating that he has been a volunteer on a committee having this discussion over the last number of years; appreciating Christina's comments; thinking one of things that is really important is the understanding that this is probably the first affordable housing project west of Wonderland in the City and the area continues to grow and so do the needs of the area; advising that there are many people who are living in their homes that are older, particularly in the older parts of Oakridge, that are looking for affordable housing and the concept of aging in place, not having to leave their community is very very important and he appreciated Christina's affirmation and the community's affirmation of that goal; wanting to comment, however, that one of the things that is really important for the committee that has been working on this is that the site is really open to the community, it is not a closed site, it is not a gated community, in fact, as staff pointed out, by right the designation could be seventy-six units per hectare and this proposal is only forty-six units per hectare; indicating that they are leaving a lot of space open and in some sense even underutilizing the space because the community is more important than the building and that is a big part of it; pointing out the concept of the lodging house is a very unusual term we use in our by-law about lodging house number 2 and one of the problems with taking that out now, he wants to comment to it from a planning perspective, is there are configurations in our community that meet the needs of very specific groups of people that would fit into that lodging house class and he wants to give everyone a very poignant example; indicating that L'Arche, a well know organization, John Vanier, the founder just passed away, has homes where there are caregivers living with people with disabilities and as they develop them and he inquired of them what class are your homes classed under the by-law; it happens to be lodging home class 2 and so the intent here is not to do something which is not being stated as right, but it is to give the flexibility to serve a broader group of people in our community and so to that

point removing that use at this stage of the game before we even have gotten into building design would actually be unduly prohibitive and he thinks that is one of the things he would ask the Committee to take into consideration; stating that staff and their consultant have done a great job of addressing the holding provisions but he will not get into that, he will leave that to people who are actually experts on that; thanking the Committee for their indulgence and it is nice to be back.

- Sergey Akopyan, 697 Redtail Trail – adding just a small comment to this case; stating that many of our neighbours are concerned about the construction and we all agree with all the concerns already being expressed; advising that the biggest concern is that the door for the emergency housing could be opened by anyone and when the door is opened, especially with no details provided at this stage, it is really a lot of that; nobody knows how many units could be used as emergency housing and knowing how emergency housing works he can tell you that occupants are not allowed to be in their units for the day, they have to leave and could you imagine that amount of people flooding the neighborhood especially with no place for them to go, there are no restaurants, there is no medical care, there is nothing because the neighborhood is not designed for these purposes so taken that amendment would just create a disaster in the future.
- Will Copeman, 1845 Cherrywood Trail – making some notes throughout the evening about the discussion and points; pointing out that one thing that caught his eye was right now it is rated for low density to medium density housing and Council's ability to permit minor departures from that; outlining that eighty units, seventy of the eighty units have a square footage of 578 -606, ten of the units are two bedroom apartments of 1048-1050 square footage so seventy of the eighty units are only under 600 square feet single bedroom apartments; noting that to him that seems like a very big departure compared to a minor departure; indicating that, in the staff planning report that was released on Wednesday last week, it did not mention the concerns with regards to Lodging House class 2 and emergency care facilities that was also contained in Christina's e-mail on page thirty-eight of the document, those notes were added to the presentation since our discussion as neighbours this past weekend; believing it seems to be a big discrepancy, seems like a larger departure; guessing one other story he will add is that they first had a red flag brought to the neighbours a couple months ago, colleague of a neighbour heard from a member of the Gateway Church that they had other plans for this site, they had plans to help the homeless and help recovering drug addicts and that became the red flag as to what is all in the proposed amendment and that is how they ended up focusing on emergency care class 2 lodging house because of those request pieces in the by-law that would not have been a red flag until they had someone from the community hear the story that there is more behind the scenes; discovered yesterday that sounds like there might already be plans in place for Gateway to step aside and a corporation to take over running or ownership of the property so what Gateway has stated their intended purpose, but we have no idea the purpose of the corporation coming behind them; reiterating that this is from what a church member discovered yesterday; feeling as though Gateway may say that is their intent, but if there is another corporation taking over their intent; stating it all comes back to the by-law, what it is zoned for and that goes forever.
- Jeff Holmes, Chair, Board of Directors, Gateway Church – addressing a couple of issues that have come up from some of the comments; responding to a question, as part of the process, they have to set up a separate corporation that will be controlled by the church; responding to a second question, he not only chairs the board, he also chairs the committee that is looking at affordable housing and they have never once talked about that type of use that the person spoke of so he just wants to be clear they have always said this is affordable housing and they have never deviated from that; stating that their goal with this project is to accomplish two things, they want to be able to provide affordable

housing in our city and we also want it to be used by our neighbours, we are our neighbours, we want to help them enjoy the area which is why we are looking at doing an ice rink for them; recognizing that our neighbours cannot put an ice rink in their yard and we want to have a place for the community to come together as part of the affordable housing development.

- M. Mildon, Cherrywood Trail – thinking we all came here because we are worried about our safety in our neighbourhood; advising that she does not think Gateway Church really explained to us what exactly are they going to build, who exactly are these affordable houses for because if they really just continue saying that there just for seniors or for people who cannot afford normal rent then why are they make such a big deal about removing the lodging house class 2 and emergency care establishment because that is why we are here; expressing fear that they are going to bring other kinds of people to our neighbourhood like drug addicts, recovering drug addicts or maybe half way houses because we do not know and we really are worried about that and that is why we came here because they just keep going, that this is not what we perceive it is no this is just for affordable housing and low income rent or anything like that; indicating that that is our concern and she lives there and if they feel comfortable with not having a specific idea who is going to come there then feel free for them to come and buy our homes and they can live there in that community because we are not going to feel comfortable.
- Rodolpho Camacaro, 1951 Cherrywood Trail – thinking the concern is not really affordable housing; believing that we, as a community, are open to it, it is a great idea; indicating it is the lack of clarity in the details; thinking there are a lot of issues with the class 2 in there; thinking to support the rest of the community in there; asking for the removal of the class as he thinks that they are not ready for it and on top of that he thinks we are not talking about abilities of the area; indicating that as we are right now, Gateway Church, if you drive by during the weekend there is not even enough parking for the people that go to the church right now and its ok so far, no big deal because it has not been an issue, but now we are going into an eighty unit apartment with sixty-six spots so where are the rest of the cars going to be parking, across the neighbourhood in his driveway; expressing concerns about the traffic, the congestion and the parking around those areas; believing the issue is not affordable housing, it is the details between the lines that they are not clear enough for the rest of the community that live there.