



20 Rousseaux St, Ancaster L9G 2W5

August 24, 2022

Mayor and Council  
City of Hamilton

You likely recall our organization fought vigorously to either scale back or deny the application for street townhomes at 15 Church St in Ancaster.

The recent bylaw amendments to permit significant intensification in existing neighbourhoods were put on hold in Ancaster pending a drainage study. If we recall correctly street townhomes would be “as right”.

**Gentle Intensification in Real Life:** 15 Church might be instructive as to what “gentle intensification” might look like in practice. We believe there are many other areas in the City similar to the Ancaster ER neighbourhoods and after the study Ancaster ER neighbourhoods may be in alignment with them. The 15 Church application was prior to the recent bylaw amendment, but whether a project was approved in the former process or “as right” under the new bylaw the project will need services, possibly more services than exist. Many neighbourhoods may be surprised to find what “as right” means.

Here is Church Street this morning:



The road is closed as is the single sidewalk. A storm sewer is being installed to accommodate excess runoff from infiltration basins on the 15 Church site.

**Private Sewer:** This new pipe is at the developers expense, we believe, and services only that property. It would be fair to call it a private sewer necessary to allow what is clearly over-development of the site.

**Over Development:** We call it over development as the single or duplex that could have gone on the lot without major zoning changes would not have required infiltration basins or a private sewer. It would not disrupt the entire neighbourhood, or the other users of an overly busy street. Church is the main access to the tennis club, a busy playground, the Old Town Hall parking and other traffic that uses Church to avoid congestion at Rousseaux/Wilson.

The reason for this disruption? Simple. Multiple street townhomes are more profitable than a duplex or a triplex. Both of those would have delivered significant intensification.

**Why Was This Need Not Disclosed by the City?** Why was the need for this major construction of a single user sewer not disclosed to Planning Committee in the application? AVHC cannot believe that this is a sudden requirement that could not have been known when the application was vetted. The presence of infiltration basins was included in the application. Why was the sewer not?

**This is NOT the end of It:** If this was the end of it, perhaps it would be a lesser issue but it surely is not. The street townhouse construction will cause major disruption for a year or more to come as they have short setbacks and it is hard to imagine how this developer will not use the sidewalk and the narrow street for basement earth excavation loading, concrete delivery, materials delivery. The municipal lot behind the site would be an attractive place for material storage and access (which AVHC strongly opposes). In short, the neighbourhood pays the price for up to two years.

**Strong Pushback?** AVHC believes if scenes like Church Street play out across the City because of “gentle intensification” public pushback will be heavy.

**A Solution?** This project is underway, but the future changes to ER may need some careful thought if this is not to play out again and again. Surely “as right” can include a provision that the required infrastructure must be in place and construction must be accommodated on the lot otherwise the full Planning Committee process with public input must be followed.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim MacLeod". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Jim MacLeod  
Vice President  
Ancaster Village Heritage Community

Cc Steve Robichaud