

Pilon, Janet

Subject: August 12 Council Agenda Addition -- re: Item 5.1

From: Dayna

Sent: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 1:46 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca; Office of the Mayor <Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca>; Wilson, Maureen <Maureen.Wilson@hamilton.ca>; Farr, Jason <Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca>; Nann, Nrinder <Nrinder.Nann@hamilton.ca>; Merulla, Sam <Sam.Merulla@hamilton.ca>; Powers, Russ <Russ.Powers@hamilton.ca>; Jackson, Tom <Tom.Jackson@hamilton.ca>; Pauls, Esther <Esther.Pauls@hamilton.ca>; Danko, John-Paul <John-Paul.Danko@hamilton.ca>; Clark, Brad <Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>; Pearson, Maria <Maria.Pearson@hamilton.ca>; Johnson, Brenda <Brenda.Johnson@hamilton.ca>; VanderBeek, Arlene <Arlene.VanderBeek@hamilton.ca>; Whitehead, Terry <Terry.Whitehead@hamilton.ca>; Partridge, Judi <Judi.Partridge@hamilton.ca>

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Dear Hamilton Councillors,

I have lived in Ancaster for thirty years. I am writing to express my support for the change to the zoning by-law to eliminate exclusionary zoning. The "ER" zone in Ancaster should not be excepted as Councillor Ferguson has requested.

I urge you to give proper consideration and greater weight to the information provided by Chief Planner Steve Robichaud, in whose objectivity and subject-matter expertise I place greater store than that of Councillor Ferguson, in relation to Councillor Ferguson's concerns about the "character" of Ancaster and flooding downstream. Converting an existing home's configuration to accommodate multiple dwellings does not affect the exterior of a home, and building townhomes would be subject to the city's site plan control process and would require a stormwater management plan. The adoption of green building standards such as permeable paving, rain barrels, rain gardens, and the planting of trees and native plants rather than turf, would further mitigate the purported issues of runoff. Additionally, Councillor Ferguson's assertion that increasing residential density would "significantly change the character" of Ancaster is entirely spurious. I note that Councillor Ferguson has not indicated to what he is referring when he uses the term "character". I shall assume that he is not intending to be elitist or exclusionary. All of Hamilton and its many neighbourhoods have character and a rich history. Ancaster is not unique in that regard. As I noted, I moved to Ancaster approximately thirty years ago. For my first thirty years, however, I lived in the Kirkendall South and Durand neighbourhoods. These areas have been long known for their "character" and for varied housing options. In neither circumstance has the addition of, for example, multiple dwellings compromised architectural or neighbourhood "character", property values, or neighbourhood liveability, attachment or cohesion. To the contrary: the Kirkendall and Durand areas continue to be highly desirable neighbourhoods, characterised, among other qualities, by their vitality and diversity. I further note that my current home in Ancaster is large, and we can think of no reason that, when we leave it, a future owner should be arbitrarily foreclosed from adapting it to a multi-dwelling unit, and in the process easing housing pressures.

Ancaster is a part of Hamilton and not a separate enclave. There is no basis for the exception that Councillor Ferguson is seeking. Our city, its residents, and its elected leaders must work together to ensure that affordable housing is available for everyone, and not shelter behind specious assertions deliberately intended to create obstacles and frustrate constructive problem-solving. Gentle intensification is an ideal solution, and its adoption would alleviate the need to build the multi-level units to which Ancaster residents are opposed. If Hamilton is to accommodate another 236,000 people by 2051, changes are required. Defending and maintaining the status quo is short-sighted and does not work.

Dayna Firth
Ancaster