

Redevelopment in Ancaster

“ER Zone” Neighbourhoods



Hamilton

**City of Hamilton
Planning & Economic Development Department
Planning Division
Policy Planning & Zoning By-law Reform Section
May 2014**

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine, change in building patterns in the large lot neighbourhoods in Ancaster (Map 1). The report characterizes the large lot zones in Ancaster, describes building redevelopment activity in these areas over a ten year time frame and identifies zoning mechanisms and tools that control/manage built form characteristics. A review of zoning mechanisms used in other Canadian communities is presented as well as a summary of regulatory options that could be implemented in Hamilton neighbourhoods in the new residential zoning work. Addressing Ancaster ER – Existing Residential zones as a case study, the report presents a variety of approaches to manage future redevelopment in this and potentially other neighbourhoods in the City of Hamilton.

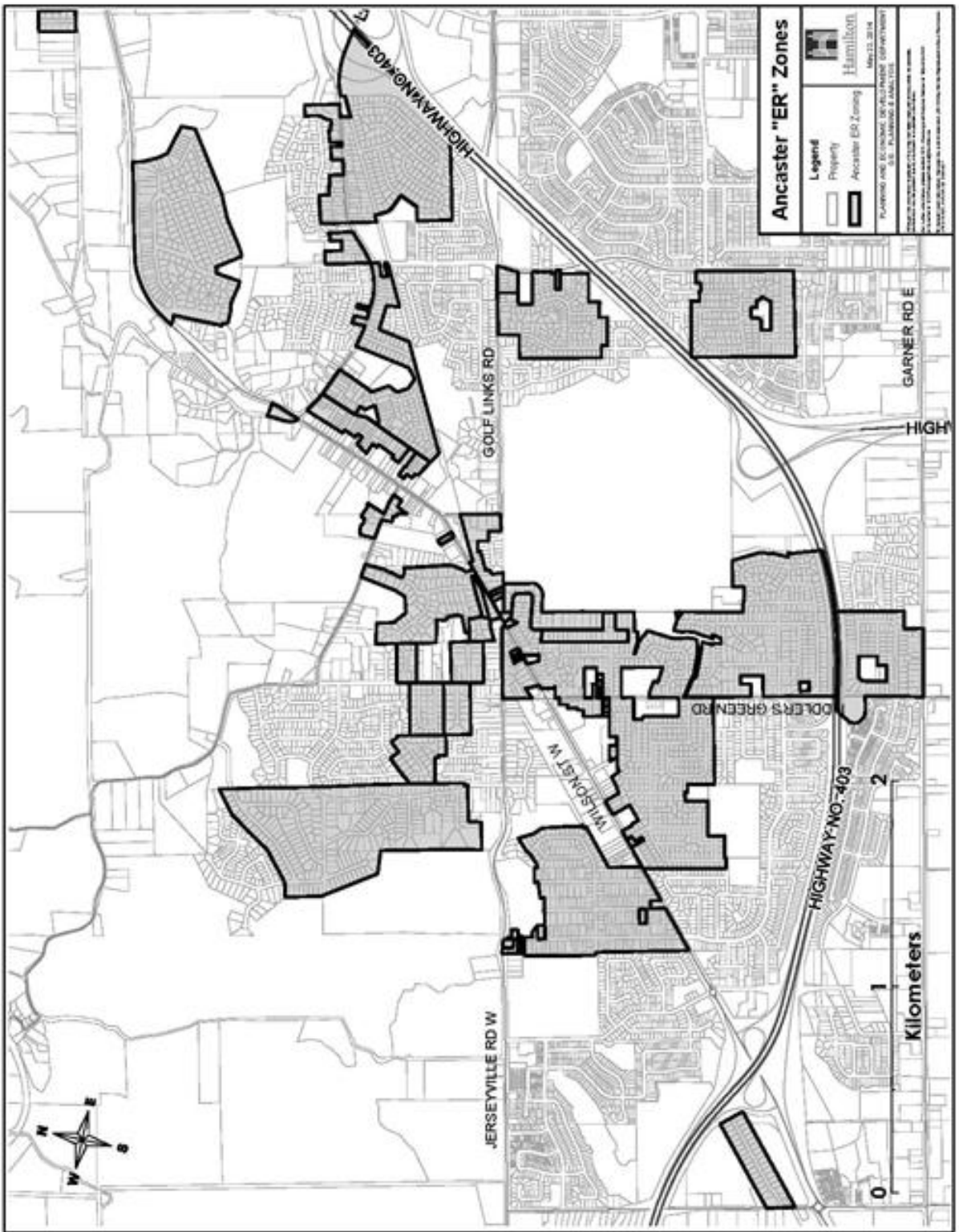
2.0 Background – Framing the Issue

Neighbourhoods are constantly changing. The nature of change in a neighbourhood is impacted by demographic shifts, lot characteristics, housing demand, real estate markets and lifestyle trends. These factors will influence development trends in a neighbourhood. The change in the built forms of a neighbourhood may result in a gradual change in the original neighbourhood character.

In the last decade, community concern over changes in built form and neighbourhood character were highlighted in areas around McMaster University and Mohawk College as the building stock evolved to supply the need for student housing around these growing institutions. In these areas, the term ‘over building’ was used to describe the process where new development and additions are undertaken within the existing zoning regulations and result in dwellings that are larger than the surrounding existing housing.

