

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

3.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING – 257-263 Springbank Drive (O-9354/ Z-9355)

- Matt Campbell, Zelinka Priamo Ltd.: Good evening, Madam Chair. Can you hear me okay? Wonderful. Thank you very much Madam Chair. My name is Matt Campbell, Senior Planner with Zelinka Priamo Ltd. and I know this has taken some time to get to Planning Committee, but we have made some revisions to the plan as Alanna described. We did have an open house in early November that was attended by, I believe, six members of the public. The same notice went out for that meeting as it did for this one, the same one hundred twenty-meter radius. We tried to engage the public and we had a good discussion about this proposal. I don't have anything to add to Ms. Riley's presentation in a technical sense other than I just want to stress for the Committee that this proposal of a five and six storey apartment building along Springbank, this really does implement the vision and intent of The London Plan. I know that in areas that are approximate to major arterial roads, such as these urban corridors that we're talking about today, there are significant development pressures, and the overall intent of The London Plan is to intensify those corridors. That's why we are seeing a number of these intensification and infill proposals along these corridors. I believe the previous application at this Committee was a similar circumstance along Sunningdale Road. Again, that's why we are seeing that. The London Plan sets out the policy intent for these mid-rise buildings. That's explaining the intent of how we got to this position with the proposed building. Councillor Turner did mention the setbacks and I just wanted to add to that particular point we did try to increase the northerly setback as much as possible. I believe the question related to reducing the setback along Springbank. A couple of clarifications on there, yes, one of the intents is to increase that northerly setback as much as possible for two reasons. One to keep the building as far away from the dwellings to the north as possible and the other to maximize the utility of the site. There's a significant road widening that's being taken at that location and, if you refer to some of the renderings, that road widening is pretty evident and if you look at the actual site plan, even though the building is located very close to the lot line along Springbank it's actually going to be located behind the building, the established building line on Springbank, again, specifically because of that road widening. I know that there are a number of concerns regarding compatibility and screening and landscaping and tree preservation for the site. I did want to make it publicly known that a wholesome landscape plan will be required through the site plan approval process and our firm has been responsible for some of these infill projects that have used large caliper trees and not just a regular six-foot-tall tree that would be implemented through the site plan process but large fifteen to twenty feet tall evergreen trees that provide some instantaneous robust screening. Unfortunately, as part of the development process we have to cut down trees. That's the reality of land development. While we try to eliminate or remove as few trees as possible, unfortunately, some trees will have to come down. What I do want to stress is that we can implement new landscaping, robust landscaping that would assist in making or blocking some of the sight lines from neighbours to the north and we can certainly get into the specifics of what that may be in this conversation or through the site plan process. One of the recommendations or notes on the staff report is an enhanced or revised tree preservation plan. We're happy to take care of that as well as fencing that goes beyond the requirements of a typical fencing that's set out in the Site Plan Control By-law. We're happy to take care of those items and we'll be happy to discuss specifics at any time. In closing, we think this is an excellent location for an infill project as we're being proposed here. We've worked well with staff; we've made modifications to the plan as suggested by staff and are satisfied with the staff report and the regulations that are being recommended before Committee this evening. If there are any questions, I'd be happy to answer them to the best of my abilities and I'm looking forward to a good discussion this evening. Thank you.

