



December 10, 2017
Planning and Economic Development Department
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West, 6th Floor
Hamilton ON.

Attention: Alissa Mahood, Senior Project Manager, Community Planning & GIS

RE: Draft Downtown Secondary Plan

The Durand Neighbourhood Association has reviewed the Draft Downtown Secondary Plan and has concerns about the plan as it impacts building heights, zoning, and the unique historical character of the Downtown Durand quadrant for the area bounded by Queen Street West, Main Street West, James Street South and Hunter Street West and the James Street South westerly corridor from Main Street West to Charlton Avenue West.

Our concerns are as follows:

- Height proposals in the current draft are three to six times higher than those contained in the former Secondary Plan 2005 “Putting People First”.
- Inconsistencies in the Land Use Maps and the Zoning Bylaws Maps in the Draft Downtown Secondary Plan
- Height maximums in the residential quadrant of Durand that has no vacant land or parking lots on which to develop without demolition.
- No regard for the unique historical character of the Durand neighbourhood, the densest neighbourhood in the Downtown by permitting maximum heights which could encourage demolition of existing buildings.

Specifically:

Map B.6.1-2

The area west of Bay Street South and immediately west of James Street South is indicated to have Maximum Building Heights of 30 storeys. Although the zoning map allows 44 meters, equivalent to 12 storeys, we are concerned developers and the Planning Department will be more likely to allow the maximum heights indicated on the map. There

is also the unnecessary confusion inherent in the dichotomy between the Maximum Heights indicated on the map and the proposed zoning bylaws.

Map B.6.1-2

The corridor on James Street between Main Street and Charlton contains several designated heritage buildings including the former Bank of Montreal, St Paul's Presbyterian, a National Historic Site as well, the Stone Row Terraces between Bold Street and Duke Street as well as several character supporting and character defining buildings as identified by the Downtown Built Heritage and the Durand Built Heritage, planning documents to help city planners in developing Secondary Plans etc. Currently building heights along this corridor on the west side are 2-4 storeys with the exception of James Street Baptist. These building heights should remain rather than the 12 storeys proposed. This will preserve the pedestrian streetscape which will enhance the unique historical character of our corridor which includes, commercial, retail, housing and the medical and health related businesses. Furthermore, based on past experience with James Street Baptist, we fear other properties along James Street South could become victims of "demolition by neglect" allowing developers to build tall buildings.

Map B.6.1-1

The area west of Caroline Street to Queen Street South, Main Street West and Hunter Street West is identified as "Downtown Residential". This area is totally occupied with a variety of housing stock including affordable, City Housing Hamilton, 2 ½ storey homes and 3 and 4 storey walk ups as well as high-rise. Included in this quadrant are retail and commercial buildings. There are currently no vacant parking lots on which to develop. With the proposed Maximum Heights of 79 – 81 meters, the unique character of this quadrant would be drastically altered.

Durand Neighbourhood Association would prefer to keep options open for this quadrant and not restrict commercial or retail spaces. The Durand Neighbourhood Plan specifies this area as suitable for commercial/retail and mixed use.

Durand Neighborhood Association would appreciate the following considerations:

1. A "Site Specific Policy Area" for the quadrant of Queen Street South, Hunter Street West, Main Street West and Bay Street South. The exception would be Wesanford Place as it is already identified as a "Site Specific Policy Area". This would include reducing the height currently proposed in this area from 77-81 meters to 44 meters, with the exception of the existing high-rise buildings.
2. Reduce the proposed 12 storey height to the current heights on the James South Corridor to the preserve and enhance the pedestrian and historical unique character of this street.
3. Eliminate contentious inconsistency with Land Use Maps and Zoning Bylaw Maps. In 2005 the Durand Precinct heights and maps were consistent. They were at that time 4-8 stories and recorded as low to medium density.
4. Include a short historical context statement from the Downtown Build Heritage Inventory to acknowledge the unique historical character of the Durand's contribution to the city. (Section 6.1.12 Cultural Heritage Resource Policies)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Downtown Secondary Plan.

Sincerely,



Christopher Redmond
President, Durand Neighbourhood Association

Board Members: Dennis Baker, Tom Flood, Roberta Harman, Wesley Jamieson, Christine Larabie, David Levy, Paul Nichols, Geoff Roche, Anne Tennier, Janis Topp,

With files from: Janice Brown, Past President
Frances Murray, Past President