Similar concerns with redevelopment have been expressed regarding development in the older neighbourhoods of Ancaster where the original housing was built at a size that is substantially smaller than what the zoning district allows. In these neighbourhoods, the larger lots are considered desirable not just due to their large size, but due to the other characteristics that are present – more open space on the lots and often mature landscaping, locations with close proximity to neighbourhood schools, natural areas, commercial amenities, and regional transportation networks.

Housing stock in these neighbourhoods is generally older (pre-1980), modest size and often does not contain the amenities demanded by today’s homeowners (larger rooms, open concepts, double garages, multiple bathrooms). Therefore, redevelopment, renovation and/or additions to the existing housing is often undertaken to create a living environment that meets the needs and demands of today’s homeowners. In Ancaster’s older neighbourhoods, an observation of the real estate market in these neighbourhoods indicates that the value of the lots and demand for the amenity of new styles of housing is often substantial enough to warrant a complete demolition and new



construction of a dwelling on these lots. It is important to note that complete demolition and new construction in these older neighbourhoods of Ancaster (ER Zone neighbourhoods) has been low, occurring on only 4% of the 2,515 lots. However, the visual change that a demolition and replacement dwelling brings attention to the fact that the neighbourhood is changing and there is a desire to understand what future changes may bring and the impact on the character of the neighbourhoods as a whole.

If the existing zoning allows, larger dwellings (i.e. taller, larger footprints, structure with greater massing) can be built and remain within the parameters set in the zoning by law. This redevelopment can result in differences in size and characteristics between the original housing stock and the replacement dwelling. Lot characteristics change as well. Lots may no longer have the same amount of open space as new homes may take up more space on the lot and may be situated closer to the required setback lines than the demolished house. Lots may lose mature trees and landscaping as the footprint of the building increases. Additional paving to accommodate larger driveways and garages also results in less green space on the lot.

The topic of residential intensification is a theme in both provincial and local planning. At a neighbourhood level, intensification is often discussed in the context of neighbourhood change and impacts on neighbourhood character. Intensification is generally defined as development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists. Density refers to the number of dwelling units per hectare. While some lot creation is occurring in these neighbourhoods which is considered intensification, the primary redevelopment activity described here does not represent intensification as it is not creating additional dwellings, but replacing or making changes to existing dwellings.

3.0 Policy Context

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land in support of the Provincial goal of enhancing quality of life. The PPS recognises that the promotion of well-designed built forms and the conservation of features that help define character contribute to the long term economic prosperity of the province.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 (the Growth Plan) provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including directions for where and how to grow, the provision of infrastructure to support growth, and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation.

Both the PPS and the Growth Plan require municipalities to plan for a range and mix of housing types and densities to meet the requirements of current and future residents, accommodating people at all stages of life.

Urban Hamilton Official Plan, 2013

The Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) provides policy guidance on how the City will grow and develop.

Urban Structure – Neighbourhoods Element: At a high level, the Neighbourhoods element of the UHOP contains the residential neighbourhoods of the city. The policies for the Neighbourhoods element recognize that each neighbourhood has a unique scale and character and changes that are compatible with the existing character of the neighbourhoods are permitted with applications for development and residential intensification to be reviewed in the local context.(E.2.6.7)

Neighbourhoods Designation: The Neighbourhoods designation (Volume 1, Chapter E.3) provides more detailed policy direction for development and change within the larger Neighbourhoods element. It is a goal of the Neighbourhoods Designation to promote and support design which enhances and respects the character of existing neighbourhoods, while at the same time allowing their ongoing evolution through redevelopment and intensification. Scale and design policies for this land use designation require the maintenance of existing character of established neighbourhoods (E.3.2.4) as well as quality urban and architectural design (E.3.2.7) with development that improves existing landscape features and overall landscape character of the surrounding areas (E.3.2.7 (d)). Specific design policies for Low Density Residential areas within the Neighbourhoods Designation recommend that development in areas dominated by low density residential uses have a mix of lot widths and sizes compatible with streetscape character, and a mix of dwelling unit types and sizes compatible in exterior design, including character scale appearance and design features. (E.3.4.6 (c))

Residential Development is also to comply with the Volume 1, Chapter B.3.3 - Urban Design Policies of the UHOP.

Urban Design Policies: The UHOP urban design policies recognize that careful attention to the physical design and placement of buildings, open spaces, landscaping and other community amenities , in both the public and private realms, create attractive, lively and safe communities where people want to live and businesses want to establish and grow. The urban design policies aim to ensure that new development is compatible with and enhances the character of the existing environment and locale, and enhances the sense of community pride and identification by creating and maintaining unique places.

The following urban design principles are expressed in the UHOP:

- Foster a sense of community pride and identity by respecting existing character, development patterns, built form and landscape (B.3.3.2.3)
- Achieve compatibility by allowing built form to evolve over time through additions and alterations that are in harmony with, and complementary to existing massing patterns, rhythm, character, colour and surrounding context (B.3.3.2.6 c), and d))

- Create places that are adaptable in accommodating future change by encouraging design that accommodates the changing physical needs of people and their lifestyles and through encouraging innovative design of built forms. B.3.3.2.7 b) and c))

3.1 Comprehensive Zoning by-law Project

While official plan policies provide some guidance, issues associated with redevelopment or ‘overbuilding’ on large lots is primarily addressed through zoning as zoning provides the detailed parameters within which development can occur. The City of Hamilton is developing new zoning to implement the policies and directions of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. New zoning is being developed gradually based on topic areas and being adopted into the new Zoning By-law 05-200. New residential zoning has not yet been developed, therefore the zoning by-laws of the former area municipalities remain in place for residential areas. Issues of redevelopment and regulation of character in existing neighbourhoods will ultimately be addressed through the new residential zoning, anticipated in 2016. The research and outcomes of this case study can be used to inform the comprehensive residential zoning project.

