

Subject: Statutory Public Meeting for Proposed Town-initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments

Hello,

I am writing as a concerned citizen and resident of the [REDACTED] Community, in reference to the proposed amendments for the “official plan” and “zoning by-law”.

The Town has indicated that the proposed initiatives are being undertaken to address the motion to respond to the Federal Governments Housing Accelerator Fund. The Council wrote, as part of their plan for 2023-2026, that “with a new vision to be a vibrant and livable community for all, the long-term strategy reflects the community’s desire for an active, beautiful and full-of-life community where people of all ages and abilities have a place to call home.” However, the direct detrimental effects of the proposed changes on the existing community have not been addressed.

I am writing on behalf of my local community and neighbourhood which is made up of single dwelling detached residential homes whose residents are primarily retired individuals and young families. Our neighbourhood has been a nurturing and safe environment for our young children. Many of us have moved from the congestion of the City in order to experience this community feeling. As the demographics change, where retired individuals leave their homes, it has been anticipated that new young families will transition into these neighbourhoods to raise their families. Our community ties will only increase further, with a further strengthening of the bond of the people within these neighbourhoods. We have been proud to say we live in Oakville and in our neighbourhood.

The proposed changes will actively alter this sense of community. Increasing the number of available dwellings will further increase the number of “migrant” residents who are not invested in creating and maintaining the community. As an example, one residence on our street has recently been converted to multiple rental dwellings and in just a few short months, there has been an increased police presence (3 visits in one week) which is highly concerning, particularly in a neighbourhood that is home to many young children. The tenants also leave their house at night and walk-through the neighbourhood in large groups, talking loudly and smoking in front of other people’s property with apparent lack of consideration for their neighbours. Further, the number of tenants is not being controlled, as we have observed a high volume of individuals entering/leaving the home. A home that is designed to be a 4 bedroom family home has now been converted into a boarding house. It is evident that the currently bylaws are not being effectively enforced and the number of these types of dwellings rises, the ability to oversee and ensure that landlords are in compliance with the bylaws will be further reduced.

It appears that decisions regarding the recently proposed changes are being made in haste to facilitate the town’s **access** to funding from the federal Housing Accelerator Fund. These hasty decisions, without careful planning to anticipate how this will impact the community and

whether there are sufficient existing resources to support the changes, will be extremely detrimental.

The federal housing accelerator also does not specify how housing is to be addressed. The Town has sufficient space to increase development of low-rise communities in adjacent areas. Even this, however, should be undertaken only after careful planning to ensure that the community has sufficient resources to support the resulting increase in population density. Unfortunately, this does not appear to have been considered in the planning of recent new developments, which have in fact directly resulted in the local public school exceeding capacity such that new enrollments are no longer being accepted. Yet when local residents have raised concerns, these have been ignored - for example, multiple Town hearings were held regarding the proposed development at River Oaks and Sixth Line by Bara Group; ultimately this went to the Land Tribunal and now an even larger structure is being proposed/accepted in this space.

If in fact the recently proposed changes are intended to address Sheridan College housing, there is also sufficient space within the property of Sheridan College that can be used. There are several parking lots that are vacant at all times of the year, which would be a prime opportunity to develop a housing structure. Other education facilities have received government funding to provide mixed-use facilities, with lecture halls at lower-levels and residences above, and Sheridan College can also apply for government grants to facilitate on site housing for their student population.

The pride that I had saying I live in Oakville is starting to diminish by the changes that the Town is making. It's time that we stand together with what is right for our communities - increasing population density to obtain funding is not the solution. We are a proud community and the strategies that are being proposed/implemented are diluting the sense of community that has been one of Oakville's greatest strengths.

Thank you,
Hussein Remtulla,