

Pilon, Janet

Subject: 15 church st - UHOPA-20-006 ZAC-20-011

From: Ryan Canu

Sent: December 8, 2020 6:07 AM

To: jamie.vanrooi@hamilton.ca; clerk@hamilton.ca

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Hi Jamie,

I hope all is well and it was a pleasure to speak with you today.

I'm sorry I won't be able to attend tomorrow's meeting so I've included this email with some of the points I want to share in opposition to the townhouse application for 15 Church Street in Ancaster.

If Veloce has the community's best interest at heart, he would take that piece of land and make a beautiful single family home - either restoring the historic home that is there or building a custom single family detached house.

Increased Danger to residents during and after construction of multi-unit townhouses compared to building a single family home

Multiple units in development will cause a lengthier construction process compared to one single family home. This causes increased danger in this quiet, residential area that is home to very young children who often walk this street to get to and from school. There is only one sidewalk on this street..it is on the same side of the street as 15 Church. *This sidewalk route is one of the main streets that residents from this Maywood neighbourhood take when taking their dog for a walk, or taking their children to the park or library or to daycare or school.*

Not only do multiple units have a longer construction project timeline with multiple phases and heavy equipment posing hazards and risks for pedestrians, it will be an issue post-construction as well. The proposed townhomes are 2.5 storeys, three-bedroom homes about 2,300 square feet with two parking spaces for each unit - 6 units, each with two-car garages. *That's like putting all of the residents who currently live on Church ..take 24 Church, 25 Church, 30 Church, 36 Church, 37 Church, and 40 Church ...and then jam them into one lot that is only 164.01 ft x 82.50 ft on a street that is only 500 feet long and 25 feet wide.*

The street is already a very narrow street. Multiple units instead of one single family detached home only increases traffic. There are only four streets that provide residents access in and out of this neighbourhood pocket - Church, Lodor, and Academy. Traffic is already an issue, as is speeding. If a utility truck is parked on the street - as is sometimes the case given that the Ancaster Old Town Hall is right here (for instance, when they put up Christmas lights), the street becomes a single lane and cars need to take turns. When the winter comes, snow build up from the plow contributes to even smaller road allowance. Congestion builds up because this is one of the key streets for residents to enter and exit the neighbourhood pocket. There is already increased traffic when the street is used as a "shortcut" for other drivers to cut through when there is congestion on Wilson or Rousseaux.

Townhouses are popular for population density, however, putting townhomes at this site is wrong for a number of reasons

The proposal doesn't fit with the Ancaster village character and there will be a glaring loss of character. Being in such close proximity to the main intersection (a high-traffic area), even if the old brick is used or they use natural stone on the exterior, *the townhouse design itself is an obvious contrast with the character homes in the area, as well as being in contrast with the historic old ancaster, the town hall and police museum which are right across the street.* How will all of these townhouses fit in this small lot without cutting down all of the trees? The mature trees and greenspaces are a vital element to the neighbourhood history as well as being aesthetically, environmentally, and ecologically

important. Without trees and seeing only townhouses, this area's appeal will suffer. This small part of town might seem like any other but it is an area that inspires appreciation for its history - I remember standing in front of what is now the Ancaster Legacy Football Club reading about how Ancaster was one of the first important and influential early British Upper Canada communities established during the late 18th century after it was Founded as a town in 1793. The history in this location is worthy of being preserved - you can see on the map how many historic locations are nearby.

The screenshot shows the 'Historical Hamilton' website. On the left, there is a vertical list of five historic locations, each with a small image and a title: 'Ancaster Shaver Homestead', 'Jerseyville Baptist Church', 'The Garnett House' (with a sub-note: 'This house was built in 1969 for the Garnett Family by architect Anthony Butler.'), '1009 Wilson Street West', and '1021 Garner Road East'. To the right of this list is a map of the Maywood area with numerous red pins indicating historic sites. Below the list is the 'Historical Hamilton' logo and a navigation bar with links for 'Home | Browse | Map | Books | Links | About'. The main content area features a detailed view of '15 Church Street', including a breadcrumb trail 'Browse > Area > Ancaster > 15 Church Street', a tag 'Ancaster House', a section for 'Exterior Images' with a small photo of the house, and a larger photo of the house above a map showing its location in the Maywood Heights area.