4.0 The Ancaster Case Study

A review of redevelopment activity in the Ancaster “ER – Existing Residential” zones was undertaken to explore the change in built forms in these zones over the past 10 years. The locations of these zones are shown on Map 1.

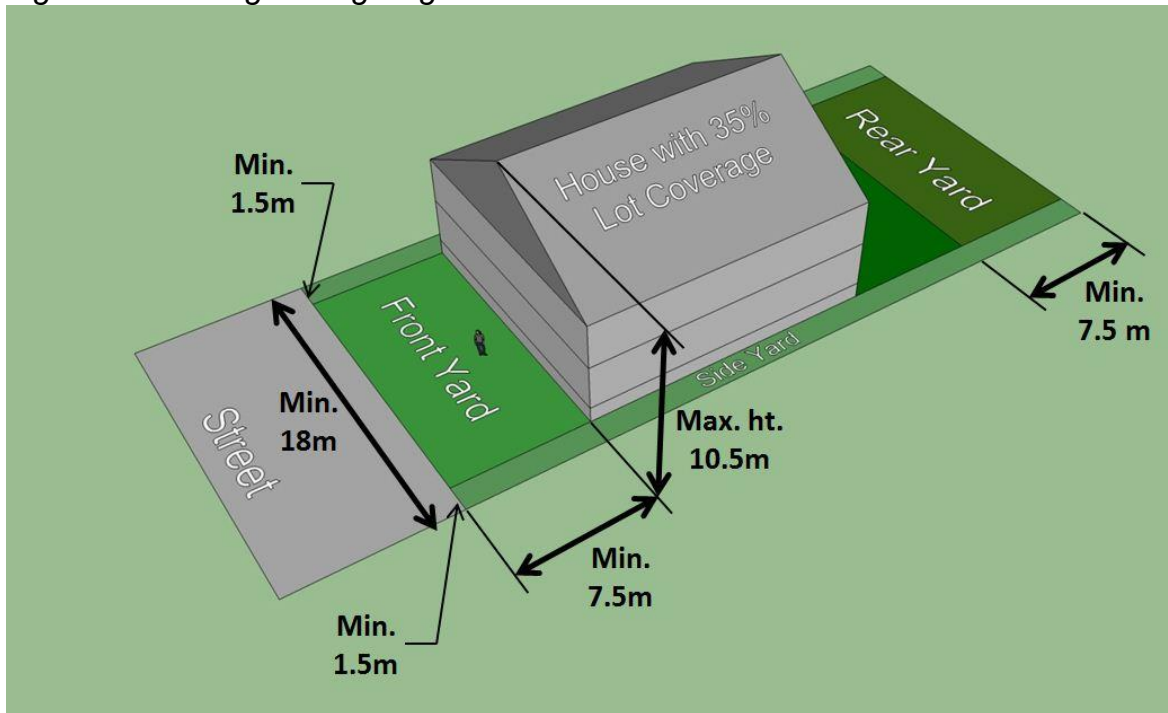
Data was extracted from the Land Use data base for characterizing the existing lots in the ER Zones. Data from demolition permits and building permits for new constructions and additions within the ER zones was used to create a data set of redevelopment from 2003 – 2012. Assessment data from the City’s Land Use Data Base was also used to complete the data set. This time frame was chosen to ensure sufficient time within which to observe and evaluate any trends in built form changes.

Zoning regulations in the Ancaster ER Zones are shown in Table 1 and on Figure 1.

TABLE 1: Zoning Regulation in Ancaster “ER – Existing Residential Zone”

Minimum lot frontage	18m (59 ft)
Minimum lot area	695 sq.m (7,481sq.ft.)
Maximum lot coverage	0.35
Maximum height (to peak of roof)	10.5m
Minimum front yard	7.5m
Minimum rear yard	7.5m
Minimum side yard	1.5m

Figure 1: Existing Zoning Regulations in Ancaster ER-Zones



4.1 Existing Characteristics of Lots in Ancaster ER Zones

Frontage

The ER zones in Ancaster consist of approximately 2,500 residential lots. Lots have an average frontage of 83.7 ft.(25.5. m). However, the majority of properties have a frontage of between 75 and 100 ft. The zoning by-law establishes the minimum frontage in the ER zone at 18 m (59 ft.) but 90.5% of the lots in the ER zone have frontages exceeding this minimum. A further breakdown of lots by frontage is provided in Table 2 to illustrate the range of frontage in these zones.

TABLE 2: Ancaster ER Zone Lots by Frontage, 2013

Frontage Size	< 75 feet	76-100 Feet	> 100 ft
Number of Properties	566 (23%)	1369 (55%)	534 (22%)

Lot Area

The average lot size in these neighbourhoods is 12,306 sq.ft. (1,143 sq.m). The zoning by-law establishes the minimum lot area in the ER zone at 695 sq.m. 96.4% of the lots in the ER zone are larger than the minimum size required.

