

Good evening, I am very thankful to Council and all the presenters who have inspired us with their expertise and commitment. I thank the planners for listening and contrasting so clearly the divide between Residents' concerns about excessive height, traffic, and greyscape AND the Developer-Landowners' opposition to lower density, parks, and accommodating non-residential uses needed for "complete communities". But while Developers want to maximize profit, Residents need a livable home and community.

SLIDE 1 I have three questions.

Does Midtown address the needs of families and youth?

How will Midtown be integrated into the Town?

And, what characterizes it as *Oakville*?

- For Families, the presentation is deeply worrying. I grew up in Ward 5; had a home in Ward 2; and I, like my family, have lived and worked in what's now Ward 3 for 2 centuries. Sadly, my sons, both professionals, are giving up their dream of an Oakville home.

-We see determined plans for High Density, but the direction for unit mix, parking, emergency services, and other vitals is absent. Non-market housing with affordable options is mentioned, but with no definition or direction other than hope for Town-owned lands.

-There's talk of innovations for rental and assisted housing and even a brief nod to this area's homeless. And innovation would be great, but in posing alternatives, the only suggestion is reduced parking – again, what about families who will have to drive to access the many services and activities not available in an incomplete community.

We need homes for newly arrived, multigenerational families and our young people. But it looks like Midtown is being planned for:

Shorter-term residents;

Commuters who may work and shop elsewhere;

Investors; and

Offices and retail when the world has moved online.

Symbolic of this is the space for only three schools.

In 2021, 47 elementary schools served Oakville's 214,000, a ratio of 1 per 4,500 people; 11 secondary schools served at a ratio of 1 per 19,000. Applying these ratios, Midtown would need more than 5 elementary schools by 2041 and more than 7 by 2051. It would need a high school by 2031 or a lot of buses. By 2051 the population would warrant 2. The long-term vision for 52,000 would demand 15 schools. There's no room.

Based on estimates, schools would be over-capacity immediately, necessitating portables (but no school yards on which to put them), or busing, causing more pollution and traffic.

Midtown plans don't explore family living, or school sites for vibrant community life.

SLIDE 2 The plans for this active TRANSPORTATION community raise serious safety concerns, especially for the vulnerable. Cross Avenue shows 6 traffic lanes AND 2 turn lanes. Trafalgar is home to many memorials for pedestrians, particularly vulnerable seniors who have died crossing from their condos by Raba or the Medical Centre. What about children crossing these roads?

Terry Murphy and Michael Johnson

Children need safe schoolyards and parks. Midtown elementary recesses will be a challenge; high school sports, impossible. Schools provide the rest of Oakville's children with a range of recreational opportunities. Midtown's children will be disadvantaged in a high-priced "ghetto" alongside a noisy, polluted corridor.

Because of intensification and high land values, we are asked to expand our definition of parks to include "links" and "pocket parks". The Parks Plan stresses that in hardscape areas like Midtown, "trees" will be "a persistent challenge." If trees and grass can't grow, how can children? It is worrying to be told that sunlight might be ensured by asking for a tower separation of a mere 30 metres - that's not much wider than this council chamber.

The *Parks Plan* (A. II, p.8) also states: "Just like a suburban dweller is required to travel to utilize amenities, the urban dweller (is) required to go elsewhere to find recreational opportunities...This is simply part of the trade-off." Trade-off for what? And again it means more cars.

Midtown features **too much concrete** (with its **huge carbon footprint**) and **not enough green**. More height means more concrete, grey, built-form in our skyline, and much less blue and green in our living space. Concept slides show green graphics and even green font to ameliorate the grey skyline and hardscape paths and avoid comparison with other neighbourhoods with yards and spacious school sites.

This area already has serious environmental issues like flooding and air and noise pollution. Midtown's air shed is severely taxed by traffic, as well as significant pollutants from industries and the Clarkson airshed. Having grown up within 250 metres of Midtown, my family has suffered many respiratory problems.

My mother's and her neighbours' homes have flooded repeatedly. The conservation authority has cautioned about these floods and spills.

SLIDE 3 The concepts talk of protecting and enhancing natural heritage and ecological areas like the Sixteen, while promoting biodiversity and green infrastructure within developed areas. How?

Aside from their climate changing properties, the towers planned near the Sixteen threaten additional runoff and erosion to the banks.

