



13 June 2019

Mr. Jim Harris
Councillor, Ward 8
City of Barrie

By email: jim.harris@barrie.ca
CC: Mayor Lehman jeff.lehman@barrie.ca
Wendy Cooke for circulation Wendy.Cooke@Barrie.ca

Dear Jim,

The purpose of this letter is to repeat and amplify the comments I made at the Public Meeting of General Committee last Tuesday, 11 June.

We bought our house in Allandale in 2006. As soon as we moved here, I became involved in the process of establishing the Historic Neighbourhoods Strategy. This process involved two major surveys of residents of Barrie's historic neighbourhoods, together with many well-attended public workshops and meetings. The result was the HNS document, which was approved by Council in June of 2010. At the time, it was celebrated on the title page as "People-led planning for Barrie's older neighbourhoods", in that it embodied the opinions of residents about the way their neighbourhoods should evolve in the future, and about the way in which the historic features of those neighbourhoods should be protected.

In the Allandale Profile in Part 4 of the HNS document, Historic Neighbourhood Profiles, the first items under how Allandale residents would like to see Allandale grow were:

- Retain and incorporate existing heritage structures.
- Encourage commercial/retail development on Essa Road, adjacent to residential streets.
- Develop Gowan Street with buildings designed to complement existing "Old Allandale" elements around the Train Station.

All the streets in Allandale were classified under three headings: Residential, Transition and Declining and needing investment. Cumberland Street was included among the Residential streets, where "Significant change in the residential character of the area is not anticipated. Growth is expected to occur primarily through small-scale residential infill (e.g. new single-detached homes) and renovations/additions to the existing housing stock". In addition it was understood that, for transition streets, "Future growth can and should be accommodated along Essa Road and Tiffin Street, as well as Innisfil Street and Gowan Street where appropriate."

The present proposal to re-zone part of Cumberland Street from RM1 to C1-1 is a good example of top-down planning, and a betrayal of the concept of people-led planning embodied in the HNS document. In Allandale, we have long accepted that Essa and Gowan would be re-

developed, but in return that Cumberland and the other residential streets would grow in accord with the expectations of the HNS document. The proposal to re-zone Cumberland did not come from the residents, but from City staff.

Along the stretch of Cumberland now proposed for re-zoning, there are several properties that are historic, built at or before the turn of the 19th century. In the discussion following his presentation at the Public Meeting, Mr. Jordan Lambie said several times dismissively that these buildings were not on the Heritage Register, and, by implication, that therefore they were not worthy of preservation. The failure to list these buildings on the Heritage Register lies, not with the owners, but with the City. The Ontario Heritage Act requires municipalities to compile and maintain a register of Historic Properties. Barrie has opted not to compile this Register, but has allowed owners to do so if they wished. When we listed our property, we found the process both complicated and unencouraging. Therefore, the fact that a historic property is not on the Register is a significant failure on the City's part, but not a justification for allowing its demolition in the name of intensification.

Staff has presented a conceptual drawing for how redevelopment of Gowan and Cumberland would occur. Anticipating a zoning of C1-1, and looking at the drawing, I see that the expectation is to have a row of retail outlets on the north side of that block of Cumberland. Executive members of the Allandale Neighbourhood Association met recently with Mr. Edward Terry of Barrie's planning department. We were told that it was essential to re-zone that block of Cumberland to C1-1 in order to control the impact of redevelopment on the properties on the south side of Cumberland. However, C1 zoning would make it difficult to refuse retail developments on Cumberland. We were told that planning staff would work with developers to ensure a compatible transition. If planning staff consider re-development, including destruction of existing historic properties, is indeed necessary, (in direct conflict with the expressed opinions of Allandale residents) then surely there are residential zoning classes that would better ensure an effective transition without retail development.

I would be happy to discuss this subject with you at your convenience.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W J Scott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

William J. Scott, Ph.D., P.Eng., P.Geo (NL, Ret.)
Past Chair, Allandale Neighbourhood Association