4.2 Demolition and Replacement of Homes

The Ancaster ER Zone contains approximately 2,515 single detached homes. Of these homes, 107 have been demolished and replaced with a new single family home since 1999 representing approximately 4% of the building stock. However, for the purpose of this study, data presented will cover the ten year period from 2003 to 2012 for 92 properties to ensure consistent data recording, complete records from building permits (post amalgamation) and a sufficient time period (10 years) to examine trends.

Table 3 shows the trend in demolitions and replacements over the past 10 years. A strong increasing trend is shown by the numbers.

TABLE 3: Demolitions and Replacement Dwellings (2002 – 2012)

TIME FRAME	2003-4	2005-6	2007-8	2009-10	2011-12
Number of Replacement Dwellings	2	6	11	28	45

Looking at the characteristics of the demolished and replaced dwellings, it is clear that new homes being built are substantially larger than the original house that was demolished. Replacement houses have been on average more than double the size of the structure that was demolished.

Associated with these larger structures, larger lot coverage is also observed. Lot coverage has also more than doubled in most cases over the ten year time period. Of the 100 replacement structures, lot coverage increased from an average of 9.8% to 21.5% of the lot over the entire time period. However, even with the increases in lot coverage, the average lot coverage of a replacement dwelling remains below the required ER Zone lot coverage of 35%.

Table 4 shows the average building size and lot coverage within 2 year periods over the ten year study time frame. There does not appear to be a trend over the time period.

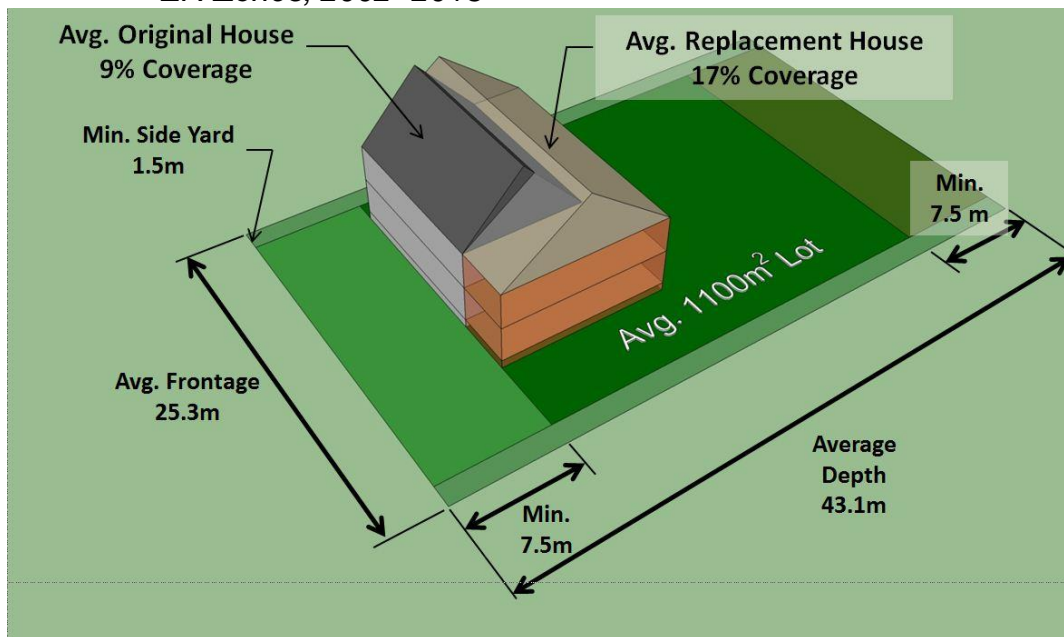
TABLE 4: Characteristics of Demolished and Replacement Structures (2003-2012)

TIME FRAME	2003-4	2005-6	2007-8	2009-10	2011-12
Average Size of Demolished Structure (total building space, sq.ft.)	1,500	1,340	1,637	1,891	1,533
Average Size of Replacement Structure (total building space, sq.ft)	3,708	3,550	3,587	3,873	3,923
% increase in size	147%	165%	119%	105%	156%
Average Lot Coverage (demolished structure)	5.8%	6.2%	8.7%	10.2%	9.8%
Average Lot Coverage (replacement structure)	15.9%	17.8%	21.1%	20.8%	21.5%
% increase in coverage	174%	187%	143%	194%	115%

Figure 2 illustrates the changes described in Table 4. Figure two shows an average sized lot (25 m frontage, 43 m depth. 1,100 sq.m. area) for the Ancaster ER zone with an average coverage of the original home.

The transparent overlay in Figure 2 shows the larger footprint and therefore coverage of a replacement dwelling.

Figure 2: Size and Coverage of Demolished and Replacement Structure – Ancaster ER-Zones, 2002- 2013



Floor Area Ratio

The Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a ratio between the floor area of a house and the area of the lot. The FAR is a measure of the intensity of development on the site. FAR is not regulated in the Ancaster ER zone. Instead, setbacks, height and building coverage regulations are used to control the building envelop on a lot. On the lots where a replacement dwelling was built, FAR increased from an average of 0.12 to an average of 0.29.

4.3 Additions to Existing Homes

Since 2003, 252 permits for additions to existing single detached dwellings were processed in the ER zones as shown in Table 5. The average size of addition in this time period was 781 sq.ft. The data indicates a relatively steady level of redevelopment through additions over the time period with the average size of the footprint of the addition also not trending in a particular direction. For the total increase in building square footage through an addition, a similar lack of ‘trend’ is seen; however, in the most recent time period, the size of the additions jumps from the 600-700 sq.ft. range up to an average of over 900 sq.ft.. It is not possible to determine through this one time period if this larger number represents the beginning of a trend.

