

DOWNTOWN BUREAU

Television City Development Part of a Successful, Growing City

I honestly never expected that someone would propose such a fantastic urban housing project in our core in my lifetime. But I really never expected that it would be my city administration that would turn it down.

By [Jason Leach](#)

Published March 20, 2018

never thought I would have either the opportunity or the need to do this, but I need to state my support for [the new housing project proposed in our downtown core on the CHCH site](#).

First of all, we *need more housing in this city*. Period. It gets tiring to read local development news and see City Hall constantly opposing or trying to shorten new urban development projects. Urban cities either grow or stagnate.

We have sprawled across the countryside for decades and are already paying a steep price for the poor planning: high taxes, way too many kilometres of roads we can't afford to maintain, and a hollowed-out central city.

As a taxpayer living in one of the highest-taxed cities in Ontario, I want many more \$300 million, 600-unit investments in my downtown core. I welcome more resident ratepayers sharing the cost of running this city without having to build miles of new suburban roads.

More housing will also help our affordability problems. Anyone who complains about affordability can't in clear conscience turn down an additional supply of homes. And that's what these are: homes for people who want to live in our city.

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Perhaps the most important fact of all surrounding new investment in our core can be found by looking at the older high-rises that were built during the last building boom downtown in the 1970s. Every building is full of residents, most have waiting lists, and the prices to purchase or rent are much cheaper than detached or semi-detached street level housing in Hamilton.



Rendering of Television City proposed development (Image Credit: Lamb Development Corp.)

Reverse the Decline

I have looked through the letters of opposition to this project (very few considering over a thousand notices went out) and of the ten letters that had a mailing address on them, six are from very nice condo buildings nearby - Bentley Place, Village Hill and Core Lofts. Three are from home owners and one is from a renter.

It's frustrating to see people who already have homes in our city trying to prevent other people from moving in. This is one of the biggest problems underway in Hamilton today: people who already own their nice luxury condo or Victorian home trying to block others from moving into their neighbourhood.

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Report: Walkable**

Hamilton's lower city population is 25,000 people fewer today than it was in 1971. I purchased my home in the downtown core with the belief that City Hall wanted to reverse that decline and revitalize the core.

I have long hoped that we would add a hundred thousand people to the core, not keep it depressed and with a shrunken population. I would have invested elsewhere had I known my civic administration is happy with the the economically stagnant status quo.

Cities Grow Over Time

In the vibrant downtown of a major city, there is no such thing as "over-intensification" of a site. This concept is a peculiar Hamilton thing because we reflexively oppose anything more dense than single-family sprawl neighbourhoods.

The neighbourhood around this development is already full of high-rise buildings. The staff report conveniently omits the fact that one block from Television City there is a 28-storey and a soon-to-be-finished 32-storey building.

Why are a few homes on Wesanford taking precedent over the existing tall-building character of the neighbourhood? This would be like the ten-storey building on Rymal near Upper Wentworth now taking precedent every time a new home is proposed in that part of the city.

Here's the thing: cities grow larger over time. The idea of a new building needing to match the buildings next door is a recipe for stagnation. Consider the following:

- The Pigott Building, Hamilton's first skyscraper, was far taller than anything else around it when it was built.
- When City Hall was built, it was like a spaceship plopped into an old Victorian downtown. Now it's a protected heritage landmark.
- The famous Hambly House on Longwood Road North doesn't match the old brick bungalows that surround it on all sides.
- The Red Hill Valley Parkway certainly didn't match the trees and river surrounding it.

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Pigott Building (RTH file photo)

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Hambly House on Longwood Road North (RTH file photo)

In none of those cases was there a successful argument that the new development should not be allowed because it didn't match the existing neighbourhood character.

Nothing will ever be built again if we honestly adopt this notion of matching to the current conditions next door. Even suburban homes with two-car garages don't match the grassy farmers fields next door.

As the staff report points out, this project conforms with the most important planning boxes: the Regional Growth Plan (Places to Grow), the Provincial Policy Statement, and the City's Official Plan. It is transit-oriented, pedestrian- and bike-friendly, mixed use, adds new residents, and has a variety of units from studios right through to three-bedrooms.