SLIDE 4 Over-development threatens **significant cultural and natural heritage**: the community garden, the pioneer cemeteries, which are still being used by families who own plots, ...

SLIDE 5 ... the 16 Mile Creek with its rich plant life and the diversity of its fauna like the 77 species of resident and migratory birds. Over-densification threatens the many protected and endangered species who live here.

SLIDE 6 And back to general quality of life, what about access to **other "Trade Off" Facilities**? For us, it's at best a 20-minute drive to the closest hospital, Credit Valley. In Midtown, add the time EMS or anxious parents would need to navigate 40+ floors and into a vehicle during rush hour. Midtown residents will have to travel for everything from schools to medical needs; recreational programs and team sports to houses of worship and seniors' homes; likely for large shops at discount food stores; and even for their jobs along the GO line.

SLIDE 7 How is there a good transition to the rest of Oakville? 50-storey buildings would change the entire Town. They don't fit, and especially for the bordering **old established neighbourhoods**, both north (shown here) and south. They are being asked to compromise their quality of life and property values to accommodate Oakville's "biggest development" - our skylines changed forever, the blue replaced by grey, and increased problems with traffic, pollution, and service accessibility.

SLIDE 8 Despite improvements from the initial plans, the north and south are still treated differently. The long-anticipated 3-D pictures are disappointing, their height- diminishing aerial views ignoring that people look up. Again we're reminded of the need for human scale. Further the perspective is only from the south. No northern view. Why do heights taper from 35 to 30 storeys at the far south-west where there are no homes, and from 40 to 35 in the north where there are?

SLIDE 9 The heights are excessive for both sides of the QE but the north is more disadvantaged. The transition slope to the low-density north is much steeper than in the south. And the Cornwall interface is 70% open space. What about "We the North"?

The costs for infrastructure and services are yet unknown except that they will be astronomically high like the towers. The impact of funding shortfalls because of Provincial changes to development, community benefits, and parkland charges is the crippling **downloading of these onto us taxpayers.**

Despite the major transportation infrastructure needed for Midtown, Metrolinx has been conspicuously absent except in influence, and whatever moneys the Federal government *might* deliver, the costs for adding 10s of 1000s to Oakville's population can bankrupt the Town as it has bankrupted Toronto.. To give just one example, the Parks Plan states a typical park costs up to \$95.00/ m² while an urban park costs up to 15 times that at \$1,500.00/ m². Plus urban parks are much more costly to maintain. The stated reasons for the density were to prevent sprawl and in-fill. With recent Federal and Provincial actions, I fear it's no longer the case.

SLIDE 10 What Characterizes Midtown as Oakville? Nine slides focus on "signature" spaces like a 48-storey gateway into Oakville. Pointed towers do not "signal" our Town's distinctiveness. The Lake, the Harbour, the 16, the canopy, the green spaces, the history of this transportation centre - from port to Henry Ford, Glen Abbey, and the persistence in identifying as a Town – these are what make Oakville distinct. These are absent – not one graphic shows a water view.

SLIDE 11 Heights and zoning should link the ecosystem with the community and allow all Oakvillians to interface with the water. Towers can't act as Oakville's signature. Towers can't be fences blocking public access and views, and separating neighbourhoods. Despite best hopes, highly-priced condos threaten increased prices and established neighbourhoods.

After yesterday's presentations, I thought about saving everyone's time and not speaking, but I decided to repeat the common, respectful refrain: dear, hardworking Councillors, please continue to listen to your constituents, the professionals and the average people like myself, so that Oakville remains a good place to be for the young, the old, and families.

SLIDE 12 Please consider a different approach to density - lower buildings along verdant streets with amenities. While planners may hope for well-spaced pointed towers, once zoning is changed developers could form a **divisive wall**. The templates for Oakville - in the UK, Australia, and the US - are not comparators. These cities intensified through organic growth. They did not say "if we build the towers and offices they will come". Midtown and its neighbours should not be asked to carry an inordinate share of growth, and the stresses it will bring.

BRING BACK SLIDE 10 I've always loved the sign on our school secretary's desk: "Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine." Neither Midtown nor Oakville can solve the housing problem for the Province, let alone the country. Let's do our part, as Oakville has always done throughout history (from the Underground Railroad to the Country's highest volunteer rate during the Second War). But let's do it our way, not like Mississauga or Melbourne or Mumbai, but as unique, livable Town, the Oakville way.

Again, sincere thanks to all for your time and patience.