



330 Lodor St, Ancaster L9G 2Z2

## **Submission to Chair and Members of the Planning Committee 12 January 2021**

Ancaster Village Heritage Community Inc is a vibrant community organization working to preserve the heritage of one of Canada's oldest communities. We wish to improve quality of life and encourage the positive development of this community to ensure its rich legacy is maintained.

Since the December 8 meeting that considered applications for amendments to the Urban Hamilton Official Plan and Bylaw 87-57, regarding 15 Church Street, we have become aware of some further matters on which we would like to comment.

We respectfully request the Planning Committee to consider these comments in their deliberations.

AVHC hosted a live online community meeting on January 6 to discuss matters relating to 15 Church Street. The 33 participants from Maywood specifically requested that AVHC should speak on their behalf.

Matters for your consideration:

1. **Variances:** There have been various numbers discussed about how many variances from Bylaw 87-57 and the Wilson Street Secondary Plan would be required to let this project proceed. It seemed to be 12 on December 8.

A careful count shows there are 21. We suggest that any project that requires 21 variances is probably not suited for the intended property.

2. **Changes?:** Since December 8 Councillor Ferguson indicated the applicant agreed to confine the height to two and a half storeys, and he will request basements. The applicable bylaw permits 10.5 meters and we understand the applicant intends to utilize the full height. We also note that 15 Church is on a rise in the land 1.5 meters high. That means an apparent 12 meter height viewed from Wilson St. We are also aware of a proposal for basements. AVHC does not see basements as a solution for the parking issues we raised. Many homes with basements still have full garages.

3. **Consider the Possibilities, NOT the Renderings:** In order to build street townhomes a rezoning to RM2, Bylaw 87-57 is applied for. That is the appropriate required zoning. This also necessitates that the property be designated Low Density Residential 3 as the current designation of Low Density Residential 1 only permits single and semi-detached homes.

AVHC has become aware that Low Density Residential 3 permits light commercial use on the main floor of all forms of townhouses and low-rise multiple dwellings.

While commercial use may be limited in the townhomes, as shown in renderings, once this property has been designated Residential 3, this designation remains for a future owner to take advantage of.

Fewer townhomes with wider form factor could facilitate light commercial uses as it is just steps away from Wilson Street.

We have no reason to doubt the intentions of Mr. Veloce, but we ask the Committee to focus on the uses that Low Density Residential 3 could bring to the established ER neighbourhood, rather than on the specific proposal advanced. Residential 3 is permanent regardless of ownership.

We should never underestimate the creativity of a developer. Once a Residential 3 status has been approved, adjacent to Wilson Street, it can bring unexpected plans. Once approval is given, the re-designated land then meets the Official Plan requirements and the City has very limited power to control it.

4. **Neighbour Oversight:** We have since seen renderings for the rear of the property and note there are balconies proposed on the second floor that overlook adjacent properties. Trees are being removed and oversight of adjacent residential properties (to the east and Lodor) may result. These balconies are not permitted in ER zoning. We request that the Committee require their removal should this application be approved.
5. **Construction Issues** are a significant concern. With the limited front setback, it is hard to see how construction can take place without blocking the Church St sidewalk and indeed Church Street itself. Church Street has active pedestrian traffic. It is narrow, so stepping onto the street is not a solution.

If there is any thought of using the City parking lot to the rear that would be another major issue. This is actively used in the daytime and by the new Arts centre. The congestion will be exacerbated as Covid recedes and life and traffic return to normal.

AVHC asks the Committee to require the developer to submit a plan at Site Planning that will ensure that the sidewalk always remains accessible, other than for the installation of services.

6. **Traffic:** The concerns about traffic seem to be overlooked despite the fact it has been a long-standing issue for 20 years or more.

The current pavement is 6 metres wide, just under 20 feet.

Believing a picture is worth a thousand words:



**On the left** you will note the vehicle is tight against the single sidewalk. **On the right** the view from the driver's seat as traffic approaches.

A courier van, garbage truck, school bus etc. effectively block the road. 6 additional homes in a neighbourhood of 8 will bring significant increases in service traffic.

AVHC rejects the position that traffic is not an issue.

7. **Notwithstanding traffic issues** and that Church St is one of the narrowest roads in Ancaster, this application to amend Section B.2.8 of the Wilson Street Secondary Plan to correct "local roads" under the Plan to 12.19 meters is unacceptable. This would be unnecessary if the lot at 15 Church was the 30 meters deep required by Bylaw 87-57.

Remember that a 12.19 meter right of way yields about a 6-meter road.

**There is no pressure from residents to widen this street, although this development might cause that.**

The applicant should provide the standard road widening allowance

AVHC asks the Committee to require the normal road widening allowance from this applicant and deny the Official Plan amendment that could negatively affect the literally thousands of residents who use this road. Granting a single developer this amendment at the expense of the community due solely to lot size being too small is unacceptable.

8. **A formal traffic study** for the neighbourhood is requested by AVHC. Church Street is a gateway to the neighbourhood. In more normal times, and they will return, cut through traffic is a major issue.

Before road widening or other future adjustments are curtailed by this development, a formal traffic study could alleviate our concerns, or confirm this development is inappropriate.

9. **Site Planning:** AVHC notes the offer by Councillor Ferguson to supervise the site planning process. With all due respect, AVHC believes this development is unique enough that some formal public oversight should be instituted.

10. **Dawson Avenue:** On December 8 this Committee denied an application on Dawson Avenue that has many similarities to this application. We understand that each proposal stands on its own merits. There was significant public input for Dawson Avenue, much as there is for 15 Church.

In that presentation a view was expressed that Council “**Should listen to its citizens.**”

On behalf of the 56 individuals who have participated in this important process we ask the same for 15 Church.

AVHC thanks you for consideration of our comments. They represent the views of a wide cross section of our community.

Respectfully Submitted

Rowen Baker—Director, on behalf of

Bob Maton—President

Jennifer Davis—Director

David Watkins—Director

Donna Stechey—Director

Andrea Connor—Director

Chris Kruter—Director

Jim MacLeod—Treasurer

33 Neighbourhood Participants at  
January 6 Consultation Meeting  
(names not disclosed for privacy)