

May 25, 2021

Catherine Maton – cmaton@london.ca

Dear Ms. Maton:

Re: File OZ-9157 – Planning Application for 435-451 Ridout St. N., including 40-storey mixed-use building

I am writing to you regarding the Notice of Planning Application by Farhi Holdings Corporation for 435-451 Ridout St. N. I hope the city will turn down this proposal for the following reasons:

- This proposed tower is a “slippery slope,” setting a precedent for more towers to be built along the Thames downtown. When highrises crowd the waterfront, they detract from the ambiance of the river forks, Harris Park, walking path, and river view.
- Twenty per cent of the downtown core consists of surface parking lots, according to Planning Department. Developers should build on these available spaces, rather than on sites where there are heritage buildings. I am aware that the city cannot *force* developers to build on these parking lots, but the use of parking lots use should be encouraged by the city.
- This area is often described as a floodplain. The overflowing Thames has been known to cover Harris Park and its adjacent parking lot. How will flooding impact a building perched on the park’s edge?
- While design appeal is subjective, I believe the proposed 40-storey highrise is not in keeping with the style of the current heritage buildings, a National Historic Site. The Ridout Restoration provides a capsule view of the appearance of mid-19th century Ontario cities. It cannot continue to do so with an unsympathetic contemporary development behind.
- Besides the Ridout Restoration, this part of Ridout Street contains: Eldon House, London’s oldest house, open as a museum; Museum London, the city’s best-known gallery; the Old Courthouse, the city’s oldest building. Together, this streetscape constitutes the heart of London, of interest to tourists. A highrise development will overwhelm and diminish the other structures, making this area look less like London, Ontario and more like the bland modernity found everywhere.

I urge the city to turn down the Farhi Landholdings proposal. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Grainger

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jbunn@london.ca, Chair of LACH through Jerri Bunn, LACH Committee Secretary