

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

3.10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING – 435-451 Ridout Street North (OZ-9157)

- Councillor Squire: Alright. Presentation. I assume there is.

Catherine Maton: Senior Planner: There is Mr. Chair. This is Catherine Maton from Planning and Development. I do have slides prepared as part of my presentation.

- Councillor Squire: They're on page, just so we are all on the same page.
- Catherine Maton: I believe it's on page 504.
- Councillor Squire: Right. Just for the Committee we are starting with the presentation that's at page 504 of the Agenda including Added. Go ahead. Thank you very much. Is the applicant present or a representative?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Mr. Chair it is my understanding that Mr. Tillman will speak on behalf of the applicant.
- Councillor Squire: Alright.
- Tom Tillman: Mr. Chair, is my audio coming through?
- Councillor Squire: It is coming through and welcome to the Committee, we're looking forward to your presentation and you have five minutes starting now.
- Tom Tillman: Thank you very much. Well, I will try, I will stay within the five minutes because I know you will make me stay within the five minutes.
- Councillor Squire: I will.
- Tom Tillman: I have a timer going here. Well first let me just say thank you to City staff for the report they put together supporting the application and this development. The only correction I had to Catherine's remarks were we, we began in 2012 on this project with Farhi Holdings. A discussion with our office and Farhi about the potential of the site after the City had presented some diagrams in a planning document they put together about investment in the downtown and what was possible. In 2013, we did meet with planning staff and the Upper Thames to talk about what were the so called showstoppers of where did we need to, to go first and, at that time, we put together a what we called option one. We met with again staff and Upper Thames and decided that that meeting with Upper Thames and going through their Board was going to be an important first step. In 2015 a second option was explored with City staff again, Upper Thames and at that time I went to UTRCA Board and that was rejected because of the amount of space that we were taking up within the floodplain. A third option was developed in 2017 that repositioned the building outside of the floodplain and that was not getting support from City planning staff. By 2018 we had a fourth option that seemed to meet with City staff as well as UTRCA staff and as mentioned in May of 2018 that option was presented to Upper Thames and the Board approved that particular option and that's the one you're seeing here with some adjustments made to it. In July of 2018 we had a justification report submitted and met with City staff to put it for a site plan consultation and by December of 2019 option four had been revised a little bit in terms of positioning of the tower as it related to comments back from the Urban Design Review Panel and it was then presented to Eldon House, the building was, the tower was shifted south to be as far from Eldon House as possible, about seventy-six meters or so from Eldon

House. In March of 2020, we did confirm back to UTRCA that the project was still alive and that it was moving through the rezoning process and in November of 2020 we responded to comments received from both LACH and Eldon House and then in April of 2021 we responded to development services heritage with the concerns that they raised and certainly we recognize that the heritage aspects and importance of the site are critical and we have made the commitment that we will be putting together all of the reports that Catherine has identified in the staff report. This is the kind of work that is not unfamiliar to our firm in terms of what is required having done work recently at University College, Western, St Joseph's hospital and the Heritage Chapel that's there as well as work at 192-194 Dundas Street and so we take that very seriously, you know, the important point for us was that we are preserving all of the existing three buildings that make up the Ridout Street complex and, in fact, will be restoring them along with, along with integrating them into the proposal so this creates a very sort of unique proposal. I'm not sure that there's anything.