TABLE 5: Building Footprint Area and Total Added Building Space through Additions to Single Family Dwellings, Ancaster ER Zones (2003- 2012)

TIME FRAME	2003-4	2005-6	2007-8	2009-10	2011-12
Average size of footprint of addition (sq.ft.)	580	592	694	549	458
Average amount of total building space added (sq.ft.)	657	762	781	686	952
number of properties (253 total)	44	57	51	57	43

4.4 Severance Activity and Variances

The creation of additional lots within a neighbourhood is another indicator of neighbourhood change. The creation of new building lots through severance is one way that a neighbourhood intensifies. In Ancaster ER zones, 27 new lots were created from 2002 – 2012. Nineteen (19) new vacant building lots were created by either splitting vacant land into new lots or severing off an existing house to create a retained lot and a new vacant lot. 8 lots were created by tearing down a single detached house and

severing the lot into two or more lots. Lot sizes and dimensions of new lots must comply with the zoning regulations of the ER District or obtain a variance.

Variances from the zoning regulations are sought when proposed development doesn't comply with the zoning district regulations. In the Ancaster ER Zone, 61 zoning variances were approved for residential lots. Of these variances, 15 were associated with severances. Of the remaining 46 approved variances, 7 were associated with the construction of a replacement structure and the remaining 39 variances were approved for additions to existing structures.

A cursory review of the nature of the variances does not show a strong pattern of a specific type of variances being sought but rather variances to a variety of the zoning regulations. In an area where redevelopment is occurring, variances are not unexpected. In older neighbourhoods, homes, accessory structures, and landscaping has evolved over time through ongoing additions, additions of pools, accessory structures, and simply the maturing of landscape making homes and lots unique. Future modifications to homes must also be unique and variances are to be expected. The low number of variances on replacement structures may be an indication of the relative ease of the design and building process on an empty lot that provides a 'clean slate'. Additions, on the other hand, are more challenging as they need to work within the confines of existing structures and landscaping.

5.0 Regulating Redevelopment in Mature Neighbourhoods: What's Happening in Other Municipalities?

5.1 Ontario Case Studies

Several municipalities in Ontario have been addressing issues of character and neighbourhood change due to redevelopment, infill and intensification. While most studies resulting in policy or zoning changes are focused on the management of intensification (increasing the number of housing units), a few municipalities are addressing changing neighbourhood character that happens through rebuilding where the issue is not intensification, but rather reconstruction of homes or additions to existing homes. A review of other Ontario municipalities' efforts follows and illustrates the diversity of approaches that have been taken to regulate re-building in mature residential areas.

City of Brampton

In response to complaints regarding incompatible additions and new construction of single-detached and semi-detached dwellings in some of Brampton's mature neighbourhoods, the City of Brampton initiated a study in 2013 to review policy, zoning and design issues in the evaluation and control of infill, additions and new dwellings within those neighbourhoods. An outcome of the study will be to recommend policy, zoning and guideline mechanisms. The study is not yet complete.

An interim control by-law was enacted to place interim controls on rebuilds and additions within several older neighbourhoods while the study was being conducted. The interim control by-law prohibits additions greater than 15% of the existing floor area with provisions for exemptions. Exemption requests are reviewed by staff on a site-by-site basis to determine impact of the proposed addition on the physical character of the existing neighbourhood. Exemptions require council approval.

The *Issues and Options Report* (January 2014) identified the need for additional Official Plan policy direction for infill development within mature neighbourhoods and also identified options for additional zoning and/or urban design control to implement new Official Plan policies. Options being considered for implementation are:

- additional design guidelines focusing on site planning and built form design specific to mature neighbourhoods;
- use of site plan control for mature neighbourhoods for all forms of building;
- provision of design criteria on siting and built form to ensure contextual fit at the neighborhood context and the architectural context;
- provision of construction guidelines pertaining to tree conservation/removal, site inspection and sidewalk repair; and,
- a range of new/revised zoning regulations including:
 - reduced lot coverage;
 - average front yard depth;
 - building volume/massing caps;
 - building heights definitions;
 - rear yard setbacks based on depth of the lot;
 - maximum dwelling depth; and,
 - side yard setback based on lot width.

To date, the interim control by-law has been extended by a year in order to complete the study and implement the appropriate amendments to the Official Plan and zoning.

City of Burlington

City of Burlington has been addressing concerns over scale and character of new development within established neighbourhoods since the late 1990s, beginning with a maximum lot coverage regulation which is tiered according to the height of the building. While the coverage maximum was successful in addressing issues of scale and preservation of open space on lots, it was not as successful in addressing the other elements of a development that contribute to neighbourhood character such as roof lines, building materials and massing. To address this deficiency, site plan control for single detached dwellings was put in place in 2010. An evaluation of this use of site plan control is currently underway.

In addition to the lot coverage and site plan control, the City, as part of its Official Plan Review, has initiated Neighbourhood Character Studies in two neighbourhoods in response to concerns with proposed development. These studies are not yet complete

but the establishment of guidelines and/or new zoning regulations specifically for these older neighbourhoods is being considered.

