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Dear Mayor and City Councilors

We are reaching out to you because you are an elected representative for all Hamiltonians, and because what you VOTE to save or destroy ends up affecting all those citizens who so very PASSIONATELY love their communities.

We NEED YOUR HELP!

Perhaps, you were present at the Monday, June 19th public meeting at City Hall, whereby our elected councilor Arlene Vanderbeek pushed through the sale of one controversial public laneway in favour of one individual, who resides in Dundas, Ontario and whose property abuts to this controversial laneway.

We are asking you to please vote "NO" to the sale of this public laneway or at least support a motion to press the "PAUSE" button and delay the sale, until the Planning and Heritage Committee can give it some more proper consideration.

Have you had an opportunity to read Andrew Dreschel's, Hamilton Spectator's article on Friday June 23- Page A -13? This political battle has now ventured into the tenured greedy desires of a single individual versus the COLLECTIVE right of our neighbourhood and community.

Perhaps weighing in on some of the actions taken on by Arlene Vanderbeek in our community, will add some insight into her questionable reasoning & actions, as to why this public laneway has become such an issue for so many.

As you know, Parkside High School (which used to abut to the Dundas Driving Park and has recently been demolished). This school was built in 1959. The neighbouring community (which is in the area of this Public laneway) have used this public laneway since 1959 and many many years prior to this date. Thousands of young highschool students, as well as young elementary school students, their families and local citizens have used this laneway. There has NEVER been an issue since the inception of 1959 (when the high school was opened) whereby safety or liability (to the city) was made a concerned issue to our community. Now fast forward to 2017 when Parkside is no longer there, because it has been demolished, and examine what Arlene Vanderbeek has been successful in achieving for the safety of our community.

All the highschool students (in Dundas) are now going to Dundas Valley High School (off of Governor's Road) and surprisingly, just as all the buses that went to Parkside, have now stopped travelling through our streets dropping off students, Arlene Vanderbeek thinks it's time to start erecting signage and cross walks to make our community safer. Sorry Arlene, these signs and cross walks should have been there long before now- when the students were going to Parkside, not after you knocked down the school and eliminated all the traffic entering the areas in question. There has been no attempt to mention the reduced volume of pedestrian

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traffic into Dundas, especially within this Melville Heritage District, due to the fact that the high school has now been demolished.

If you haven't recently visited Dundas, you should drive through our main downtown streets and surrounding street arteries and inspect all the recent STOP signs and painted road crossings that have plagued the entire community. Safety is indeed important but at what cost? Considering the remarkable decline in student traffic from the elimination of Parkside High school do we really need to slow down traffic that much? The logic and the expenditure for these painted crosswalks and signs have come from Arlene. What I can't understand is why one waited until Parkside High school was demolished, in order to enact all these safety concerns.? If you are really concerned about safety- FIX the physical condition of some of our roadways....they are an atrocious mess!

My husband taught at Parkside High School (for many years) and in the history of his being at the school, there were never any issues raised about the safety of it's students and how they got to school through our streets- yet Miss Vanderbeek has spent thousands of our tax dollars to make Dundas her vision of a safer place, by having all these STOP signs and painted road crossings pop up all over the town.

I invite you to examine the Sydenham school crossing that was put in place.....and ask yourself, when transport trucks and vehicles come flying down this escarpment road to enter into Dundas, and the cross guard is not there, how does anyone justify why this is a safe place to let anybody cross over Sydenham Street, especially children???? The crossing guard is not there on weekends or holidays, or in the evenings, yet NOW, everybody is being told that this is where we should all cross. Personally, I would avoid this area like the plague. If you want to try and get killed, try crossing where we are NOW being asked to let our children, and community members cross. Is this supposed to be safer for everyone? Who makes up the committee who elected to propose this ridiculous recommendation? Are they inept?

As for safety issues on Alma street regarding this controversial laneway, has anyone asked the question or proposed whether or not the school buses can be better routed to the school, to safely drop off the kids?

Has anyone looked in to the apartment building (owned by an absentee landlord - directly across from St. Augustine's school and abutting to this laneway)? Why are tenants or the general public (from this apartment building) allowed to park directly in front of this apartment building opposite the school, taking up valuable road space- which might be better utilized - if school safety concerns were a real issue? Traffic congestion is magnified even further when you have vehicles trying to back up from parked positions on the road way, especially with the influx of parents who drive their children to school and school buses trying to enter the school grounds all at the same time. The laneway is not the problem, but the way

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the road way on Alma Street is now positioned certainly does not ameliorate the dangers involved.

One councilor raised the question at last Monday's meeting, as to who, had put in some large landscape rocks blocking a portion of the public laneway? I was very surprised that Arlene did not say anything about this matter, because the placement of these rocks took place when Russ Powers was our elected representative and Arlene Vanderbeek was his assistant. Arlene knew who had placed these rocks there, but chose not to say anything or point a finger at anyone. Perhaps, because there might be another mysterious powerful purchaser (in the works) who might want to purchase the remainder of the lane way, after you sell off the controversial portion to Mr. Len Medeiros....does this start to make any sense to you now?

We don't agree with the selling of this laneway because of its Heritage value to this particular district in our community. We do not like the idea of these powerful Dundas citizens having the right to be able to obliterate and take away the laneway's public use, for the costs involved. Arlene Vanderbeek happens to support these individuals by playing the "trump card" involving a purported safety issue. However, this is not the case at all, and the safety issues raised from the sale of this public laneway, have been poorly justified and inconsistent with what is really taking place in the area involved.

The land value, alone, far exceeds what they are being asked to pay, and if the City of Hamilton wants to do this right, they should charge what the land is worth and reflect this charge in the property taxes that should be collected from these individuals who happen to want to own it now. If public laneway's continue to be sold off, will we the citizens, ever see the day, where each and everyone of us can purchase a section of the sidewalks or boulevards that are in front of our homes (which citizens maintain for the benefit of the city)?

This laneway is not a safety issue, it's a political one – please VOTE to say NO to it's closing and at the very least push the PAUSE button and ask for a further delay.

The concerned citizens who oppose the selling of this public laneway deserve to be listened to and ALL the City's councilors should be responsible for the actions of providing a proper democratic calling. ALL councilors should support the majority of those who do not want this laneway closed. It's your duty and obligation at the very least! Please don't let this historical and significant public laneway in our Dundas community be sold OFF on your watch.

Please help save our laneway!

Doug and Bruna Bruce