

October 14, 2021

**Chair and Committee Members
Planning and Environment Committee
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London Ontario**

Via email

Re: Comments on the Masonville Secondary Plan (August 2021) from Richmond Hyland Centre Inc.- c/o Westdell Development Corporation, for their lands at 1701 -1737 Richmond Street, London, Ontario.

Dear Chair and Committee Members: SBM Planning and Zedd Architecture are retained by Westdell Development Corporation, who is the principal of Richmond Hyland Centre Inc. and the owner of the commercial centre, known as RICHMOND HYLAND CENTRE.



This Centre occupies the entire northwest quadrant of the Fanshawe-Richmond intersection that is included in the Secondary Plan planning area. Westdell has been involved for about 3 years with the ongoing improvements to the commercial centre. An office building was recently completed at the very corner of the property at the intersection of Richmond and Fanshawe Park Road.

We appreciate the major work that went into the preparation of the Secondary Plan, and that the Project was commenced in January 2019.

OUR COMMENTS, CONCERNS AND REQUESTS:

1. **UNCERTAINTY** –The client is concerned that the Secondary Plan will be too rigid and constrain redevelopment opportunities by not being able to predict what the future holds, as well as recognize the complexities in managing the operation and renewal of a large commercial centre, comprising:

- a) Several tenants and leases with different time periods. The Tenants have protection in their leases with rights to extend the lease, of which Westdell cannot control. Some of these renewals go out 20 years.
- b) The need to keep businesses open while renewal projects are constructed;
- c) Predicting the way and how people will shop? On-line, small stores, big box etc.

The above is not unique to Westdell as other commercial quadrants of the Masonville area are in the same situation. THEREFORE, We request that the Secondary Plan recognize these complexities, provide FOR broad scope and flexibility, and in the final version demonstrate how this has been accomplished.

2. BUS RAPID TRANSIT SERVICE -- Is there a Bus Rapid Transit Plan (BRT) planned for Masonville, or are there options that replace Council's deferral of the North Route of the original BRT Plan? Secondly, is there a Plan that would show how the Masonville Transit Village would be connected to the surrounding communities with presumably a system of feeder routes? We see this as vital to achieving some of the PRINCIPLES of achieving high transit use, pedestrian mode reliance and enable the redevelopment intensity that is contemplated. In addition, perhaps a more full description of the existing Transit Terminal that is in place and how it may be expanded to enhance public transit usage etc. would help.
3. PUBLIC PARK LAND - The MSP proposes 0.5 ha in Section 3.7 – Parks. We request that the 0.5 ha requirement be expressed as a target and not an absolute. We request that there be an expressed opportunity included in the policy to provide the open space and parkland in a variety of ways such as roof-top green space, privately owned public spaces, (POPS) Our Master Plan Development Concept intends to show a public square (POPS) and a green "boulevard" North Centre Road.
4. Section 3.8 - Housing Mix and Affordability – 25 % minimum of all should to be affordable. There is no definition in the document but we understand The Province of Ontario *defines affordable housing as the least expensive of: 1) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or 2) a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.*

How would this apply to the Masonville area? What are the implications? We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the MSP and look forward to working with you on the future next steps to achieve a better alignment with our Master Plan and your Secondary Plan. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Strik, Baldinelli, Moniz Ltd.

Planning • Civil • Structural • Mechanical • Electrical



Laverne Kirkness, BES, RPP, MCIP.

Principal Planner, Planning Division Manager

Encl.

cc. Westdell Development Corporation; cc. Zedd Architecture. cc. Sonia Wise Cc. Britt O'Hagan