

From: Barbara Ledger

Sent: April 29, 2021 9:06 PM

To: Kelsey, Lisa <Lisa.Kelsey@hamilton.ca>; Ward 8 Office <ward8@hamilton.ca>; Farr, Jason <Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca>; Wilson, Maureen <Maureen.Wilson@hamilton.ca>; Collins, Chad <Chad.Collins@hamilton.ca>; Ferguson, Lloyd <Lloyd.Ferguson@hamilton.ca>; Pearson, Maria <Maria.Pearson@hamilton.ca>; Johnson, Brenda <Brenda.Johnson@hamilton.ca>; Partridge, Judi <Judi.Partridge@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: 354 King Street West/Hotel portion – UHOPA-20-003/ZAC-20-008 (May 4th Planning Meeting)

April 29, 2021
Hamilton

Dear Ms. Kelsey and members of the Planning Committee:

Re: proposed amendments to height of hotel at 354 King St. W., UHOPA-20-003/ZAC-20-008

I am writing to express my consternation about the application by King West Crossing, aka Vrancor, for two additional storeys on their hotel at King and Queen.

I am very disappointed that city planning staff have recommended the approval of the amendments. It seems they have accepted without question statements made by the applicant, while disregarding the concerns of the residents. Yes, the plans allow for height up to twelve stories — if the design is in keeping with existing architecture, and if the height provides a suitable transition to the neighbourhood. Those are very big ‘ifs’. Vrancor’s assertion that the building complements the heritage nature of its surrounding is patently ridiculous. It is a characterless grey and black block amid historic brick and stone treasures (see photos below.) And even at ten storeys, the hotel looms over nearby buildings in Strathcona. It even towers over the other buildings in Vrancor’s own development, a row of townhouses and a future six-storey residence. (Yes, I know Vrancor wants to build 25 storeys, but permission has quite rightly only been given for six.)

It might seem that an additional two storeys on the hotel isn’t much to quibble over. But even with the ten storey building — and ten is already a concession over the six storeys that would have been allowed without any amendments — the residents of Strathcona will feel the impact of increased traffic and parking problems on our narrow streets, increased wind, and decreased sunlight. Two additional storeys represent a height increase of 20%, and a commensurate increase in those problems — and for what? That extra height contributes nothing to what is a well-established residential neighbourhood. It adds nothing to our streetscape, our walkability, our livability.

The only benefit is to the developer — a developer whose sole concern is profit, who cares nothing about community. A developer who has repeatedly over the course of the development thus far shown his disdain for the neighbourhood. It started with the ‘bait and switch’ tactic of proposing one project then embarking on another, and has been followed up with continual annoyances such as a gate to the job site left open over the weekend, oil spills, impassable sidewalks and noise at all hours. This is not behaviour that should be rewarded.

A new development should make a positive difference to the life of the city. In an ideal world, it wouldn’t be a case of the developer making demands of the city, but rather, the city making demands of the developer.

The Official Plan and the Strathcona Secondary Plan have been put in place to hold developers to best practices, and should be adhered to. Please, on May 4, say ‘enough is enough’ and deny Vrancor’s application.

Sincerely,
Barbara Ledger

Complementary?? Really??



