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March 4, 2025

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Town of Oakville

Cc: Mayor Burton, Stephen Crawford, MP. Councilor Dudack and Councilor Chisholm,  
Paul Barrette (Manager Planning) and Town Clerk

**Subject: 105-159 Garden Drive Proposed Development**

Dear Catherine

Consequent on our recent conversation, John Westcott and I worked together to review earlier issues identified when the re-zoning of this lot was first considered. We believe many of those objections still stand and, with the usage and density proposal now on the table exacerbating certain points (for example, parking), we believe that this proposal should not be approved by the Town in its current form.

We have communicated with our neighbours and there is general agreement among them. We will forward their letters in a separate email.

Please see the attached "Letter Objecting to Proposed New Development" for our in-depth comments. In summary, it deals with a variety of issues, not just with this particularly dense proposal, but the knock-on effect when re-zoning of other properties in the area is considered. The main topics are:

- Public safety and traffic concerns i.e. Vehicular volumes at peak times, stacking issues, etc.
- Parking (Lack of, for visitors. Unrealistic reliance on "parking stackers", busses or bicycles for owners)
- Building height and shadow studies. For all intents and purposes the proposal would result in a 5-storey building. Observations suggest that there would be more shadow issues than suggested in the current study.
- Density (number of units and size of units). Future density of Neighbouring Lots/Properties. E.g. the property at the corner of Lakeshore/Doval/Garden Drive.

Your attention to our position would be appreciated.

Sincerely,



Bradley Jones



John Westcott

# Letter Objecting to Proposed New Development

At 105-159 Garden Drive

We are writing to express our strong objection to the proposed new development at 105-159 Garden Drive, which is currently under consideration by the town council. As residents of this community, we are deeply concerned about the negative impacts this development will have on our neighborhood, public safety (traffic congestion) environment, and overall quality of life for the local residents and business operators.

We also wish to be clear that we are not objecting to residential construction on this property but, rather, the type and density this property can support.

## 1. Parking:

These units, as proposed, only have room for one car parking. This is contrary to the Towns requirement for 1.5 vehicles per unit. We understand Car Stackers have been proposed as a solution to this shortfall. We feel there are many drawbacks to this sort of solution:

While we understand that this might make sense in Toronto or other dense metropolitan area where the general density of population dictates it, this is in Oakville, in what would be generally considered a suburban environment. It should not be a necessary fall-back for a building design that does not suit the lot it is being built on.

Let's look at a few drawbacks of stackers:

- a. **Access Time:** Depending on the system's efficiency, retrieving a car can take longer compared to traditional parking. This is particularly true if the "secondary" vehicle needs to be moved, and the "primary" vehicle is in place.
- b. **Safety Concerns:** While generally safe, there is always a risk of accidents or damage to vehicles during the stacking process.
- c. **Complexity:** Operating the system can be challenging for users unfamiliar with automated parking.
- d. **Reliability:** Mechanical or technical failures can lead to significant downtime and inconvenience for users. In other words, in the event of a failure, an owner may not have access to their car or, worse, its stuck "half-way" and the "primary" car cannot be parked at all.
- e. **Maintenance:** Regular maintenance is crucial to keep the system running smoothly, which can add to ongoing costs. Further, we understand there is no on-premises facility management to allow access, so a hot-line support

service and permanent access would have to be given to the maintenance company and the stacker made part of the condominium as it gives access to every unit.

- f. **Initial Costs:** Installation can be expensive, with the need for specialized equipment and construction.

We see the “stacked parking” as nothing more than a “work-around” hoping to avoid the established Building Code and, for the Developer, allowing a greater density of units to be built than, otherwise, what the land-size would allow.

A few other observations:

- a. Where in Old Oakville has this parking system been used successfully in a suburban residential context?
- b. How much height does this add to the building that already exceeds its surrounding buildings? Based on what we have read, a ceiling of at least 12 feet would be required in the parking space.
- c. There are concerns that residents will not use the stackers as designed leading to parking on the streets and providing more congestion on Garden Drive and Maurice Drive in an already high traffic area.
- d. Parking is not sufficient for the 48 units and commercial use being proposed even with the stackers.
- e. Guest/Visitor parking spaces are not sufficient given the medium density application, especially when the Commercial units on Lakeshore are included. Additionally, as they are clustered in one end of the proposed development, separate from most of the units, they will not serve the units at the middle nor north end of the property very well.
- f. If the Parking system is not used correctly what is the parking solution for the building? Parking on the street or tagging and towing is NOT a solution to what will be a parking problem. (For example, with 4 additional driveway accesses to Garden Drive, no parking is likely to be available on Garden Drive itself. There is no parking on Rebecca or Lakeshore.

Where will the cars go? Why has the Town Planning Department not stipulated one level of underground parking. This is a real solution!