Cities Grow Over Time

We need to address the Escarpment red herring. Buildings that are taller than the escarpment have already existed for decades and nobody noticed or cared. This proposed building is shorter than our tallest building, which was built 45 years ago. Are we really 'ambitious' or 'unstoppable'? Or are we going backwards?

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by Ryan McGreal, published April 25, 2018 in *Ontario Election 2018*
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Absolute World, Mississauga, at 56 and 50 storeys (RTH file photo)

Most cities crave for a new tallest building to show that they're alive and building a modern city. Mississauga hosted a world-wide competition for their new tallest. It's now an international landmark. That city is now seeing buildings of 65 storeys.

Little Vaughan, Ontario is seeing buildings of 55 storeys. Edmonton, Alberta just approved 80 storeys. Brooklyn, New York just approved a 1,000 foot tower, equal to 100 storeys.

In all of these cases, these buildings are far taller than anything else ever built in those cities - just like the Century 21 on Main Street East was here back in the 1970s.

Why is it that the least dense urban form is always the one given the most clout in Hamilton's planning decisions? We already have buildings in the 30-43 storey range in our downtown core. Based on recent development applications, this seems to be where most builders are looking to max out their heights: the 30-40 storey range.

What exactly are we accomplishing by allowing 25 or 30 stories, but not 35 or 40?

Some folks suggest that we should be more like Paris or Vienna with a 6-8 storey height throughout the city in order to achieve density without tall buildings. That is fine in theory, but it would require the purchase of all properties from Dundas to Stoney Creek, full demolition, and a total rebuild on every block at 6-8 stories.

Who is volunteering to put their home on the market first?



Six-storey streetwalls in Paris (RTH file photo)

Finally, look at the new development zones outside of the historic central cities of places like Paris and Vienna. Dense, modern high-rise towers with mixed-use streetscapes. In North America, we need to add the density where we can: mostly in the city centre, but also along all major thoroughfares city-wide.

The only way to raise our average density is to go tall where we can to make up for the existing stock of low-density housing.

Jason Leach was born and raised in the Hammer and currently lives downtown with his wife and children. You can follow him on [twitter](#).

36 Comments

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By kevlahan (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 14:13:03

Jason, you yourself argued that we can have high quality densification *without* towers:

<https://raisethehammer.org/blog/362/high...>

Now you seem to be arguing that we really do need to build 140 century 21 towers to achieve the right density.

And note that the entire central city of Paris has a diameter of only 10 km including the river (and a population of 2.2 million). In Hamilton, that's the distance from Westdale to Parkdale. And there are lots of other areas that could be densified with mid-rises so it's simply not true that "all properties from Dundas to Stoney Creek" would need to be re-built even if we decided Hamilton needed to quadruple its population.

Comment edited by kevlahan on 2018-03-20 14:14:15

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 17:25:38 in reply to [Comment 122642](#)

I wasn't at all saying that we shouldn't have towers. In fact, I wrote a piece back then called "Hamilton should aim higher. Literally". I was merely combatting the fear-mongering being purported by the home builder at the time who was trying to oppose the city's plan to intensify.

Same thing happening today with ridiculous headlines like "downtown will be a sea of skyscrapers" with new city plan. Just now the fear-mongering isn't happening from the home builders association.

Density comes in many forms, and I welcome them. I love the King William projects by Core Urban, and I welcome TV City. Design matters,

not height IMHO

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By [Ryan \(registered\)](#) - [website](#) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 16:07:56 in reply to [Comment 122642](#)

In fairness, if you follow that link [back to its reference](#), Jason wrote:

Anyone with a slight education on urban intensification understands that new growth can be accommodated with some high-rise towers downtown, but will also involve more low and mid-rise buildings in the rest of the city.

Common sense is that which tells us the world is flat.