Town of Oakville

The Town of Oakville Official Plan (Liveable Oakville) contains general policy direction for infill development and redevelopment through compatibility criteria for all residential development (single dwellings included) in all stable residential communities within the Town. To assist in the implementation of these policies, the Town is preparing town-wide design guidelines and is in the process of preparing new residential zoning.

Zoning By-law Amendments

In Oakville, specific zoning regulations have been in effect since 1990 that aim to reduce the size of new detached dwelling units and additions to existing dwellings in areas that were considered to be the stable residential area. These RO zones established massing and lot coverage requirements including:

- height reductions and changes in definition of height measurements;
- two storey cap;
- a maximum building volume cap (tiered to a percentage of the total lot area); and,
- maximum size for garages.

A 2013 study on residential zoning identified three measures that affect building mass – lot coverage, yard minimums and building height. The study recommended changes to the approach to ensure that new developments fit in with the character of the low density stable residential neighbourhoods. Proposed recommendations are:

- new front yard standards that averages the front yards of adjacent properties;
- reduction of coverage standards for dwellings more than one storey; and,
- changes to how height is measured (to highest point of the roof rather than determined by roof type).

These recommendations were incorporated into Oakville’s new Zoning by-law which was adopted in February 2014. The by-law is currently in its OMB appeal period.

Design Guidelines

A Town-wide design manual, *Liveable by Design*, is being prepared with a specific guideline to apply to the Town’s stable residential neighbourhoods. The guideline is used in the site plan review process for new single detached dwellings and significant additions to existing dwellings in Oakville’s ‘low density’ residential areas as identified in their Official Plan and corresponding residential zoning districts. The guideline is tailored to new development in ‘stable residential areas’ and includes guidelines on neighbourhood context (character, lot patterns, scale, rear yard privacy), architectural context (massing, height, setbacks, garages and accessory structures, façade

elements), site context (landscaping, tree preservation, driveways) and heritage resource context.

City of Mississauga

Zoning By-Law Amendments

In several areas of Mississauga, zoning by-laws were modified to retain the character of the areas and reduce the incompatibility between existing houses and new houses and additions. In 2012, the City of Mississauga initiated a review of existing zoning standards in the Port Credit area to address concerns with changes in neighbourhood character due to the size and configuration of replacement houses and additions that are significantly larger than existing houses. Mississauga is considering the following new provisions and changes to the existing zoning to address the issues in the subject area:

- a maximum garage projections beyond the front face of a dwelling;
- a change in how height is measured based on roof style;
- a change to maximum dwelling depth;
- reduction in maximum lot coverage; and,
- increased minimum front yard setback standard plus an additional setback requirement based on existing front yards of adjacent properties.

Urban Design Guidelines

In March 2013, the City of Mississauga adopted urban design guidelines for new dwellings, replacement housing and additions. Specific areas of the City are designated as site plan control areas and the City uses the guidelines in the site plan review process to ensure that the construction of new dwellings, replacement housing and additions retain and complement the overall character of the community's existing housing stock and natural areas. The Guidelines deal with scale, massing, and character of proposed buildings and/or structures relating to tree protection, garage location, driveway location and grading.

Town of Newmarket

Town of Newmarket uses an overlay zone where lots within the overlay would be subject to alternate zone regulations. The overlay zone changes the existing zoning regulations by:

- Reducing height
- Varying maximum allowed lot coverage based on number of stories
- Altering required front yards to be in line with or in between existing front yard setbacks of adjacent dwellings.

5.2 Other Approaches in Canada

Delta, BC

Delta was facing a situation similar to many communities where smaller houses were being demolished and replaced with larger homes. Community concern with excessive massing, poor design quality and impacts on daylight and privacy led to the introduction of new zoning amendments and the use of a development permit system (DPS) to regulate new development. A DPS allows a municipality to regulate form and character through a design review process. In the zoning by-law, Delta placed a cap on house size irrespective of the size of the lot. The cap is 330 sq.m. (3,500 sq.ft.). Delta's DPS system provides guidance on aesthetics and landscaping as well as guidelines for backyards. Replacement houses having a lesser floor area than the house that is being replaced are exempted from the DPS. Additions that are less than 25% of the floor area of the existing building or 50 sq.m. whichever is less, are also exempt.

Coquitlum, BC

Development permit systems are also used in Coquitlum, BC but construction of a single detached dwelling is exempt from that regulation. Instead, the primary tool used in the older single detached zones is the regulation of average wall height and maximum perimeter wall areas. These regulations achieve the desired result of staggered wall faces, creating greater building articulation and reduction in overall massing. These regulations are used instead of floor area restrictions.

6.0 Summary of Tools Used to Regulate Redevelopment

The following section summarizes zoning tools that can be used to regulate redevelopment and discusses the applicability of these tools for the Ancaster ER zone.

6.1. Zoning Tools:

Lot Coverage Reductions or Averaging

Lot coverage maximums determine how much of a lot can be covered by structures (house and accessory buildings such as detached garages). In the Ancaster ER zones, the existing built forms are well below the maximum lot coverage allowed which has created the character in the neighbourhood of generous front and rear yards and open space. Replacement homes or additions can result in buildings that cover the lots to a greater degree but still meet the 35% lot coverage maximum from the zoning by law. Reduction of the lot coverage maximum for the ER zone or, alternatively, establishing of a lot coverage maximum based on a group of lots or blocks are two ways to address this measure. Lot coverage standards could also be developed based on the number of storeys of the dwelling, allowing single storey dwellings to have larger coverages.

