

Michael Oliveri

From: Keith Wallbank [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 16, 2023 7:06 PM
To: E_Clerks
Subject: [External] Hespeler Rd Secondary Plan

Hello.

I'm unable to attend tonight's meeting and therefore submit my comments in this e mail.

I have concerns about the proposed secondary plan and how it will impact this corridor and the city.

Hespeler Rd/ Highway 24 – Role

The plan to turn Hespeler Rd into a residential area contradicts the fact it is a major thoroughfare through Cambridge.

It not only links different parts of the city; it's a major highway for transportation through it to Brantford - there is no practical alternative.

In addition, it is the commercial centre for the city ,replacing downtown cores: decades ago.

Lane Reductions

Lane reductions proposed will lead to further gridlock on Hespeler Rd.

Vehicles making right hand turns will further congest traffic.

At present, traffic at certain times of the day is collectively backed up to Dunbar Rd to the Delta (2kms), GCI to the Delta (1km) and past the hospital (1km). There is no mention of the above in the plan amendment including traffic studies or impacts.

The resulting additional traffic congestion will: reduce the quality of life for all drivers (extra time & frustration), negatively impact the flow of goods & services and make it less of a shopping or eating destination for residents & visitors.

Hespeler Rd was a two lane gravel road when Galt/Preston/Hespeler had a combined population of less than 50,000: now the road is facing lane reductions with a population of 145,000 ? There is no logic to this.

Other Modes of Transportation

Bicycles/ Pedestrians: There is ample room for a smooth paved multi – use trail on either side of Hespeler Rd: to take the place of the sidewalks which tend to be rough/uneven in nature for walking or riding.

Mass Transit

Buses: I've been observing buses for a number of years in various parts of the city at different times of the day: at the most they're half full and usually only approx. 10 people or less on a bus - including Hespeler Rd.

How is this fact not taken into consideration?

It's clear that a different model has to be examined to attract more riders. Much smaller vehicles that can manoeuvre much quicker in traffic to destinations would help a great deal.

LRT : I've also been observing the LRT when in Kitchener; basically the same low ridership as buses. It's also clear that a different model has to be examined to attract more riders: the LRT is

slow, extremely expensive and an ineffective mode of transportation. They're also disruptive to all other transportation types at intersections.

I attended several public meetings about transit alternatives and the information provided at these meetings indicated that LRT stops would attract development.

Why is this now the opposite where Hespeler Rd has to change to justify/promote the LRT?

15 Minute City

The new list of permitted uses of organizations and businesses mainly represent lower paid employment such as retail & hotels; auto related businesses include skilled trades where the rate of pay is much higher.

This rationale of promoting lower paid employment is wrong; a skilled labour force: automotive & otherwise need to be promoted for the betterment of the city. A service based economy is a lower standard of living economy.

It needs to be noted that 15 minute cities exist already such as the proximity of the former Hespeler, Preston & Galt industrial areas in the Queen St., Industrial Rd & Lowell industrial area starting from Conestoga Blvd. In addition the Maple Grove industrial / commercial area: all these locations are surrounded by homes with close proximity to doctor offices & banking etc.

How is the effort on Hespeler Rd going to benefit residents/travellers than these existing 15-minute cities?

It will indeed be unknown: an experiment with ultimately the real estate & consumer demand dictating what will happen.

Gateway

Gateways provide no benefit as seen by the Downtown Galt Gateway or the old Knob Hill Farms structure (which looks like the city's symbol) on the Home Depot property at the corner of Pinebush and Hespeler Rd.

Its clear that there hasn't been any positive impact in either area and improvement in aesthetics is highly debatable – both are largely ignored by all forms of transportation.

Change

Change is inevitable; taller buildings need to be allowed along Hespeler Rd based on market demand.

The present model of mass transit is ineffective and needs to go back to the drawing board to become quicker and attract more riders.

The number of lanes can't be reduced for the sake of practical travel and to not add further gridlock in this city: this has to be a non-starter.

Anyone who travels through the city during busy times can clearly encounter serious problems with getting around. You have to be creative and zig zag around to make progress.

Change is needed to effectively address these facts and not ignore them.

Please seriously consider these points in regards to this secondary plan.

Thank you,

Keith Wallbank