

**To** Planning Committee, City of Hamilton  
**Re** Development of Corktown Plaza in Corktown in Ward 2

February 16, 2021

This short letter is being submitted in consideration of the matter before the Planning Committee today, item 8.5 (PED21032), with respect to the development of the Corktown Plaza in the Corktown neighbourhood in Ward 2.

For the record, I am supportive of this site being redeveloped and think it's important to consider how it could increase liveability, accessibility, and vibrancy in the neighbourhood.

The sole purpose of providing this feedback is to ask the Committee not to go ahead with any approvals until the City of Hamilton more adequately engages with the community about this development.

The designs and plans have changed dramatically since this development was originally considered by the community. In short, it is no longer the same project.

At a preliminary engagement session with the developer, access to food was cited as a serious priority by residents. I attended these meetings and heard from residents directly about this. The original designs contemplated this possibility and there were some promising early discussions about the potential for a grocery store on the site.

Since then the footprint of the site was made smaller in total and reduced the total amount of available retail space. I'm not sure how this decision was reached. From what I understand, having spoken to the developer's agent briefly, there is no longer space available for a grocery store.

The Corktown neighbourhood is underserved in this way and has been for a very long time. This site is of an adequate size to accommodate this type of amenity and is located somewhat centrally so as to be of benefit to most Corktowners. Other sites in the area with similar footprints are less accessible and more accessible sites have much smaller footprints.

My point is that there are few opportunities to provide this kind of amenity to Corktowners and that the redevelopment of the Corktown Plaza could play a significant role in improving access to food for residents.

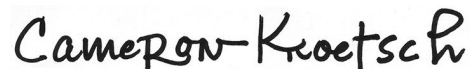
Before this is approved as presented, I think it's important for the community to be consulted about the new plans, in a manner similar to how they were consulted about the original plans.

When drastic changes like this take place, it's important to circle back and continue the engagement process. That process means coming back to residents when things change considerably and giving them an opportunity to provide additional feedback.

While I have no doubt that the City fulfilled its legal obligations in providing adequate official notice to nearby residents, it's not enough. I have made this point to your Committee before, but I think it's especially important considering that the impacts of COVID-19 have limited the public's ability to participate in this process in person. It is the City's responsibility, in my opinion, to meet residents where they're at. During COVID, that means going the extra mile to ensure that they have been adequately consulted.

Please take the time necessary to get this right and to engage with Corktowners before moving ahead.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cameron Kroetsch". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Cameron Kroetsch  
Ward 2 resident