Front Yards – Increases or Averaging

Various setbacks (front, rear and side) determine the building location on a lot. The Ancaster Zoning by-law uses the term “required” yards when describing a setback. Existing Front yards in the Ancaster ER zone vary. Many blocks contain structures already built up to the minimum front yard requirement. Other areas within the ER zones show greater variability in front yards on a block by block basis and often within a block. Provisions could be added that establish a front yard requirement based on the average of front yards on adjacent properties or averaging of properties within other defined areas (block, parts of blocks, groups of blocks, distance from property etc.). Establishing a range for the required front yard is another method which may be used to respect the existing front yards of surrounding properties and allow limited variation and flexibility to architects and builders when designing.

Side Yard Requirements

The distance between buildings, or the side yard, also contribute to the character of the neighbourhood. Wide side yards result in greater open space characteristics on a lot and create more area for landscaping. In the Ancaster ER neighbourhoods, side yard requirements are 1.5 m. yet there is much variability in the side yards through these neighbourhoods. As with rear yards, an option to explore would be varying side yard requirement based on lot width or moving to a minimum distance between dwellings approach.

Building Depth Maximums

A building depth maximum regulates the dimension of a building from front façade to rear facade and when used in conjunction with a front and rear yard regulation would further define the size of the building footprint that could be built and impact the resulting coverage on a lot. Along with coverage regulations, this provision can assist in ensuring sufficient rear yards are maintained. In addition to a building depth, a required rear yard can be implemented to ensure sufficient rear yard space is maintained, possibly addressing issues of overshadow and privacy in the back yards. In the Ancaster ER zone, building depth is not currently regulated and could be considered with further study.

Rear Yard Requirements

Rear yards refer to the distance from the rear property line to back façade of a building. The size of the rear yard contributes to the character of the neighbourhood. Replacement dwellings which extend further back on the property can have impacts on privacy and shadowing on neighbouring properties where large backyards are the predominant characteristic. The Ancaster ER zone currently has a required rear yard of 7.5 m yet a scan of aerial photos show that many of the existing structures have larger rear yards. Changes to rear yard regulation could be explored in a variety of ways

including increases to rear yard requirements or establishing rear yards as a percentage of lot depth or through averaging as described for front yards.

Building Volume Caps/Floor Area Ratios (FAR)

Building volume, or the mass of the dwelling, is a common measure employed in an attempt to describe and manage changes in neighbourhood character. Typically used in addition to lot coverage, a building volume cap (or floor area ratio) is a measure of the size of the building in relation to the lot on which it sits. Used as a finite number, the FAR may can be used to determine the size of the structure that can be built, with the the larger the lot, the larger the building that could be built. However, FAR on its own may not be the best way to control scale and ensure compatibility where lot sizes vary considerably. However, FAR can also be scaled based on the size of the lot, and it can also be applied based on the predominant floor area in the surrounding blocks of the neighbourhood. The Ancaster ER zone does not contain a floor area ratio regulation but combined with coverage regulation, could be useful in managing concerns with building mass.

Height Regulations

Height is a commonly regulated element in built form through a zoning by-law. Usually, expressed as a measurement, it may often be described as the number of storeys. Sometimes zoning by-laws include both height and number of storeys. Ancaster’s by-law defines height from the ground to the highest peak of the roof. This is the simplest method of measuring height. Another method of measuring height is from the ground to the mid point of a peaked roof, or the highest point of a flat roof. Replacement dwellings do not appear to have difficulty meeting the height limit in the Ancaster ER zones.

Roof lines significantly contribute to the appearance and therefore character of a neighbourhood and houses. Where houses have the appearance of excessive height due to roof styles, an additional provision of ‘height to the eave’ can be implemented to reduce overall wall height, reducing the appearance of height, and prevent roof lines that are excessively tall. The ‘height to eave’ provision is essentially a tool to manage roof style and roof height.

Averaging heights based on heights of adjacent properties should not be considered where there is existing variability in housing style and heights as it could create situations were a subject property happens to be between two single storey homes yet other two storey homes exist throughout the neighbourhood and would be considered an appropriate built form.

6.2. Urban Design Tools

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines help translate the policies and desired directions of the Official Plan into desired outcomes. Guidelines provide more detailed description and guidance on built forms and development practices in a context specific manor. Once established, guidelines can be used as part of the development review process to ensure that the development meets the required design direction in the official plan. However, Guidelines are not enforceable unless used in a development review process and the development review would not be triggered if the proposed building met all zoning requirements.

Best Practices Manuals/Brochures

Publications describing best practices for building in a mature neighborhood context can be an effective educational tool for homeowners, neighbourhood organizations and development professional. Issues of neighbourhood character and impacts of new buildings or additions on adjacent property can be described and illustrated.

6.3. Development Process Tools

Site Plan Control

The City of Hamilton does not require site plan control for single detached homes. Therefore, when a development proposal is in conformity with the zoning, there is no mechanism to review building elements that affect compatibility with established character of the neighbourhood. Establishing site plan control for single detached dwellings is a significant commitment to addressing compatibility issues in established neighbourhoods. Enacting site plan control for single detached dwellings could be narrowed to a specific geographic area or zoning district, or for proposed development with certain criteria (size of proposed development). A move to this level of development review would still require the development of guidelines for the specific context and careful consideration of the impact on staff resources for processing time and the potential additional cost for the applicant.