- Councillor Squire: You have one minute left.
- Tom Tillman: I see that. Maybe the closest thing that that comes to a project like this was the Delta Armouries project but I think this one's different but I think what makes it so unique is it is a London made solution. This is not something that's repeatable anywhere else. I think that's what's happening with the land going back to Harris Park, and the opportunities of how this particular site is going to link downtown to the Thames River and vice versa it is going to be something that's quite dramatic and it will become a very sort of public space if you will. It's a dynamic mixed-use development that I think will strengthen the downtown. It builds on the investments that have been made downtown as well as the fact that I think it will promote better development through design excellence. Thank you.
- Councillor Squire: 4 minutes and 59 seconds. Very good. Technical questions for staff or the applicant? These are technical questions only. Councillor Hopkins.
- Councillor Hopkins: Yes. Thank you. I do have a question through you to the applicant regarding the application that went to the Upper Thames Conservation Board, the fourth, the fourth review. I just would like to know a little bit more about that.
- Tom Tillman: Sure. It was the third review was where it was passed. The first review, the building had been positioned so that it was not abutting any of the existing heritage properties and at that time, although we did have support from the Upper Thames staff, it was turned down at the Board. There were concerns raised at that time about how would we waterproof the building. There hadn't been any discussion at that time about deeding land or, or giving land back to the City to complete the south end of Harris Park. When we went back the second time, we had moved the building to the south end and it didn't seem to satisfy the, the issue again related to how are we dealing with flood protection as well as displacement of water from putting a building in the flood plain so at the, in the third offering to Upper Thames we were able to satisfy them the flood protection measures would be in place, that there would not be property damage in that regard and that we had, through the transfer of land to the City, we could do a cut and fill that dealt with the displacement of water of the parking structure sitting in the flood plain and they were looking for a balance of a net zero gain of flood water being pushed into the rest of the city, if you will.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you. Councillor?
- Councillor Hopkins: Thank you. If I just might add, I, I just wanted clarification on the Hearings Board approval, just to make sure I understand what the applicant is saying here.

- Tom Tillman: Oh, sorry, that we have approval for the development as presented with the package that City staff have provided you and they have Section 28 if I've got my right policy in place that there's certain matters that still have to be satisfied through the S.P.A. process.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you. Anything further in technical questions? There being none we will move on to the public.
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Mr Chair Alex Farrell is here.
- Councillor Squire: Alright. I'm sorry, Barrell or Farrell? Barrell? Mr. Barrell?
- Alex Farrell: Sorry Mr. Chair, it's Alex Farrell.
- Councillor Squire: Farrell. I'm sorry about that. I heard something different.
- Alex Farrell: No problem.
- Councillor Squire: You have five minutes starting now.
- Alex Farrell: Thank you very much for your time today Mr Chair, Mayor Holder and Council members. My name is Alex Farell and I live across the street from Bankers Row in London. I escaped downtown Toronto in 2018 to take care of my mother who has Alzheimer's and to improve my quality of life. I've lived and travelled in most major Canadian cities and in many other parts of the world. I can honestly say that London is truly unique because of its history and its connection to nature; however, as a resident I am very concerned about this project. We are still living in a pandemic and people are still really hurting and struggling. Many business owners, small and large, have stepped up to combat and the pandemic and help the city in this time of need. As one of the city's large property owners how has Mr. Farhi helped the city in its time of need? Has he used temporary shelters for homeless people or essential workers with the vacant land properties that he owns? This project does not address the homelessness of London and the exodus of tenants from its urban center over the last twenty years. It mainly benefits Mr. Farhi to have the tallest tower in London all the way west to.
- Councillor Squire: Can I just, can I just stop you there if you don't mind.
- Alex Farrell: Sure.
- Councillor Squire: This, this is not an attack on a particular person or other things they may do. This is a planning application with regard to this particular development so I've given you a little bit of leeway but continuing personal attacks of any nature whoever it is, is not something that we're going to do here.
- Alex Farrell: Okay. No thank you for letting me know. Okay. Can I continue?
- Councillor Squire: Yep. Go ahead.
- Alex Farrell: Okay. Okay. While putting tremendous strain on the city's limited resources and infrastructure to reiterate other voices this project is a slippery slope and will set the precedent to open up the floodgates and there will be no turning back. Mr. Farhi has stated that this project will be his legacy. Londoners will then be welcome to Farhi tower from all angles. Is this really what Londoners want to be its most recognizable monument? It will take a considerable amount of time and effort on his part. Is he biting off more than he can chew? As a professional I am very concerned about this project. As well as a former corporate banker for large financial institutions I've analyzed and managed billions of loans involving commercial real

estate, infrastructure, structured securities and film and television production over my twenty year career. I've also managed relationships with municipalities, universities, school boards and hospitals. Based on extensive research my main concern with Mr. Farhi is his experience, his development experience, to complete a hundred million dollar project of this size. I would like to know what projects he has actually developed over the last twenty years, start to finish, that are even close to a hundred million dollars. Farhi is the interface. Being new to London Farhi is the interface for the City of London. You can see this through many buildings and signs he has throughout the city itself. He does hold many valuable heritage properties, we all know. This reminds me of the railroads hundred years ago and, most recently, Amazon. The City is taking major risks by transforming one of its fundamental heritage by-laws to accommodate one person. We are in a new era of higher inflation and possibly higher rising interest rates around the corner so time is of the essence for Mr. Farhi. An inexperienced developer could handcuff the City for eight years and will leave it with little to no bargaining power. Moreover, construction for a complex project of this size will likely be four to six years due to unforeseen circumstances like broken water main, structural deficiencies, protests and traffic jams. The City's also taking a major financing risk here, will Farhi step up for cost overruns to complete the project if things don't go as planned? What assurances the city have other than his work? Lenders, lenders take first charge on all assets and are first in line to get paid.

