

**Subject:** 282 MacNab St N Staff Recommendation Planning Committee Comments Tuesday April 02, 2019; 9:30AM

Hello,

My name is Chris and I have been involved in various things in the community around Hamilton. I attended McMaster University where I studied political science and geography, live at John St N and Barton, and work downtown Hamilton in Ward 2, and have a deep interest in urban planning and transit. I have a few comments about the recommendation by staff for denial of the project at 282 MacNab St N found here: <https://pub-hamilton.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=9494c144-2d79-4379-a7c4-7a19032918ee&Agenda=Agenda&lang=English&Item=19>

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The proposal at 282 MacNab St N has been recommended to be denied by city staff. While I completely respect the professional opinion of city staff and their recommendations, I have to disagree completely with their recommendation.

This development is exactly the type of development Hamilton should be encouraging. The city just made a complaint that Go service is being promised far too late considering the growth potential and interest in Hamilton. It also just declared a climate emergency, and is continuing to push for improved transit and cycling.

The best way to approach each of these above elements is to intensify around transit nodes and walkable areas. The development proposes bicycle parking and limited parking spaces. Exactly what developments downtown should be moving toward. I can understand that some would not consider this downtown, but I do since downtown is apparently 4 blocks across, and juts out into James St N which this development is less than 100 metres from. I find it interesting that rather than resolve issues of parking, such as requiring parking on streets near downtown have parking limits or require permits, the city would rather deny developments immediately adjacent to a Go Station.

This recommendation for denial feels like it stems from two things; an inability in Hamilton to actually resolve issues, pushing them to a future date, and pandering to a few loud voices. While the city suggests congestion, traffic and parking are major issues in this area, it works to approve mass suburbia that will require a car or multiple, rather than approve a development that will allow its residents to walk to work, walk to transit, walk to the waterfront, walk to First Ontario Centre, and walk to nightlife and cafes and restaurants. To reiterate the Go station is literally a 5 metre walk from this planned building. In addition to this, Go stations have a minimum people/jobs per hectare with no maximum for a reason, it is because going slightly higher than the minimum is considered to be acceptable.

As an advocate for cycling, may I add that the development is less than a minute away from 3 of the city's major bi-directional separated cycle tracks, and on top of a SoBi station.

It is irrational that a city like Hamilton would imagine the worst possible outcomes from this type of proposal. As if people living here would be absolute scumbags and take up street space to those who have been living here for years. Hamilton needs vision for the future that is less pessimistic. The city proudly touts how much value in developments were approved year over year, while denying medium density developments right beside the empty Go station and one of downtown's treasures; Jame St N and all its eventful days and nights.

Instead of working with the developer to get community benefits like public parking in the building because it is moderately taller than the official plan suggests, it requests additional parking, so as to encourage more cars, and less public parking. The Connolly was just approved with a parking ratio of 0.36 and with a downtown suggested parking ratio of 0.80 the Connolly has 45% the parking suggested by the city, while this has 63% within 5 metres of a Go Station, and within a few hundred metres of multiple bus lines, Jame St N, bicycle lanes, Bayfront park and various other amenities. If anywhere constitutes a beneficial location for reduced parking, it is here.

If the character of this neighbourhood was at stake because of new housing, let us not ignore the sleek, new, modern Go station immediately beside this proposal. Further to this point, this property is a vacant lot, and the city seems very quick to approve demolition of heritage buildings, schools and houses to approve condos, while denying seemingly everything on a vacant or pavement lot. Nearly every approved development in Hamilton has been where a building once stood; The Connolly, Platinum Condos, the Kresge site, Jamesville Lofts, 154 Main St E, 71 Rebecca, and the CIC Residence. At a certain height, I can see the character getting ruined, but this development, being adjacent to a Go station would hardly affect the neighbourhood character. If anything the design could have an impact, but then mention design, not other unnecessary points.

The city seems to be working backward, and trying to hurt itself, rather than move forward. A large portion of the city's core is surface parking lots and vacant properties. The city claims there is no infrastructure to handle these developments, but apparently fails to realize that bringing people and jobs to the city will increase the total tax revenue

to allow for more infrastructure to be built. Let's not deny respectful development creating homes for people that want to live in Hamilton, and those wanting to move to the city, and for those who want to downsize or buy a first home in the city who have lived here all their lives. I live around the corner from this proposal, and want nothing more for this to be approved, and that is my recommendation for council.

Regards,

Christopher Ritsma.