— Stuart Chase

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By [kevlahan \(registered\)](#) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 19:08:32 in reply to [Comment 122647](#)

Maybe I misunderstood the previous two articles, but they seemed to be recommending primarily Paris-style medium density development in most of the city, with *some* high-rise towers downtown. This doesn't sound like high-rise towers should be the default design downtown, or that we should automatically say yes to very tall high rises, which is what the articles about the Television City building seem to imply.

This was also the message from city staff during the design charrettes around LRT: that there are different ways to achieve significantly higher population densities besides high-rises and the City and its residents should be able to choose what they prefer according to the circumstances. Now we seem to be saying that high rises are the preferred design downtown. This is a significant change.

The brief article I referenced deliberately highlights Paris as an example we should follow to achieve increased densities, primarily without high-rises. Now this vision is explicitly dismissed as being completely unrealistic.

Some folks suggest that we should be more like Paris or Vienna with a 6-8 storey height throughout the city in order to achieve density without tall buildings. That is fine in theory, but it would require the purchase of all properties from Dundas to Stoney Creek, full demolition, and a total rebuild on every block at 6-8 stories.

Jason himself suggested this! What changed?

This is really the DeSantis argument about needing a hundred 30 storey buildings, it's just that now we're saying we need dozens of 30+ storey buildings all downtown rather than spread throughout the City. We can achieve much higher densities without deciding that every new building downtown should be a very tall high-rise.

There is a place for high-rises, but the arguments in favour of Television City haven't properly addressed the downsides: the density is presented as (essentially) the beginning and end of the argument and anyone who has concerns is dismissed as a NIMBY.

I do agree that the argument that new developments need to "fit in" is largely bogus, but there is a lot more to the pros and cons of very tall buildings than that.

As RobF has said, the worrying thing is the precedent: will the city lose its ability to plan? Do we decide that we should just accept whatever a developer proposes provided it is big?

Have we thought carefully about the downsides as well as the upsides of primarily high-rise development downtown? Will we even be able to have the discussion?

Comment edited by kevlahan on 2018-03-20 19:13:40

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By [Ryan \(registered\)](#) - [website](#) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 05:54:37 in reply to [Comment 122655](#)

This doesn't sound like high-rise towers should be the default design downtown, or that we should automatically say yes to very tall high rises, which is what the articles about the Television City building seem to imply.

I have never argued that we should *automatically* say yes to very tall high rises. I do think we should say yes to tall buildings *if we don't have a good reason to say no.*

I support this specific proposal because seems to me to be well-designed and a good fit: it makes much more productive use of a site that currently houses an ugly spaceship and a parking lot; it preserves and adaptively reuses a heritage-designated 1850 mansion; it adds 618 new residences to the downtown core in a variety of unit sizes from studios to three-bedrooms and a variety of prices started in the \$220,000s; it adds retail and restaurant space to a corner (Hunter and Caroline) that is currently blank wall or fenced parking lot; and it is a set of two towers surrounded by other towers - including a new 32-storey building at George and Caroline.

The arguments against a 40-storey building apply equally to a 30-storey building - at that height an extra ten storeys doesn't make a difference to the subjective experience on the street. As long as these buildings are designed well at street level, the height doesn't much matter.

Common sense is that which tells us the world is flat.

— Stuart Chase

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By Locke (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 14:25:45
in reply to [Comment 122664](#).

I think you'll find that Caroline and George is 6m lower in elevation than Hess and Hunter. That means the 30 floor tower on Hunter would reach approximately the same elevation as the 32 storey tower on George.

Sure, we all want to see a development replace the space ship and parking lot... But we have so many empty parking lots downtown that also need infill. If we start allowing 40-storey buildings here, the next application will be for 55 storeys downhill and downtown and this project will be used as justification since it will break the plane of the escarpment by approximately 18-storeys.

After a few or maybe a dozen very tall projects, demand would ease and building would all but stop. We'll be left with dozens of empty parking lots. There is only so much demand. Would we rather have, say, six new very-tall

projects or 12 new moderately-tall projects and 12 other 6-8-storey projects?

If the number of parking lots downtown were cut by 75%, I'd change my position and suggest we need more height.