- Councillor Squire: You have one minute remaining.
- Alex Farrell: Thank you. What freed up, unencumbered assets does Mr. Farhi have that have not already been leveraged with debt? For a project of this nature, specially for a new developer without a proven track record most major lenders would require that the developer put in fifty percent equity as part of the financing plan. In conclusion, yes, London needs to build up housing in its core for everyone; yes, London needs property tax revenue from these projects but also London also needs the right projects for the city at the right time and to maintain the city for its residents. Its resources could be better spent on projects with developers that are benefiting the needs of the community not one single wealthy individual. Companies that employ and generate cash flow will change London, not companies that buy and hold assets and sell and trade heritage properties as a tax and financing mechanism for its overall business operations. This is fundamentally a tale of two cities - the City of London and the City of Farhi. The question.
- Councillor Squire: That's. Your. Your time is up, sir. Your time is up.
- Alex Farrell: Thank you.
- Councillor Squire: I'm sorry. Your time is up. Thank you very much for coming today. Who is next?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Marvin Simner.
- Councillor Squire: Mr. Simner? Mr. Simner?
- Marvin Simner: Sorry, I just turned the microphone on.
- Councillor Squire: Alright. You have five minutes sir. Go ahead.
- Marvin Simner: I was absent during the beginning part of the discussion here but I just wanted to share with you one thing - I'm talking on behalf of the London-Middlesex Historical Society. Our concern here has to do with the fact that Harris Park is listed as a designated Part V Downtown Conservation Heritage District as is the case with Victoria Park. This designation was adopted by the Municipal Council

in 2012 and fell under the Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* of 2013 which means that Harris Park is considered to be as central to London's history as is much of the heritage site as much of the heritage site as Victoria Park; therefore, we believe that Harris Park deserves the same degree of consideration as has been granted to Victoria Park although today both parks are used for a variety of purposes that benefit London's citizens throughout much of the year. City Council recently drafted recommendations to limit the height of all future buildings to be erected adjacent to Victoria Park in order to maintain the ambiance of this park. In keeping with these recommendations we believe that similar thought needs to be given by the Council to the height of the proposed residential tower which could also negatively impact the ambiance of Harris Park. We do not wish to discourage the corporation from constructing a tower on the site any means that can be enacted to reduce the height of this tower by ten to fifteen storeys would be very much appreciated. Thank you for your time.

- Councillor Squire: Thank you very much. Next speaker?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Kelley McKeating.
- Councillor Squire: Ms. McKeating.
- Kelley McKeating: I trust you can hear me?
- Councillor Squire: I can hear you. Go ahead whenever you are ready.
- Kelley McKeating: Thank you and I know I'm on the clock. Hello. My name is Kelly McKeating and I'm speaking on behalf of ACO London. What we're asking you today is for the City to follow its own rules. The staff recommendation in front of you is to interpret the 1989 Official Plan and The London Plan in a way that differs from how they're written in order to justify approval of the requested Official Plan and Zoning Amendments. We're asking you not to do that but to respect and uphold the spirit and intent of those Plans giving serious consideration to paragraph 802.5 of The London Plan which provides for the Zoning By-law to include regulations to ensure that the intensity of development is appropriate for individual sites. We believe that the current zoning for the property - no building taller than the current buildings should be given considerable weight. This is a National Historic Site and arguably the most important historic streetscape in London. By the 1960's Bankers Row, London's first financial district, in the 1840's had become decrepit and run down. The plan was to demolish the block, partly to make way for a widening of Queens Ave and partly to get rid of an eyesore. Concerned members of the University Women's Club saw things differently and took steps to prove the buildings were important. Under the leadership of President Jake Moore, Labatt Brewery purchased and restored the three buildings and built a modern four storey addition to the rear and down the hill, remaining sensitive to the historic streetscape as they adapted the property to house their head office. From the citizen activism to save the Ridout Street complex ACO London was born. From that restoration the principle of adaptive reuse of historic buildings was introduced to London. Since 1970 the Ridout Street complex has been in continuous use by organizations large and small and the historic streetscape has been retained until now. The PEC should consider paragraph 803.6 of The London Plan that recognizes the primacy of *Ontario Heritage Act* HCD and national historic site protections. The London Plan requires continuity and harmony with adjacent uses that are of architectural or historical significance. The sheer size of this contemplated development makes harmony impossible. We have no quibbles with the design or height of the proposed tower. Our concern is with its location - a forty storey building on the site so close to 451 Ridout that they would actually share a wall fails to meet the requirements of the downtown HCD Plan. To remind you, new and renovated buildings must ensure the conservation of character defining elements of the buildings it neighbours, be physically and visually compatible with the historic

