

(Ms.) Carmen Cuming  
Hamilton, ON

October 4, 2020

Planning Committee

City of Hamilton

Regarding: Presentation at the planning committee meeting of October 6 for File no. UHOPA-18-005 and ZAC -18-012 for a proposed 23 storey building on 235 Main St. W and 3 storey townhouse block on 75 Queen St. S., 244 and 246 Jackson Street West.

Dear Planning Committee members:

I am grateful to have lived in this family neighborhood for 34 years. I have built many friendships here and felt the community support around me. I am a 70 years old senior living alone and plan to age in place. I am concerned that your approval of the proposed staff report changes might negatively impact the healthy future of this small residential enclave and nearby neighborhoods. I live at Jackson and Pearl between Queen and Locke (see map exhibit 1). We have been protected by development to date, sheltered by the bridges over the railroads to the south and our narrow streets; the bridges don't have vehicular traffic and only the one on Pearl St is accessible to pedestrians leading to Ryerson middle school and recreation center, a tennis court and Triple H park.

We used to be called "the poor neighborhood on the wrong side of the tracks", as compared to the ones closer to Aberdeen. The popularity of Locke St. and recent condo on 101 Locke St. S., between Canada and Jackson streets, have changed this perception. But this popularity may also be our downfall as a small community and quiet residential area. We have been grateful for living close enough to downtown but "not being downtown".

Change is inevitable and intensification desired. But I worry that acceptance of the proposed changes will likely have a long-term detrimental impact on our neighborhoods potentially opening the doors to more high- rises, creating a downtown sprawl, eroding local communities and contributing to:

- a) more traffic and consequent more air pollution and risk of accidents and pressure on limited street parking;
- b) less air circulation; studies have shown in other cities that "the high-density construction of certain areas hinders natural aeration and causes the formation of heat islands that affect the pollution of the air basin. In addition, the environmental situation is negatively affected by the stagnation of air masses caused by natural and climatic factors such as no wind conditions, surface temperature inversion" (2018, pgs. 2 and 3 attached exhibit 2);
- c) shadow, wind tunnels, obstruction of skyscape;
- d) more impersonal relationships and crowded areas at local amenities e.g. local park;
- e) pressure on old infrastructure especially hydro and water sewage; we already had many power outages in this neighborhood and I wrote to the city mayor and local councilor about it (Nov. 1, 2019).

We favor development congruent with 101 Locke St. S. which has 6 floors. Other buildings in this area are not higher than 7 until we get to Beverly Hills building west of Dundurn St.. Yes, there are some high-rise buildings nearby, to the east of Queen (as noted by staff on pag. 33) but most are not higher than 20 storeys. Besides as noted by the staff report this site is on a topographical elevation (DRP comment, pag. 39) making it more prominent. And it is on Queen St. South which provides the only access to West Mountain, a very busy road.

I cannot agree with the statement by staff “Along the Jackson St. W. frontage, the town house block is proposed adjacent to the existing low rise residential allow for an appropriate transition in built form and density (Policies E.4.24)” (staff report pag. 14). Is this meant to satisfy the requirement for gradation in building height as required? (E.2.4.16, E.4.6.24). It does not seem logical as it is still a height of 23 descending to 3!

This argument is repeated in pag. 16 : “The townhouse block was introduced to provide a transition from the tower to the existing low rise residential area”. And in pag. 19 “To create an appropriate transition from the low rise residential to the high-rise multiple dwelling, the applicant has provided a block of attached two and three storey townhouses along the Jackson Street West frontage that connect the remaining façades of 74 Queen Street West and transitions to the low-rise houses to the west”. And it is mentioned again in pag. 19. The massive height of this tower is problematic with repetitions to justify it, culminating on pag. 27 when the town houses are presented as a transition to the residential area to the south! A three storey podium does not provide an appropriate transition either as suggested in staff report (pag 37 ).

A 23 storeys glass building is incongruent in height and design with this neighborhood, characterized by two and two and half storey, older, majority brick homes. A podium of three storeys is only limited to the first three storeys and we still have a massive glass building above it! I don't agree with: “The tower podium and the townhouse block have been designed to respect and enhance the existing built form and character of the existing streetscapes. The use of a combination of brick, cement panels and glazing, the development has mimicked the surrounding neighbourhood by breaking up the podium with horizontal and vertical features that are similar in scale to the surrounding homes (Policies B.3.3.2.3 a), b) and f), b) and c), B.3.3.2.6 a), c) d) and e)).

This development will stick out like a sore thumb in this neighborhood and our landscape despite of the podium or enhanced sidewalks. It will block the sun and air circulation, create wind tunnels and cause traffic congestion amongst other issues. It is not compatible with the surrounding area in terms of use, scale, form and character (Policy b.2.4.1.4.d) and g). This proposal contravenes Urban Design Policies B.2.2.2.2 and B.3.3.2.3. (a,b,c,f). I am not sure about the requirements for heritage conservation but we need more information about the proposed adaptive reuse of the historic property on 74 Queen St. S.

Please clarify pag 14, 3<sup>rd</sup> par. starting at “This applicant is seeking to adda Site Specific Policy Area to the Strathcona Secondary Plan to permit a height of 23 storeys”. And explain the staff recommendation on pag. 27, 3<sup>rd</sup> par.: “Staff are recommending to remove the 235 Main St. W. and 74 Queen St. S. from the Area Specific Policy -Area C and to place these lands in a new site specific policy area to permit the development of the 23 storey tower atop a three storey podium and an attached six unit townhouse block”? What are the repercussions of this change on future high-rise developments in this area?

How can we be assured that the present maximum 22.0 metre building height allowed be maintained for the remainder of lands abutting Main St. West? (staff report 38). This is clearly a glaring massive change in height from 20.0 to 80.85 meters and it sets a precedent. You have a responsibility to stop it or ask to be revised for a more acceptable height.

My recommendation is that if you approve a development in this area for it should be for an 8 storey or maximum 10 storey building, not including the mechanical structure above.

And we need your support and commitment with any development going forward for:

- 1) Improvement of our aging infrastructure of hydro stations and water sewage
- 2) Provision of calming areas for car traffic; this is particularly necessary at the block between Ray and Pearl streets because it is a downslope; we have many children and seniors in this neighborhood.

This community has spoken loud and clear with front lawn signs opposing changes in our official plans. The signs say: "I want the city to stick to its plans. No development around us without us".

Respectfully yours,

Carmen Cuming

Cc: Andrea Horwath, MPP, Hamilton Center

Attachments: Appendix 1 (map of the area)

Appendix 2: Article: Giyasov, Botir, Giyasova Irina: "The Impact of High Rise Buildings on the Living Environment", E3S Web of Conferences 33, 01045 (2018)