

From:
To: [Committee of Adjustment \(SM\); Sean Harrigan;](#)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed 8-Unit Development at 96 Wood Street
Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2024 8:36:31 AM

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Dear, Committee of Adjustment, Mr. Harrigan and Ms. Chapman,

I am writing on behalf of concerned residents to formally object to the proposed 8-unit development at 96 Wood Street. This proposal raises significant concerns that jeopardize the character, functionality, and overall integrity of our neighborhood. I would like to start off with:

Unprofessional Conduct During the Meeting on Tuesday September 17, 2024 at 10:00am

At the Committee of Adjustment meeting for Application A-2024-075 on 96 Wood Street, Chair [redacted] made comments that were both inappropriate and dismissive of residents' concerns.

1. Dismissal of Written Statements and Absence of Residents

Chair [redacted] repeatedly emphasized the absence of neighborhood residents speaking at the meeting, despite the fact that **15 written statements** had been submitted. His remarks alluded to the absence of speakers as a detriment to the strength of opposition. This oversight fails to acknowledge that the meeting was conducted during **working hours—10 a.m. on a Tuesday**—making it inaccessible for many.

- Residents should not have to choose between personal or professional obligations and having their voices heard.
- Someone in a position of leadership should exhibit professionalism and understand the realities of residents' schedules when making such dismissive observations.

2. Inappropriate Personal Commentary

Chair [redacted] remarks during the meeting, including his statement:

"I'm going to respectfully disagree. It's not an overdevelopment of a lot. For someone who lived in a crappy basement apartment for 1 year with undersized windows—it sucks—and I'm in support of this application."

This type of unprofessional commentary, rooted in personal experience, is entirely inappropriate for a decision-making forum. Such statements are dismissive of the concerns of the community and indicate a troubling bias.

Mr. [redacted], how would you feel if an 8-unit development were proposed directly beside your home? This comment illustrates a lack of empathy and understanding for the residents directly impacted by this project.

I urge you to carefully consider the following points:

Gildner Green Cultural Heritage Landscape

This property is located within the Gildner Green Cultural Heritage Landscape, a designation that underscores the City of Kitchener's recognition of the unique attributes of our neighborhood. The mature street trees, consistent architectural styles, and heritage-like "built-form" of the houses are defining features that this development blatantly disregards. Permitting such a project would set a dangerous precedent, undermining the values this designation was meant to preserve.

Neighbourhood Aesthetic and Property Value

The proposed development's design does not align with the aesthetic or architectural character of the area. Many homeowners in the neighborhood have invested significant resources to enhance their properties in ways that reflect and respect the community's distinct charm. Introducing an oversized, incongruous development risks degrading the neighborhood's appeal and lowering property values for all residents.

Excessive Building Height

The proposed building height exceeds the zoning limit of 11 meters, reaching 12 meters. This excessive height is incompatible with the existing streetscape and creates a visual and spatial imbalance that undermines the cohesion of the neighborhood. The zoning rules are in place to prevent such overreach, and allowing this exception would erode trust in their enforcement.

Street Parking Congestion

Wood Street is already burdened by parking challenges due to its proximity to the hospital, with visitors and employees frequently occupying the limited 2-hour spaces. The proposed development does not include any parking for its 8 units, which will exacerbate these issues significantly. Additional cars on the street will complicate snow removal and increase tension among residents, further eroding the quality of life in our community.

Precedent for Demolition and Overdevelopment

The approval of this development risks setting a precedent for further demolitions and multi-unit developments in our neighborhood. The current landlord's track record—purchasing this property out of reach for a first-time homebuyer and showing interest in additional acquisitions—suggests a troubling trend. This project could open the door to further speculative developments, threatening the long-term stability and character of the area.

As a long-time resident of this neighborhood, I strongly urge the Committee of Adjustment to reject this proposal. The negative impact on the Gildner Green Cultural Heritage Landscape, property values, parking congestion, and community cohesion far outweighs any potential benefits. This development is not aligned with the vision of our neighborhood or the City of Kitchener's commitment to preserving cultural heritage and livable spaces.

I trust the Committee will carefully consider these concerns, which are shared by many residents in our community, and act in the best interest of preserving the unique character of Wood Street.

Sincerely,
Michele Grieco

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