

From: H Millar

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: upcoming council vote on approval of affordable housing project

Re: Proposal to build affordable housing on parking lot rejected (at 5 and 13 Lake Ave. S in Stoney Creek)

Please consider this email as an expression of my concerns regarding this decision and include it in the upcoming meeting agenda.

Council needs to support affordable housing initiatives. We are in the midst of a full blown housing crisis.

I live in downtown Hamilton. Every day I see unhoused people sleeping in parks and doorways. I can see the YWCA women's shelter from my rental apartment. Every night there are lineups and every night there are those who are turned away due to lack of space. We desperately need affordable housing.

Every renter such as myself is one step away from being unhoused, if their current rental housing situation comes to an end and they are unable to find another apartment that they can afford. In the three years that I have lived in my current building the rent for similar units has risen by five hundred dollars per month. This is the harsh reality of the rental market in Hamilton.

There are more than a dozen housing projects under construction in my neighbourhood and I support them wholeheartedly. Yes, it means that increased traffic and construction noise will happen. But it is creating needed housing and increased property revenue for the city. And it also means hundreds of employed tradespeople who are able to support their families, pay their property taxes, and spend money in the stores and restaurants in my neighbourhood. And when that housing is occupied, the new residents will do the same. This is a good thing. Housing density is nothing to be afraid of, and realistically is the only viable solution to help us get out of this crisis. And **every** neighbourhood has to carry a share of that responsibility. Yes, even Stoney Creek. Yes, even if that means that you may now have to **pay** for a parking spot because that free one you were previously using is now being used to build permanent housing for families in need.

It is unconscionable that we would prioritize 27 free parking spots over providing affordable housing for 67 Hamilton families. We didn't seem to have any problem when it became necessary to eliminate free transit fares for Hamiltonians in wheelchairs, because the city had a financial crisis in relation to the city budget, and difficult choices were made for the greater good of attempting to keep the property tax increase as low as possible for city taxpayers.

But somehow we can't apply the same principle to car owners in Stoney Creek?

For those council members who voted against this project I urge you to please do the right thing and approve the construction of this much needed affordable housing development. People should always be a greater priority than parking spots.

Kind regards,
Heather Millar