

## **March 29, 2021 PPM meeting on Masonville Secondary Plan with Council**

Hello. Thank you for the opportunity of addressing you.

I have been a resident of Fawn Court for the last 28 ½ years. Fawn Court is composed of 13 single family homes built 28 to 30 years ago. Of the 13 homes, 10 have been owned by the same families for over 20 years, a few closer to 30 years. We originally bought the property due to its dead end street, peacefulness, lack of through traffic and proximity to shopping and schools. It is a 5 to 10 minute walk to the library/mall and also to the neighbouring stores. It is actually quicker for us to walk than to have to deal with traffic and at certain times of the year fight for parking spots. I do not agree with the direction the Secondary Plan takes with Fawn Court however, will defer this discussion to other presenters this evening.

I have reviewed the plan and I agree that there are areas where some infill with additional housing makes sense. I do not agree with the building height allowances. However, I do have some other areas of concern, namely: population density, schools, green space, traffic, bicycle paths, and parking.

The area under discussion, as disclosed in the plan, is composed of 219 acres of land which is the equivalent of .9 square kms. Simple math puts the proposed ultimate population density at 14,700 people per square km. This is equivalent to certain regions in Toronto, however Toronto has the advantage of wider and better roads systems along with extensive transit systems servicing those neighbourhoods. More on this later. I cannot think of any other area in the city of London with this dense of a population base. This is an increase of 4.5 times current density or 10,000 people above what currently reside in this .9 square kms. In order to meet this density it appears that the plan calls for the removal of all existing buildings and businesses and a complete rebuilding.

With this type of population increase, school desks must be given due consideration. I do not believe the city should proceed until a review has been completed with both Boards of Education. Masonville Public School is just finishing an upgrade and Saint Kateri already has portables. Given that low income housing is proposed for 25% of the units I believe that children will be living in this area and school desk space must be given due consideration.

We do see a park in the plan however I presume this is a people park and not a dog park. A family member of mine resides in an apartment building downtown with approximately 300 units and the building has 30 dogs registered with management. Given this 1 in 10 ratio, dogs to apartment units, will there be a consideration for a dog park. Forcing dog owners to drive to the closest dog park on Adelaide Street north, where the existing parking lot is at times overflowing, is not logical given our biggest issue, traffic.

For 25 years I dropped my wife off in downtown London while on my way to work every day, and picked her up for the return ride home. In those years, travelling northbound in the evenings and southbound in the mornings, traffic, whether it was Adelaide Street or Richmond

Street, has gotten worse as new home construction north of Fanshawe Park Road has increased. As we all know construction is still ongoing north of Fanshawe and the additional traffic included from this area will only aggravate the current situation further. Pre-covid, the traffic flowing south on Richmond from Sunningdale to the University Gates in the morning was bumper to bumper. During the peak times in the evenings it would take ½ hour, where Google maps currently states 6 minutes, to travel north on Richmond Street from Windemere to the corner of Hastings and Fanshawe Park Road, a distance of 3 kms. Travelling north, the intersection of Western Road and Richmond is the current pinch point. Our current traffic situations are also aggravated by two large destinations in the area, namely University Hospital and The University of Western Ontario. Traffic flow studies at peak times should be conducted to get a pulse of the current situation. I believe this plan needs to include a comprehensive discussion on how all traffic, present and in the future, will be dealt with. Gridlock is not an option and it will be much harder to fix the problem once the buildings have been constructed.

As a comparison, the current mall owners are already proceeding with similar infill proposals at Sherway Gardens on the western edge of Toronto. This location is supported by a road structure bounded on three sides by super roads or highways, namely, The Queensway (6 lanes), QEW and Gardiner Expressway (8 lanes), and highway 427 south (8 lanes). The fourth road, The West Mall, is comprised of 4 lanes of traffic. Consequently, Sherway Gardens is surrounded on all 4 sides with roads/highways to support its residents. Our four lane Richmond Street and Fanshawe Park Road are no match. As I understand it, there is a current proposal for Fanshawe to be widened to 6 lanes from Louise to North Center Road. I struggle to understand how this will resolve our current north/south, east/west traffic problems let alone allow us to add more traffic in the near and distant future. Further expansion of both Richmond and Fanshawe above this proposal are a must, however the challenge now is to fit additional lanes of traffic, plus bus islands and bicycle lanes, into the existing road allowances. For example the building housing Starbucks on Fanshawe west of Adelaide is much too close to the road allowances and in my opinion this building, which is less than 10 years old would have to be removed. Sunningdale and Adelaide may also need consideration for expansion.

I applaud the City on their efforts on creating a bicycle plan. Currently, however, there are no bike paths south of the Library on North Center Road. This means that a cyclist must use the rather narrow uneven North Center Road along with Richmond Street to get to the trails heading downtown along the river. During heavy rains or spring runoff unfortunately these trails are not accessible as they are covered in water. This forces riders to travel further south on Richmond Street which narrows south of the Thames River bridge. A rider's other option is to use the sidewalk, however doing this could result in a ticket. Again, another opportunity which should be addressed as part of this plan. I do suggest that bike paths should be found on secondary roads running parallel to the main arteries and not necessarily on main arteries where possible.

Currently, even with the latest construction projects, there are approximately 5,200+ public parking spots available in the plan area. I counted them. During the peak periods the majority of these spots are taken and many a driver is frustrated at not finding a spot. Given that the plan calls for an increase in commercial, office and civic spaces by 52% this will only result in a further increase in parking requirements. How will parking be dealt with given that the plan already considers floor space and new population densities.

To recap, the plan has good points however is lacking in details in the following:

- School planning and resources
- Dog park and green space planning
- Current traffic bottlenecks and potential gridlock without major changes to both Richmond Street both north and south and Fanshawe Park Road both east and west of the site
- Bike paths south of the Library
- Parking plan for increased commercial and residential requirements.

In conclusion, I do not believe that Council should accept the plan as drafted until such time as all of these issues are addressed to Council's satisfaction.

In addition, given the scope and impact of this project, I believe that the inclusion of residence who live further than 120 m from the affected area is crucial as it impacts more than just those closest to it.

I would be happy to help with any questions that you may have regarding my listed points.

Thank you for your time.

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