Families have lived in Ancaster for generations. Hearing feedback from the people who have invested their lives and their money here is essential. Veloce lives in Ancaster now but it has only been for a few years - around the same time that he started his construction company in 2016. He may not know about the historical significance or even what is important to the people who live here in the Maywood neighbourhood. Given that he hasn't been in business that long, it would make better PR sense to listen to the community and work in harmony with it, building a positive reputation and gaining referral clients, rather than going against community interests solely to make a few more bucks. As a builder, Veloce has 8 months of experience as a project manager for a property management company, Cornerstone Select Properties, and then he started his own company and built one house according to the Tarion registration. It's admirable that he is an Olympian but cycling isn't a skill that is transferable to construction project management and building technology and to make the leap from one custom home to 6 townhome units, while also promising they will be built to achieve net-zero standards, is a big jump. There are already homes that we have seen built locally that are of very poor quality - mould issues, health/safety concerns, shoddy trades, etc - simply because the 'investor/realtor/builder' put profit before building quality homes. To not take the community into consideration will only cost reputation and future business. This quote comes to mind: "It can take 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it" (Warren Buffett). It's important to do things right and provide quality work when building homes.

Residential infill and densification serves a good purpose and there are many locations in Hamilton that would be ideal. This lot on Church isn't suitable for townhouses. After the fire, it may not be able to be renovated and restored so a new home probably does need to be built. A single family detached home, similar to what Veloce did at 51 Sulphur Springs, would be fitting. That home is 4199 Sq Ft (rather than 6 x 2300 Sq Ft) so it should fit on the lot and still have greenspace and trees.

There are townhouse condominiums in this area of Ancaster (71 Sulphur Springs Road and 371 Wilson Street E), however they aren't located in the heart of Ancaster's village right on a main road. The townhouses in this area are all in their own condominium pocket communities and there is a common drive with shared access to the street. There are no "Front-Loaded Townhouses" (blocks of attached units that are oriented to the street). Entering the complex feels more like entering a private estate drive. The previous townhouses on Academy were demolished and new single family luxury homes were built. It's not logical to go backwards and build townhouses again down the street in an area where the new single-family detached homes were just built in place of townhouses. Detached houses outperform townhouses with higher resale values and appreciation over time and they also boost the value of homes in the neighbourhood.

Ancaster has special zoning restrictions - the ER zoning

Council directed staff to review the Existing Residential "ER" Zone in Ancaster to determine how to manage the building of new residential homes in mature areas.

"Ancaster is one of many communities facing change where larger homes are replacing smaller ones that were built decades before. Mature neighbourhoods are different from new growth areas such as the Meadowlands, not only in the character of the neighbourhood, but also in how development is regulated." (Source: City of Hamilton website). As much as some builders might find it frustrating or limiting to their intended design, it was put in place for a reason and there is benefit to preserving the aesthetic architecture and the historic aspects that is unique to Ancaster - and this area in particular. We've had family and friends visit from Lorne Park in Mississauga, Oakville, and the Rosedale area in Toronto and they all say it feels similar to these areas and it's likely because of the history, the mature trees, lot sizes, and architecture and design of the homes in the area.

There are a lot of reasons not to build townhouses at the 15 Church lot (loss of character, towering over neighbours, increased ecological damage and stress, increased traffic on a small narrow street, risks to children and pedestrian safety, etc.). The only possible reason someone would want to build townhouses rather than a single family detached home suited to the area is ..money/greed? Not everyone can afford a custom built home, including those from that community who may want to stay in that community. (i.e. the young people, sons and daughters of the residents who are starting out, the empty nesters, the families who may split up.). It's not like we can make the case that these will be 'affordable' homes - townhouse condominiums in ancaster sell for almost as much as some detached bungalows and cost over half a million to purchase (recent closed prices for townhouses range from \$550,000 to \$800,000). These townhomes will likely be in the range of \$860,000 - \$1,175,000 based on current comparables. 51 Sulphur Springs sold for \$2,875,000.00 but that property took 508 Days to sell.

A detached single family home priced a bit lower would have a larger market and a faster sale and have a healthy profit, while also keeping the community happy, and the business could even gain new clients because they earned a positive reputation as a local custom home builder in Ancaster. Good reputation, as the saying goes, is more valuable than money.

Again, I am sorry that I can't attend tomorrow's meeting as I have a client meeting myself in Oakville at 930am. Let me know if there is anything else I can do.

Thank you
Ryan Canu