place, respect the significant design features and horizontal rhythm of adjacent buildings and be designed to be sympathetic to the district heritage attributes. You should also seriously consider the 2015 OMB ruling set an important precedent for Ontario. It ruled that a thirty-two storey building could not be constructed adjacent to a designated property. The OMB determined that respectful separation distance was critical to conserving the heritage attributes of the neighboring designated property given the reasons for designation and the character defining features of the Ridout Street complex and Eldon House we expect that Eldon, that Eldon, LPAT or the courts might take a similar view here. Our members are also concerned about the impact this project would have on Harris Park, Eldon House and on the city's river focus. To develop.

- Councillor Squire: You have about one minute remaining.
- Kelley McKeating: Okay. To encourage public access to and use of the historic Forks of the Thames, a vote for these amendments today means you're undoing decades of broad based efforts to retain the Forks as a centerpiece for Londoners when other locations for increased density exist. We should also be concerned with the foreseeable issues that future Councils will have to deal with if this application proceeds, puts a large building on land that may well be in the flood plain in the future. There's no underground parking being proposed. The four levels of inground indoor parking would be all the above ground where the existing rear addition currently stands. You must turn down this application based on all of the safeguards enshrined in the Official Plan and Zoning By-law and HCD Plan. Based on the demonstrated desire of the public is expressed in the numerous letters you've received and based on the premise that this building should be built in a different location and we thank you for considering these points.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you very much. Next speaker?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Maggie Whalley.
- Councillor Squire: Hello Ms. Whalley.
- Maggie Whalley: Hello. Can you hear me?
- Councillor Squire: I can. You can go ahead as soon as you wish.
- Maggie Whalley: Thank you very much. I'm Maggie Whalley, North Centre Road and I have, I feel many objections to this proposal. I have so many I don't know where to start but I'll try to bring it down to a few points. It's already been pointed out to you that on historical grounds this site is basically the centerpiece of London's historical heart. The Heritage Impact Statement that I read for this proposal was completely inadequate in, in recording this and represents basically ignoring or disregarding the importance of this site. We know and we've been told tonight there at least two designations on this site and it is a National Historic Site. All of these documents speak of any new developments as having to respect character and they cite streetscapes and views and viewscapes as being as significant as the structures themselves. This development would diminish and trivialize these buildings reducing them to an unimportant footnote, I think. As well as distorting and obstructing views. Banker's Row can be seen from a distance and is highly visible and has a completeness all of its own. Talking about context now, this is a set, a part of an extremely important historical scene, harking back to the very beginnings of our city. Can't get more important than that. This striked tower would be out of place, incongruous and rather ridiculous on this site. The wall of glass and metal and plastic would loom over Eldon House garden casting it into shade and destroying the special sense of place of that locale. This large building would cut off views of the river and also help to destroy any connectiveness with the river for London which so many

people have wished for and planned for, for so long. To get into the site as we know it right on the flood plain they had to go forty storeys because they had such a small foot print and that is totally unacceptable. I hope people have seen the photos that I've been seeing recently of the many floodwaters that have inundated this site and as far as I know, no one else is allowed to build on the flood plain. From a public and a community perspective don't forget that it's not just us history buffs or heritage activists who have an interest in this. Every, every comment that I've seen on social media in the last few weeks has been in opposition to this development and that's a very unusual statistic. I think, I'm sure you are aware, that very rarely happens and this is also true of everyone that I've spoken to. The word "ridiculous" was often used. This is our city, our view, our river. From a design point of view, I, I wonder why we run after density at all costs. This forty storey tower would become the highest in London. Why in this place? It looms over and dwarfs heritage buildings, it blocks views. I'm sorry but black and white stripes do not mitigate any of this intrusiveness. It's, I think, ill-conceived, incongruous and too tall, far too close to heritage buildings. Density, yes, I'm totally in favor of that but don't abandon all other principles in that desire. Good planning, suitability of sites and even design and aesthetics.

