

October 18/2021

City of Cambridge  
50 Dickson Street,  
Cambridge ON N1R 8S1

Reference: 130 Water Street North/Pearle Hospitality Waterfront Proposal

Our family lives in West Galt and have an office on Ainslie Street North. We are writing this letter to Council out of deep concern regarding the proposed development at 130 Water Street North even though it was apparent last week during the Council meeting that input from the public doesn't seem to matter anymore.

And so it may be that Council has already made up its mind about the proposed development at the Cambridge Mill in an effort to strengthen the business case for a Cambridge LRT, but I sincerely hope that this is not the case. While we can all understand the need to bring more people into the core for the benefit of a vibrant downtown and for the benefit of businesses (including mine perhaps) as well as the need for revitalization, this project as proposed would change the landscape of West Galt in a significant and negative way, far into the future for generations to come. There will be no turning back.

The development as proposed with a height of 37 storeys for a condo building and 28 storeys for a hotel are completely inconsistent with a city that markets and prides itself on the charm and historic attributes of West Galt in particular. No longer will anyone consider a trip to this city like a '*mini-European Vacation*' as described by the blog Narcity Toronto last year. Indeed, the only real way to describe this proposal for an already congested area of the City is OBSCENE.

Some of my concerns about the proposed development at 130 Water Street North are as follows:

1. This development far exceeds the current height restrictions in Galt not just marginally but SIGNIFICANTLY. After extensive study and consideration as well as much public input (and outcry) the city allowed the Gaslight Condos to build to 17-18 stories. Now the City seems open to twice that height with the 130 Water Street development. If allowed to proceed, this will set a terrible precedent for future development in the downtown.
2. The traffic in the area around Cambridge Mill and crossing the Park Hill Bridge is extremely congested at several times a day/every day of the week beyond the rush hour periods. Traffic waiting to turn left to proceed north on Ainslie/Water/Hespeler often runs west of George Street to the Ainslie Street/Park Hill intersection, which also leads to bottlenecked traffic all the way to the Delta at Dundas and to GCI. This area was not built for the kind of traffic that will result from the West Cambridge housing development, the Gaslight towers, Kerr Street development and now the Water Street development?

I find it impossible to imagine how additional traffic can be accommodated with the additional development of 253 condo units and 146 hotel suites. Ironically, this additional traffic in the core is sure to be a discouragement for residents outside of the downtown core to visit shops in downtown. Have traffic studies been provided?

3. The Cambridge Mill at 100 Water Street North is a designated property and so I would ask the City to uphold the requirement to do a heritage impact assessment even though Pearle Hospitality has conveniently severed the property to avoid a heritage review. One must wonder if this is also the reason why the Galt Heritage district was also not expanded this past month; to accommodate Pearle Hospitality
4. ) Wind tunnel conditions around the proposed buildings will be very significant given the enormous height proposed for this development; more study is warranted.
5. There will be major shadow affects cast from this proposed development during all seasons of the year impacting a good portion of the core-more study is warranted
6. High rise buildings are not energy efficient and are inherently less sustainable due to the use of steel, concrete and glass as compared to lower rise and mid-rise buildings. Is the City not concerned with building more sustainable developments?
7. While the BIA may have already provided support for this project; as a member of the BIA myself, they do not speak for me. There was no poll taken of members prior to them weighing in to support this project as proposed. The BIA's prime concern is for adding people to the core to support retailers, full stop. As noted above, the traffic congestion which will increase with the additional developments being planned for the core will become the next disincentive to visiting and shopping in Downtown Cambridge.

We understand that the City of Guelph has a restriction on development in their downtown core such that high rises are built outside of the core area of the city. Our city should be doing the same given the historic architecture and unique site lines that Downtown Cambridge is known for which bring many visitors and film production revenue to this City. Cambridge should not be disregarding all of that in the name of building a business case for bringing the LRT to this City. Allowing this massive and out of place development to proceed is not the legacy that this Council should be looking to leave for the next generations of Cambridge residents.

Sincerely

Brenda and Kevin Phelan

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