- Laszlo Rahoji, 169 Forest Hill Avenue: I don't want to go into the technical issues because other people who were speaking at much better in that sense. I just want to talk about the practical effect to the residents of the street. The street is mostly led by older people whose life savings are invested in their homes and the property values will go very badly down but not just the property volumes. The quality of life in the street would go down. We regularly have to stop for wildlife on the street. Yesterday two whitetail deer were in my backyard and so on. I know most people are not so much interested in it. It's a beautiful place to live, that street, and the proposed amendment would make it possible a building of a substandard slum at the end of our street right by Springbank Drive. Yes. This building is an open supposed to be an apartment building which is substandard in many fronts like the size of their apartments, the unlabeled parking places, the setback from the street especially from Springbank Drive but from Forest Hill Avenue, too. I would say it's a substandard building for a purpose which will turn into a subsidized rent place sooner or later and the traffic problems which it will cause because the entrance would be from Forest Hill Avenue would be unsolvable practically because right now it takes a long time and it's very hard to get out from Forest Hill Avenue to Springbank Drive especially if somebody's doing a left turn. Another thirty-eight people at least or more trying to come out, drive out of their rush hour would make it practically impossible to come out. The property values, I thought living farther in but the property values close to it would be very much depressed. That's for sure. When I was building the detached garage on my yard beside my house, I couldn't build it with a steep higher roof because it will shade the neighbour's lot. Now it looks like a six-storey building won't shade the neighbours. That's the situation and the original picture which was put out on the billboard was very deceiving. It's showing a nice, beautiful building standing at the center of the big street and building lot. No, there won't be any trees left practically there. It will be a concrete desert, a parking lot behind it, even that one is very tight, not enough parking places and it would provide a very different quality of life both for the old residents of Forest Hill Avenue and for those unfortunate people who will live in that apartment building. I don't want to waste your time ladies and gentlemen but, in my opinion, the only objective thing would be to build there is a nice two-storey townhouse. Why they don't do that? I know why they don't do that because they picked up the lot cheap, the three lots cost around a million and a half which is paltry money at this time, and they want to put up an apartment house or high rise on it which is only or any other place would take many millions of dollars to provide a suitable lot for it. That's what I wanted to say. I haven't met anybody in the street who would support the idea and we are the people who live there. We are taxpayers and voters so please don't forget it. Thank you for your time and your patience.

- Elaine Pevcevicus, 163 Forest Hill Avenue: I did send in my latest queries. There were a lot of questions about zoning that was sent in with the initial when we first initially got the news that they were proposing to do this apartment building. My last one that I wasn't sure if I would be able to connect well tonight so I actually sent this in as well. If you don't mind, I'm just going to read it because I get a little nervous speaking in front of people. My main concerns now for this site, the first would be of London waste management, the garbage division has been consulted because now when I'm looking at that site again, garbage, when reading your city plan, garbage pickup is not allowed on the curb for development as there are more than twelve units and when I spoke to the developers, I guess, in November, when they had that Zoom, because it's not even marked on their site, they were indicating where the garbage would be picked up and in looking at that, let me just read, again, verbatim what I wrote. A private drive would then be needed for garbage pickup. Garbage loading is not shown on the site plan, but I was told that it would be on the west side in front of the amenity area and I understand, I've been told this, that garbage trucks need a twelve metre radius to turn around and there's not enough room for the truck to do that. It would actually knock out a great part of the southwest corner of the building and then the garbage truck would have to back up which also would eliminate most of the parking on the west side, so I don't know how they are going to do that. I mean

the building is just way too big for the plan, for those three home units. Parking and traffic is a big issue. There's not enough parking spots on this site. For any growth of trees, there's only a 1.5 meter setback from the neighbours property line and this is what I don't understand what the fellow before was saying about them being able to grow big trees, it's a 1.5 meter setback and I've been told that trees need a three meter radius from the center for growth and that would cut greatly into any of the parking spaces on that side too, so you are losing the parking spots there and this plan also doesn't show any drop-off areas for guests or loading or deliveries or anything. We find that it's very deceiving, the description, I mean, the picture of what it's supposed to look like and, as the other gentleman said, turning left onto Springbank from Forest Hill is already difficult as our exit is halfway down a hill. The City Engineers need to look at the site plan as the building proposal only has a six-meter daylight triangle at the southeast corner and that actually is going to obscure our view for going out and turning safely right there as well. Let me just see what else do I have here. Also, the amenity area for the residents is very poor and it doubles as a snow removal area or snow storage area. That would mean that nothing can be programmed for the residents as that can only be grass there so there's going to be really nothing offered for any tenants that would be there. Basically, there's no consideration for landscaping on the site at all so that's a whim that they're talking about doing later on. I don't know how they can do that and still keep the building that big. I guess, in closing, I'm saying I understand that London needs more rental units on bus routes within the current city limits. This apartment, however, would not benefit the City of London or our community but solely only the pockets of the developer. I'm just saying a small development is all but suitable for this site. It should not be a large apartment building.