- Councillor Squire: One minute left.
- Maggie Whalley. Okay. I'm almost done and don't let a development like this harm our history, our history which should be a source of pride to a mature city. Thank you very much.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you. Next speaker?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Susan Bentley.
- Councillor Squire: Ms. Bentley. Ms. Bentley?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Ms. Bentley we've asked you to unmute if you could unmute your audio please.
- Susan Bentley: Hello?
- Councillor Squire: Yes. We now are hearing you and you can start anytime you wish.
- Susan Bentley: I'm sorry I may be a heritage enthusiast but I'm also a dinosaur, especially when it comes to technology. I've, I've got a written presentation but I, I think I want to just forget it and say in the interest of brevity that I just would like to echo and repeat what Ms. McKeating and Ms. Whalley said. I think the letter that the ACO sent you was superb and extremely detailed but I just want to add a few things. It is my fervent hope this rezoning application is denied and that the current height and setback allowances be maintained by Planning Committee. Were the worst case scenario to happen and Council does agree to this application I would also hope that a very stringent type of design guideline be attached to any consent. The height needs to be significantly lower, for example, and the building's overall mass decreased. Members of the LACH should be part of the guidelines change so the heritage attributes of the Ridout buildings and Eldon House are taken into account and respected in the use of materials. On the overall design, the current design and we know that this can be subject to change doesn't really reflect the surrounding context. With all due respect to Mr. Tillman, he said it was dramatic and I know he's very proud of it and it is certainly extremely dramatic. Just not quite sure, as others have said, that it's in the right place. The downtown HCD Plan states that the City should influence the renovation or construction of modern era buildings so that it is done with regards to the District and complementary to the character and

streetscape. I would dearly love to see Mr. Farhi develop the Wright Lithography building into condos and the Elsie Perrin Williams Memorial Library on Queens Avenue undergo its projected transformation into the underpinnings of a high rise development when there are opportunities for intensification throughout the downtown. Do not destroy historic views and natural landscape. Why is development not directed to them? Please listen to the many voices from Londoners who are stating their objections and deny this application. Unlike Macbeth, I do not believe that he will be cursed who states hold enough and I'm afraid I have a question. I only recently became aware of this application to build anything on this site thanks to the ACO and it seems that the proposal has already moved quite far along in the approvals process. My question is if these exceptions to the Zoning By-law are not allowed will the building be constructed anyway? Can a Committee Member or staff person inform us please?

- Councillor Squire: I will make sure that happens.
- Susan Bentley: Thank you so much. Thank you for your attention and thank you for allowing us to speak.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you very much. Next speaker.
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Nancy Tausky.
- Councillor Squire: Ms. Tausky?
- Nancy Tausky: Hello. Am I unmuted?
- Councillor Squire: Nope, you're, we can hear you.
- Nancy Tausky: Okay. That's good. My comments, to echo some that have already been made, and I will try to, therefore, be very brief. I'm looking at things from a slightly different point of view. Thinking that this rezoning application is in fact the major. It, in fact, involves a major decision to be made with this site and, given that, it seems to me that there should be a lot more information that one usually finds in a site plan proposal, for example, Heritage Planners report talking about the historical importance of the buildings here and secondly, some substantial mention of the relationship between the river and these sites. This has been touched on by other people but I think a little elaboration is appropriate here. Governor Simcoe seized on this site for his new town on maps even before arriving in Canada because of the convergence of the river and the need for river transportation. This was his new London and his new Thames for his new Britain and his wife chose the site where Eldon House was eventually built as the site for her new home. Just one moment. I have to hang up. Bye. I'm sorry about that. Increasingly from the late 19th century on this site has been one for public enjoyment with its baseball diamond, boathouses, sulfur springs, picnic grounds, horse races, trails and increasingly festivals of various sorts and from the time of those first. I'm so sorry. From the time of those first forms of entertainment when we were having, when people were having the first horse races below the courthouse, people have been able to look up at these early buildings and be aware of the relationship between the river and the entertainment and London's origins. The third thing that's missing here is the well thought out report from LACH. I don't understand why Council hasn't been able to look at those comments when making their consideration about this, when making their decision about this proposal and finally, or not finally, I'm sorry, there should have been more, I think, on the effect that this will have on Eldon House and one's experience of the Eldon House grounds and the views from Eldon House grounds which were so important in its original siting. I don't understand why some consideration hasn't been given to the rationale for the previous zoning that we're now proposing to get rid of. It was attempting to unify this idea of heritage with the

