

From: Bob Maton

Sent: July 5, 2021 10:48 AM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Written Submission to Planning Committee for July 6th Mtg

Hello Mme Clerk:

I am submitting my letter attached above and copied below for the attention of the Planning Committee for tomorrow's meeting. Thank you,

Bob Maton, Ph.D., President

Ancaster Village Heritage Community

Hello, my name is Bob Maton and I'm President of the Ancaster Village Heritage Community Incorporated.

Ancaster Village Heritage Community is a neighbourhood association with over 100 dues-paying members from all over Ancaster, and 761 members on our Facebook page. Our mission is to preserve Ancaster's heritage; mitigate overdevelopment; and control traffic.

By doing these things, AVHC aims to preserve our heritage, our neighbourhoods, and our quality of life in Ancaster, which has a long history of human residence and usage going back literally thousands of years. Ancaster was the site of the earliest European community at the Head of the Lake. The original village was established in the late 1700s at the intersection of a number of native trails on the Escarpment, one of which extended along what is now Mohawk Road where this 1883 heritage building is situated. Crucially, but largely unrecognized, is the fact that the earliest Europeans here got along well with the original native inhabitants, and both parties benefitted from their mutual trade and social interactions.

We are grateful that the façade of this distinctive 1883 farmhouse will be preserved. It has a remarkable history in the founding of Ancaster and the West Mountain. We also appreciate the Holding Provision for a Documentation and Salvage Report, and the requirement for at least a Stage 3 Archaeological Assessment before permitting will proceed.

However, we have a number of concerns.

1) We disagree with the zoning amendment to allow this 4-storey building to be built. It is closely surrounded by single-family dwellings, and a children's centre which is a two-storey commercial building; another 2-storey commercial building is proposed to be built close by but is under development review. The proposed building is too massive and high for this lot and this neighbourhood, and it will overwhelm its surroundings.

Current zoning allows for single-family dwellings, and in our opinion good planning would follow the current zoning and maintain compatibility with the existing uses in the surrounding area as required by General Planning Policies E.3.1.4 and 3.3.2.

E.3.1.4 states: Promote and support design which enhances and respects the character of existing neighbourhoods while at the same time allowing their on-going evolution.

3.3.2 states: Development or redevelopment adjacent to areas of lower density shall ensure the height, massing, and arrangement of buildings and structures are compatible with existing and future uses in the surrounding area.

We agree that some densification is legitimate to meet the provincial policies, but in our view this particular development - of a 19-unit apartment dwelling squashed onto a lot that is far too small for it - goes way beyond what is reasonable to densify the neighbourhood. It meets neither one nor the other of the previously stated General Policy criteria, and does not maintain compatibility with the existing single-family dwellings and the two-storey commercial building surrounding it. Ideally, the site should be dedicated to single-family dwellings or 2-storey commercial use only, in order to

maintain compatibility with the existing heritage building on site; with provincial densification policies; and with the surrounding neighbourhood.

2) If the zoning is actually to be amended as planned, even then the 19-unit apartment dwelling proposed is much too large in density, mass and height, especially with the existing heritage building occupying a large portion of the lot. The exceptions and variances from the amended zoning to allow for this building are extreme and should not be allowed. Our AVHC commitment is to strict adherence to bylaw and zoning restrictions, and to densify where a reasonable opportunity arises. This plan is unreasonable and meets none of these expectations.

The exceptions and variances applied for, and the amounts by which they fail to meet the zoning requirements demonstrate their unreasonableness. These unreasonable asks are the following:

- a) The Minimum Lot Area allowed for this plan under the new zoning will be 0.19 hectares, whereas the zoning requires a Minimum of 0.4 hectares. This Lot Area is less than half of what is required by the new zoning;
- b) Density will be increased to 100 units per hectare, whereas a maximum of 70 units per hectare is permitted by the zoning, an increase in density of nearly 45%;
- c) Maximum Lot Coverage will be increased to 40%, whereas the staff report says that a limit of 25% is required. This is an increase of 40% over the zoning restriction;
- d) The Minimum Side Yard (Westerly) will be reduced to 7.5 meters, except for the existing heritage structure, whereas 9.0 meters is required by the zoning, a decrease from the zoning requirement of nearly 20%;
- e) The Side Yard Minimum will be reduced to 2.0 meters on the Eastern side, whereas 9.0 meters is required, a decrease of 450% from the zoning requirement;
- f) A Minimum of 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit will be allowed, whereas 2.33 spaces per dwelling unit is required by the zoning;
- g) There is no “children’s play area”, whereas a curbed or fenced children's outside play area that has a minimum area of 2.5 square meters per bedroom, excluding master bedrooms, is required;
- h) The Maximum Building Height allowed is to be raised to 13.0 meters, whereas under the zoning 10.5 meters is permitted. It has balconies on all sides except the front, and the fenceline is a mere 16 meters approximately distant from the three buildings behind it, and a few meters away from homes under construction on its west side. The occupants will be able to view quite clearly the interiors of homes surrounding it.

The building elevation is 2.5 meters above grade at Mohawk Road, and so it will tower 15.5 meters above the road. It will completely dominate the skyline when travelling from the west on Mohawk Road, i.e., from the Meadowlands, and will dominate also from the east (Hamilton) as well. It will also tower over the commercial medical building being built right across the road.

- i) There will be a minimum 1.5 metre wide planting strip allowed, whereas 3.0 meters is required by the zoning, a decrease of 50%; and finally,

j) There will be a Minimum Landscaping requirement of 25%, whereas 40% is required by the zoning, a decrease from the zoning requirement of 40%.

The variances necessary to permit this development are far beyond what is acceptable and in our view are simply bad planning on this site. The building and its neighbours will be squeezed into this area like sardines in a can. The mass and height of this planned building are way too far beyond the Official Plan requirement that they conform to the height, massing, and arrangement of existing buildings, structures and uses in the surrounding area. The design fails to enhance and respect the character of the existing neighbourhood. The plan should be rejected, and replaced by a more reasonable proposal.

Thank you. Bob Maton