- Brenda Palmer, 185 Forest Hill Avenue: I'm going to read most of mine as well. We do appreciate the concession of the one storey drop on the north side of the building but how do you maintain the number of units and the parking spots. You're still showing thirty-eight, so that seems odd and, although you've reduced the height, you're planning to put a terrace there instead, which does nothing to enhance the neighbour's privacy. We have the same concerns as Elaine about the garbage truck and in our written submission, and at the meeting, we raised that issue about there appearing not to be enough space because they needed the twelve-meter turning radius and they're not supposed to back up. This issue has never been addressed to our knowledge, so we want to know if that has been resolved. It doesn't look possible in the plan. Also, the snow removal. Figure five in that report has scaling issues that minimize the imposing quality of the building. The building is rendered from a different viewpoint than the surrounding neighbourhood. This is evident if you look at the angles of the corners of the building and compare that to the corners of the houses. It is also evident when comparing the height of the two-storey building across the street from the six-storey building. It certainly doesn't look as if it's three times as tall so that's a bit of misinformation and it is evident in the fact that the site plan shows the building parking lot extending all the way back to the adjacent property, whereas the diagram shows a large green space. Figure two does a much better job of showing the scale of the building to the small single storey homes immediately behind its parking lot. It's much more dwarfed. All these exemptions and rezoning that are being done to make this site compatible suggest that it really isn't. Also, there is supposed to be consideration of other sites that might be more appropriate. Which other sites were considered? The person who bought up these properties wants to put up a building that will provide him the greatest return and the city is helping by ramming through exemptions and adjustments to make that happen even though the community doesn't want this and they don't even conform to the city's own plan. We think this space would be better served by townhouses. You can still maximize the number of units on the site and, in this market, the property owner would still make a great return on his investment. I guess my last point is that we already have jobs, lives and things that we need to take care of and we feel that we're having to do the city's job in vetting these proposals against the Official Plan because we are finding

things that are wrong or at least, I don't know, out of scale and things like that. We've been trying to be engaged with these projects. We've talked to our neighbours and many of them say the city is going to do whatever it wants. We really feel like the city is not listening to our concerns we had with this project and also the one across the street. We feel that we were shortchanged on the process that there should have been some kind of community feedback. All we've had is a virtual open house and now this which allows us five minutes, no back and forth. It's inappropriate. I can give my extra minutes to Tyson. As I said I can give them to my husband, he's got lots of stuff to tell you.

- Tyson Whitehead, 185 Forest Hill Avenue: I do appreciate the sort of creativeness of the developer trying to reduce the back height of this a storey but I also feel as everybody else does that it is just simply too big for the property and I think this is reflected in the fact that we have to chop all these setbacks down to nothing and I know when I came in here Maureen Cassidy was talking about one they had just approved where they actually increased the setbacks and speaking about how much appreciated that was and how the scaling was appropriate and stuff so just that is a point of difference between this one and this one. You know, I understand the developers, or their designers are doing everything they can, but you're fundamentally restrained by the size of the property. I wanted to comment on the city's response what appropriate level of intensification and quoting the maximum height on that being the six storeys, the table, being table eight in The London Plan, there's a footnote in there pointing out that it's not going to be necessarily permitted on all sites and that's mentioned in other parts of the plan too. I believe I put all the reference numbers I had found in the written report I submitted. It kind of leaves me wondering, there seems to be an understanding that it's not just everything gets built to six and I would feel if there is anything that was indicating that perhaps we are, this might be a site where we wouldn't be wanting to hit this sort of maximum would be the fact that all the setbacks have to be reduced. The parking has to be reduced, the density has to be increased, a lot of indicators there I think that speaks to our concern and then that all feeds back into the traffic questions and the space for the garbage trucks and so on and, I guess, a particular concern for us being on the north side is the north side setback. I think it technically would be twenty-three meters but they mandate a one-to-one setback ratio if you're back up to an R-1 Residential zoned area. That'd be twenty-three meters but they've reduced the back to twenty meters so you could argue it would be twenty meters but they're further reducing that down to 15.5 which is, I believe that's a twenty-five percent reduction with math in my head there and that one-to-one setback I think is important for maintaining privacy, it's important for maintaining the shadowing and again I think the developers or designers are trying to do everything they can by pushing it right up to the front but it all comes back to again it's trying to say this property is just too small for this maximum level of intensification and I think this would be an appropriate case where The London Plan speaks about not necessarily all sites are appropriate for the maximum levels of intensification. I will go quickly. I was just going to say the shadowing, we looked at the shadowing, we've got to finally got a report of the official shadowing plan. It was pretty hard to follow, there was, I had looked up, I used the shadow site on the EU and I was noticing starting in March 20th our neighbours to the south are going to be getting about forty-five minutes which approximately their whole property is under, sorry, from late September to late March, that's six months and then as you go out to late October to late February that's increasing to two hours, two and a half hours under shadow and then even further out to November to March we're talking about over three hours and then finally at the worst at the winter solstice up to three hours and twelve minutes and these are all, like they say there's no problems except for late evening but the time zone we're talking about here is typically between ten o'clock and one o'clock which is sort of prime daylight time and the other day I was out front and I realized just how much we need that sun to melt our icy walkways. We shovel them still but you need the sun to come down and warm up the concrete and stuff. Very significant concerns about the shadowing and again, that gets back to the setbacks