Development Permit Process (DPS)

The DPS is a land use planning tool permitted by Provincial legislation which combines the zoning, site plan and minor variance processes into one application and approval process and is established by passing of a by-law. Like a zoning by-law the development permit by-law contains a list of permitted uses as well as minimum and maximum development standards. However, a development permit by-law may also establish a specified range of variation from these standards, avoiding the need for minor variances for applications that fall within the prescribed range of variation.

DPS can allow municipalities to better ensure compatibility of development with existing or desired community character, by allowing for conditions related to exterior design, site alterations and vegetation removal.

Policies in the UHOP allow for consideration of a DPS. However, in order to implement such a system, substantial work on developing the development standards would be required. The impact on current administration and staff resources would require significant consideration.

Interim Control By-law

Passed under Section 38 of the Planning Act, interim control by laws can be used to establish temporary prohibitions, controls or regulations within a defined geographic area. Passage of this sort of by-law effectively prohibits the continued use of the land, buildings or structures within the specified area(s), except for those uses set out in the by-law. Interim control by laws are put in place to control development while a specific land use study is being conducted on how to address issues on a longer term basis. The interim control by-law suspends development that may conflict with any new policy developed in the study.

Interim Control By-law may be in effect for up to one year, to allow sufficient time to complete the desired review or study. Additionally, Council may amend the by-law to extend the period of time during which it will be in effect for one more year, provided the total period of time does not exceed two years from the date that the initial interim control by-law was passed. After the two year effective period has expired, or after a municipality lifts the interim control by-law, a municipality may not use interim control in the same geographic area for three years.

The City of Brampton is currently working with an Interim Control By-law as they review redevelopment in large lot neighbourhoods on a City-wide basis. In Brampton, public education was essential to alleviate confusion within the neighbourhoods to which the by-law applies and to assist property owners in understanding the temporary development review process established under the Interim Control By-law.

6.4. Policy Tools

Existing policy direction in the Official Plan requires the maintenance of existing character of established neighbourhoods and quality urban and architectural design. In existing neighbourhoods, development is to improve existing landscape features and overall landscape character of the surrounding areas. The UHOP contains specific policy direction for managing residential intensification in existing neighbourhoods but does not address redevelopment that doesn't increase density (and is therefore not considered intensification). Policies specific to infill and redevelopment in either a mature or a larger lot neighbourhood context could be developed to provide further direction to these policies described in Section 3.0.

7.0 Options for Ancaster

All the tools described in Section 4 above could be used in Ancaster. However, a cautious approach to regulation is recommended in consideration of the characteristics of lots, existing zoning regulations and characteristics of replacement dwellings in the Ancaster ER zones. The level of replacement activity constitutes only 4% of the total number of lots in ER zones and replacement dwellings are usually well within the maximum lot coverage and setback regulations on the ER zone. Variance activity is realistic given the age of the neighbourhood and the number of additions that have occurred in the time period studied. There is potential for ongoing, cumulative redevelopment to impact the character of these neighbourhoods, therefore the following options are the most appropriate to explore for these neighbourhoods:

- *Change to Selected Zoning Regulation* - Reduction of lot coverages, averaging of front yard setbacks, reconsideration of side yard setbacks;
- Addition of New Zoning Regulations – development of building depth regulation and floor area ratio;
- Additional Official Plan policies that address development in mature large lot neighbourhoods;
- Development of a guide to maintaining character in mature neighbourhoods; and/or
- Establishment of Site Plan Control for replacement single detached dwellings or additions meeting specific size criteria.

APPENDIX 1: Terminology – General Definitions

Lot Coverage	The percentage of the lot area covered by all buildings above ground, including accessory buildings
Floor Area (generally, gross floor area)	The total floor area of all floors within a building, which area is measured between the exterior face of exterior walls – does not include any carport or garage, breezeway, porch, veranda, balcony, attic, basement, cellar or any unheated area
Floor Area Ratio (generally, gross floor area ratio, or GFAR)	The ratio between the gross floor area of the dwelling and the area of the lot.
Accessory Buildings	A building or structure not used for human habitation the use of which is naturally and normally incidental and subordinate to a permitted principal use on the same lot (e.g detached garages, swimming pools, pool houses)
Building height	The vertical distance measured from the average finished grade level adjacent to the front elevation of a building to the highest point of the roof structure. (Ancaster Zoning By-law definition)
Building Envelope	The area on a parcel of land within which a building is permitted to be constructed
Lot frontage	The length of the front lot line
Dwelling depth	The distance measured from the front wall to the rear wall of the dwelling
Setbacks (Front, side or rear)	The distance of a structure from a property line (traditionally expressed as a minimum in a zoning by-law)
Rear yard	Area of the lot that extends across the full width of the lot between the rear property line and the rear façade of the dwelling (or, can describe the actual linear setback distance of an existing dwelling from the rear property line)
Front yard	Area of the lot that extends across the full width of the lot between the front property line and the front façade of the dwelling (or, can describe the actual linear setback distance of an existing dwelling from the front

	property line)
Scale	Size of a building and its component parts in comparison with the size of neighbourhood dwelling, or, A building's proportions to the surrounding buildings
Massing	The three dimensional form of a building
Hard surface	An area which is paved or covered with a permanent durable material to make a suitable surface of vehicular and pedestrian activities (e.g. driveways, walkways, parking pads)