idea of the river and I think that's a very important concept in the uses that have been made of the site and finally, I'm wondering why heritage considerations weren't an important, or why heritage.

- Councillor Squire: One minute. One minute remaining.
- Nancy Tausky: I'm wondering why people representing heritage considerations weren't involved in those original considerations back around 2012. This has been going on all this time and still it seems now that Council is being asked to make a decision on the rezoning for this massive property without really hearing a complete account of the other side of the picture. I don't think this is fair to Council, I don't think it's fair to the citizens of London and I agree with Maggie Whalley in thinking that intensification has an important place in London but that doesn't make it in all places. To misquote the author's idea about love conquering all, intensification should not.
- Councillor Squire: You have now, you have now hit five minutes. Please wrap up.
- Nancy Tausky: Yep. I'm done.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you very much. Next speaker?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: AnnaMaria Valastro.
- Councillor Squire: Ms. Valastro.
- AnnaMaria Valastro: I am here to read a letter from my neighbor who couldn't be here tonight. Dear Councillors and Mayor Holder, I was both saddened and horrified to learn that Mr. Farhi is attempting to build a 40-storey building along the Thames River. The building will radically impact the look and feel of the entire neighbourhood from all directions, affect the wildlife, change the peacefulness of a walk along the river, as well as impact concerts and other events in Harris Park. It will ruin London for generations to come. I am not opposed to big buildings, but it is imperative the impact of a building be measured against the harm to those who live in, and regularly use the area, as well as how well the building fits with its surroundings. I am currently a victim of what I consider an unnecessary large building on Richmond Street near Dufferin. Since I moved to John Street over a year ago, the view from my kitchen has radically changed from sky, trees and a few rooftops to a monolithic apartment building. I also see the building every time I walk down Richmond Street. It is jolting to the senses as it does not fit the historic neighbourhood at all. The same will be true of Mr. Farhi's proposed building as it will dwarf everything around it. I lived in the Blackfriars neighbourhood for 28 years and like many Londoners regularly walked along the river, crossed over the Dundas Street Bridge on route to the market and the rest of downtown. Sadly, I can easily imagine how horrible it will be to take that same walk and have a mammoth 40-storey building blocking the view, and destroying the ambience of the historic neighbourhood. It is truly a heartless move to approve this proposal. As well, Mr. Farhi and other builders in London know it is likely the approval of one 40-storey building on the river will set the precedent for more of the same in the future. Please stop the carnage while you can. This is by Jill Jacobson at 189 John Street, London, and I just want to add one quick note, the birds from the river, it can't, the building can't be bird friendly from the river side because the birds need to, need space to get the height they need to clear the building. I just want to make that note because it was raised by the Planner but you can't say things like that unless you actually, you can't say you're making a building bird friendly unless you understand where it is and how the birds take flight so I know a little bit about that so I just wanted to tell you that and that's, that's everything. Thank you again.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you. Next speaker?
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Patricia Morley Forster.