and then the final thing I was wondering about was the city seems to be doing this modification under a Chapter 10, a special policy in the old Official Plan. It seems to me like this would be a high-density residential designation which would be a Chapter 3 and I'm just curious because Chapter 3 there has a whole sort of process regarding the intensification increase and a community engagement and a site plan process and this comes back to us just not feeling that we have had much opportunity to engage. I mean we submitted the written stuff and now we get five minutes and that's sort of it, there's no back and forth. I feel like some of that stuff in Chapter 3 that it says would be necessary for this sort of intensification, this is the old Official Plan I'm talking about here now, which is one we're amending, would be appropriate and then they talk about all these issues we're concerned about. Year long shadowing, buffering, traffic, there's just a big list that just seems to hit all the points and I feel that process is just being dropped somehow. Thank you very much. I was just hoping we could have some follow-up on those things. Thanks very much.

- Claudine St. Pierre, 187 Forest Hill Avenue: My home and property is directly next to the proposed development. I don't think I would need that long, I want to thank Elaine and Tyson and Laszlo for their thorough sharing of information and work that they've done, but for all the same reasons that Elaine and Tyson and Laszlo brought up, but even more so I feel that my property, my home, will suffer the most negative impact from the proposed development and that including the tree loss. My home, right now, is surrounded by trees and with the proposed development, my home will be enclosed on two sides by the development. Is there some sort of standard that that should be allowed? It doesn't make sense to me and, in terms of the shadow as Tyson said, my home will be in shadow, my front yard, backyard, will be in shadow for large parts of the day for many, many months through the year. The last thing I wanted to say is about, it refers to the traffic. Since I am right next door to development and there being not enough parking spaces for the building and the units that it's proposed many people may be parking on the road during the day and as we have no sidewalks and the traffic, of course, will increase dramatically and that just, for me, there are children on the street and I walk my dogs daily and that for me is a real safety issue. I think I've covered what I want to say and thank you again to Elaine, Tyson and Laszlo for speaking as well.

- Sandy Reid, 167 Forest Hill Avenue: I just wanted to agree with everyone that's come forward and all their knowledge of everything. I have all the same concerns and mainly the traffic as well. I had submitted an email with my concerns and never did hear back from anyone which would, you know, could have done some of the give and take there with the answering of your questions. That's the frustrating part, too, that you can't get answers. If that could be the next meeting would be a follow-up on that type of meeting would be great and yes, with the traffic because I asked about first of all with the parking it says total parking forty-two, it only adds up to thirty-one and says thirty-eight residents. I asked about, is there going to be a traffic light on Springbank at Forest Hill because, again, the way everyone mentioned it's impossible to turn left a lot of the time and a lot of people would be going the other way around the back up Wildwood to get out and it's just going to be a raceway, that road, because, like you say, the parking on both sides, it's going to be a major safety concern and with our wildlife walking around, turkeys and deer, it's just going to be not good, let alone people, dogs and children. Those were my main concerns, and I would have appreciated an answer but never did get one. That's all I would like to say and hopefully have follow-up later.