In the meantime, the idea of height restrictions fits well into the idea of incremental development and strong towns.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 14:57:58 in reply to [Comment 122678](#)

just some context here as far as numbers go.

On the portion of land where the 30 storey tower is proposed here, the difference in elevation between the land and the escarpment directly south of here is 86 metres. On Mr Lamb's documents submitted to the city, 30 storeys is 88metres. In other words, at the escarpment height.

This far from the Mtn Brow, someone could easily go 5+ storeys higher than the Mtn Brow and nobody would ever notice. Right up against the base of the escarpment is where the city would be wise to have some height limits, not far north by Main Street.

The 40-storey point in the eastern building is 118 metres..... so, this would be 34 metres higher than the escarpment edge, not including the mechanical penthouse. With the mechanics, it would be 46 metres higher. So, that's somewhere between 10-14 floors higher than the escarpment. Not 18.

Landmark Place stands roughly 32 metres higher than the escarpment. But again, is so far north it doesn't block anyone's view. I'm not sure if that includes it's mechanical penthouse or not.

The point is, these buildings are not outlandish for our current downtown core.

One thing everyone should keep in mind when measuring these elevation heights is that the city didn't use the top of the escarpment for their

elevation numbers. Head to any number of online elevation devices or apps and go stand at:

- 1 Belvidere Ave
- 1 Mountain Park Ave
- 5 Harbourview Lane
- Century Manor site on Juravinski Drive
- Garth St at Auchmar Road

Every single elevation measurement comes in at 195-197 metres. The city's map showing a range of 182 to 191 along this portion of brow is ridiculously off....I'm going to assume it's an accidental error, but regardless, developers are being informed that they can verify the escarpment height themselves when it comes time to apply to build. You'll end up seeing different numbers roll in than the erroneous ones being presented to the public by the city.

One final point that some seem to be asking about.... the ceiling height in the ground floor retail at TV City is 23 feet. That is slightly higher than the rooftop of the Pinehurst Manor. For comparison sake, the glass pavilion at AGH is 18 feet tall.... in other words, this retail space will be large and airy both inside and to the sidewalk.

<https://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/wed...>

Comment edited by JasonL on 2018-03-21 15:09:45

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By Locke (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 16:16:59 in reply to [Comment 122680](#)

I used <https://elevationmap.net> for my rough calculations.

The 18 floors number was presented at the planning meeting as an estimate -- it wasn't disputed by Lamb when he spoke, but that doesn't mean a whole lot.

There certainly have been developers wanting to build up the slope close to the escarpment -- you're right, lower heights are needed there.

Again though, I definitely heard a willingness/expectation on Lamb's part to negotiate a settlement before OMB. I don't expect we're looking at a 40-storey building in the end.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 16:34:58 in reply to [Comment 122681](#)

you're probably right...yes, that's a great website. Great mobile version too. The escarpment top edge is clearly 195-197 metres....makes one worry when our city can't do a simple measurement like this.

Maybe he'll settle on two 30-storey buildings? Will mean higher prices per unit, and less multi-bedroom units.... not what Hamilton should be pushing for at this point IMO.

And yes, even tho I oppose a height limit, I could very well see the sense in one south of Charlton or Young Street in order to keep the views of downtown open. But again, in Hamilton fashion, we pick the wrong battles all the time.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By Locke (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 16:56:18 in reply to [Comment 122682](#)

I guess I'm feeling more generous towards city staff than you are at the moment.

I'm as inclined to ask where the city got its figures and to ask if it is more or less reliable than something I found on the web.

Secondly, it is possible... even likely... we've not heard about the battles city staff have fought to turn preliminary enquiries back that wanted 30-storey towers south of St. Joseph's Hospital.

In time, I'd love to see taller towers dispersed across downtown... Heck, I'd likely support the idea of a downtown jewel that soared twice as high as adjacent buildings but addressed The Gore at street level nicely.