- Councillor Squire: Ms. Morley Forster. Ms. Morley Forster?
- Patricia Morley Forster: Good evening. Can you hear me?
- Councillor Squire: I can hear you now and you can start any time you like. You have five minutes.
- Patricia Morley Forster: Okay. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Chair and Councillors. The other speakers have spoken very eloquently and thoughtfully about the potential negative impact of this very, very high tower. I just wanted to give a slightly personal view. My husband and I, through the pandemic, and also with friends have visited Harris Park, visited the waterfront much more than in the past and we have really been struck by the beauty of this area. We now understand that the Back to the River projects are trying to promote this green space and take advantage of the water front and I just think that this is a very retrograde step in that it would reduce access from the downtown to the waterfront rather than, as Mr Tillmann suggested, would link the down, link the downtown to the waterfront. It would be the exact opposite. We are not opposed to densification of the core and we are considering moving downtown but certainly not into this size of building. When I think of heritage, when I think of tourist draws and draws to locals, you think of the Stratford waterfront, the Goderich, St. Thomas, all of those places have used heritage to their advantage to make the streetscape pedestrian friendly and draw people down there to relax and this tower does the exact opposite both, of both. I will say destroying heritage but it may possibly ultimately damage both Eldon House and the Labatt's buildings, we just don't know with the foundation of a forty storey building. That is a concern but the visual streetscape will be destroyed and the green spaces will be also destroyed in ways that we don't even understand. The previous speaker mentioned about the bird pathways and the flood plain is a concern to myself and my husband. That's all I have to say. I know that the ACO wrote a very detailed report and I don't think all of the questions that were raised in that have been addressed tonight. We only heard of this on Saturday through The London Free Press article and I assume that many, many Londoners have also just heard of this, really, in the last twenty four hours. Thank you Mr. Chair.
- Councillor Squire: Thank you. Next speaker.
- Catharine Saunders, City Clerk: Susan Bradman.
- Susan Bradman: Yes, can you hear me?
- Councillor Squire: Yes I can and whenever you want to start you have five minutes.
- Susan Bradman: Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you for letting me speak today and thank you to all the compelling speakers that have gone before me. When I read Saturday's story in The Free Press about Mr Farhi's proposal for his property near the Forks, I was really shocked. I, I posted the information on Facebook, spoke to family and friends and then I canvassed my neighborhood. I live in Oakridge. I got the same reaction, most people hadn't even heard of Farhi's proposal to erect a skyscraper at the Forks of the Thames right in the center of London's small but highly valued historical area. They were angry and saddened that this might happen without proper public debate or information sessions in the middle of a covid lockdown. My question to the Councillors is do you really feel due diligence has been given to inform the residents of London about this extremely important decision that has the potential to shake the entire downtown core immeasurably? Mr. Farhi, as you know, owns a large number of buildings in the downtown core, many of which are sitting empty and have been for some time so he has many locations to choose from to build his flagship skyscraper: the old free press building sitting empty would sustain a forty foot storey high skyscraper without presenting many of the foreseeable concerns that may also rise up with this current location choice if construction were allowed and some of the concerns that I received from my neighbors were the flood

plain, we were all kind of under the impression that the parking would have to be above ground because this was on the flood plain, the traffic flow through the Forks area which is already slow during non Covid rush hours and that can really, you can sit there for quite a while when you're heading down to Wharncliffe . Would be further hampered during and after construction with people pulling in for parking into this unit. A forty story skyscraper would block the sunlight falling on the Eldon House and its gardens and change the peaceful surrounding of this block immeasurably. London has managed to save three of the five historical buildings and Bankers Row but what guarantees, if any, can Mr. Farhi and his company provide that those buildings will remain intact and not be structurally damaged? There's been a fire in one of those buildings already, on September 24, 2018 and security, I walked around those buildings the other day with a friend, security definitely seems to be very limited. As a matter of fact there's a lot of homeless people living at the base of it. What environmental impact studies have been done in relation to the effect of construction and usage in the area outside the Planning Department? In conclusion I know Londoners care about this city and I remember over two thousand people who circled the Talbot Street block to protest the demolition of the Talbot Street Inn. That demolition started at 7:30 in the morning on a Sunday morning while most lenders were sleeping. That was a gut punch. Please don't be so blindsided again. Please postpone this vote until after the lockdown and after Londoners have been fully informed on this crucial decision to the downtown. To allow this project to go forward during the lockdown and the pandemic is unconscionable. Most Londoners have been restricted to their homes and their neighborhoods and if you drove down Dundas Street today from the west to the east you would see a core that is presently being used essentially by non-taxpayers. Is this an appropriate time to vote on this proposal? Please take time to inform the people of London. Thank you.

- Councillor Squire: Next speaker? Those are the, as I understand it, the public speakers today so I'll need a motion to close the public participation meeting.