## **2. Proposed building heights and proper shadow studies.**

The proposed units appear to be higher than the buildings around it. If were just 4-storey, it might not be so bad, but... it is really 5 storeys when the roof area is included. The infrastructure built on the roof will block the sun whether it is 100% coverage or 50% coverage

### **Shadow Studies:**

Back decks, and balconies will be severely compromised. Especially with minimal set back provisions on the lot line at the rear of the Maurice properties, where many Owners purchased their properties because of the spacious back deck before the land in question was re-zoned. (When the Maurice units were built, the land behind was approved for 18 town homes fronting on Garden with similar decks behind).

Based on the setting sun and when it is blocked today (by the condos on the east of Garden Drive) it is clear that a building higher than those units and within feet of the Maurice decks would have a significant impact. We do believe there needs to be another independent study completed to properly assess the shadow impact on the Maurice Collection property before the project progresses any further.

### **Building Heights:**

The density of the proposed units and on-grade parking within the unit forces the units to be built higher than necessary. If there would be underground parking, at least 12 feet could be removed from the height.

Reducing the density would allow more area per floor that could be a solution to reducing the overall height to be in line with the properties next to the new development

### **3. Traffic Study**

Given the residential growth in Oakville over the past years, specifically, the Windemere, at Lakeshore and Maurice, ROC development at Dorval and Rebecca and, more recently, The Maurice Collection – 16 units (with 83 parking spaces for residents and visitors), The Berkshire condo's on Maurice – 56 units (with 96 parking spots), the Harbour Place Towns on Lakeshore 22 Units (with 2 parking spaces per resident plus more for visitors), and the Matheson Townhomes on Rebecca. Further, and importantly, the future development of the part of Lakeshore between Dorval and Garden is concerning. If the density is allowed in the development on Garden, it will set a new precedent in the area, and we are convinced that the owner of the property on Dorval, Lakeshore and Garden Drive will request the same or greater re-zoning amendment for medium

or, perhaps, high density. This will further exacerbate the vehicular and pedestrian congestion and materially impact the safety of the residents and students.

Has the traffic congestion study taken all this into consideration? Lakeshore, Rebecca, Garden Drive and Maurice Drive will all be impacted by the associated stacking issues that can and will lead to serious safety concerns. Especially with the high school fronting on to Lakeshore, Rebecca and Dorval. Have any of the studies taken into account the number of students that walk along Lakeshore, Rebecca, Dorval, Garden Dr. and Maurice Dr.? There is a high volume of students walking to and from the school in the mornings and after school. At the lunch hour there are multiple groups of students walking the streets going to Fortinos, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, Harveys, Starbucks, and others.

It is worth mentioning that commercial parking is already constrained in the plaza at the north of Lakeshore and Brock (Beckers/Physiotherapy/Optomatrist) as well as the plaza opposite to the south (Starbucks/Harveys/Post Office, etc).

There are real safety concerns given the proposal of 48 units; this is way too much density for this property.

The further concern is the amount of vehicular traffic already on Garden Drive and Maurice Drive. Drivers are using these streets to cut through to Lakeshore and Rebecca. The length of these streets is too short to accommodate the type of density being requested.

We believe that the proposed development will exacerbate traffic congestion and parking issues in our area. We already see significant traffic issues during peak hours on Lakeshore and Rebecca, and adding this relatively high-density development on one of the streets linking those two roads will only worsen the situation. Increased traffic not only leads to stacking issues but also raises the risk of accidents and poses a danger to pedestrians, especially children and the elderly. This is of particular concern given the proximity of the St. Thomas Aquinas school, hosting over 1,100 students, just one short block away. Further to our conversation of February 14<sup>th</sup>, even if the School Board was not present at the October 15, 2024, Planning and Development Council Meeting, the safety of the students and faculty is a real concern and must be considered within this application.

#### **4. Snow Clearing**

Where do the property Owners propose to place snow piles given there are property owners on both sides. Are they proposing to haul the snow off site?

#### **In Conclusion**

In conclusion, we strongly oppose the planned new development due to the numerous potential negative impacts on traffic, the environment, local services, property values, noise and light pollution, and community cohesion.

We believe that this is an ill-conceived proposal that only serves to maximize the profit of the developers and ignoring the realities of the neighbourhood by packing as many units as possible onto the lot.

The notion that people will only have one car (quoting from the first public meeting) may be true of a metropolitan development or, perhaps, a development close to substantial public transportation options. This site does not fulfil those criteria.

It was stressed how bicycles would be an option... In the suburbs, a bicycle is generally more of a hobby or recreation that most will only use on a nice day. One only has to walk Lakeshore or Rebecca during "rush-hour" to show how few bicycles are on the road.

Walking to work is also unlikely. The stated expected price of these units was "about 2 million". Most jobs within walking distance are retail, coffee shop, etc., and would be unlikely to provide the wherewithal to afford such a unit.

We urge the town council to carefully consider these concerns and to prioritize the long-term well-being of our community in their decision-making process. Again, we would stress, we are not against residential development on this site, but the appropriateness of the development is of utmost concern.

We thank you for your time and understanding of this urgent matter.

Respectfully,

The Maurice Collection