But most importantly, I'd rather see more developments downtown than a fewer. If we allow all buildings to exceed the height restriction by 25% or more, it's pretty logical to assume we'll see 25% fewer new developments.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 21:55:47 in reply to [Comment 122683](#)

not sure I buy that when we're talking relatively short towers (for big cities) in the 30-40 storey range. Research has shown 40-50 stories is the ultimate sweet spot for construction of new buildings being spread out over the units. Once a building surpasses 50 floors constructions costs rise exponentially due to added complexities. I don't think we would see any more, or less developments just because a handful of builders want to land in the 30-40 storey range. I find it interesting that before this faux escarpment height issue became a thing a few months ago we were seeing development applications max out around 36-40 floors. Most applications were of course smaller, but this was the ceiling for the 'bigger' ones.

Your concept could have more merit if we were talking about 4 or 5 80-storey buildings sucking up all the demand. Hamilton isn't TO. I suspect

pressure will rise at city hall in the next 5+ years for a couple new tallest builds once this next wave of mid/high-rises are built and complete.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By ergopepsi (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 21:24:50 in reply to [Comment 122683](#)

Or, you'd see rent and purchasing costs go down due to increased supply and even more people flocking to the city driving demand.

It goes down like steel wool but comes out like an angel from heaven.
-Mr Krabs

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 21:18:23 in reply to [Comment 122655](#)

seems your missing my point, both from a decade ago, and today. We should welcome and encourage ALL forms of new, urban-focused dense developments. Sprawl is killing us.

No, it won't require 100 massive towers, nor will it require demolishing the entire city to copy central Paris or Vienna. We can do both...tall and short, modern and historic renovations, mid-rise along suburban arteries and missing middle low-rise multi-unit developments in all hoods, city and suburbs included. Walkable, street oriented, close to transit and with ground floor retail is the way to fix Hamilton's financial and urban design crisis. Whether a building is 30 floors or 40 is totally irrelevant.

I've never once heard anyone say "I was going to take an apartment in that Century 21 building, but once I found out it was 43 stories instead of 30 I said no way!"

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By KevinLove (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 15:06:52 in reply to [Comment 122642](#)

Yes, we do need density. But this proposed project has a lot of wasted space that takes away from density. Starting with the fact that two towers are proposed.

Why two towers? This just creates a huge waste of space between the two towers. Why not fill in this space to create a rectangular building? If we look at the aerial photo of the site in [Ryan's previous article](#), we see that there are no less than four high-rise rectangular buildings immediately adjacent to or kitty-corner to this site.

It should be possible to design a building that has the same or more residential units at a much lower height. Just fill in the wasted space.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 17:27:55 in reply to [Comment 122644](#)

personally I prefer narrow, skinny buildings instead of long slabs. Much more sunlight is affected by a long slab. Narrow buildings may cast a slightly longer shadow in the non-summer months, but for not as long a period of time.

Also, one could argue that much of the space being wasted on this site is found by preserving the mansion and turning the parking lot in front of it into a public plaza/parkette.

Give me tall, narrow towers anyway if it makes it profitable to save a heritage building AND add public gathering space which is sorely needed all over downtown.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By Locke (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 14:47:11 in reply to [Comment 122649](#)

I too prefer the skinny buildings instead of a long slab for the same reasons you present (glad to find common ground).

I'll also add that after having watched the city's video of the planning meeting and seeing Jason Thorne's tweets from the 19th, I suspect the actual height limit of this particular property might actually be about 22-storeys under the draft Secondary Plan (and I believe it is 12 without exemption under the old plan).

I'd personally prefer to see two narrow towers that break the plane of the escarpment than a monolith that maxes out at 22-storeys.

That said, I still want the towers to be somewhat relational to the other towers around them and the streetscape to be relational to the the immediate neighbours to the west. And I want to make sure we don't just say yes to developers wanting ever taller buildings which reduces the overall demand for new development elsewhere downtown.

One other note from watching the city's planning committee meeting video: Brad Lamb indicated he wants/expects to settle before this goes to the OMB and if you can read between the lines at all, that certainly sounds like he will be hoping to compromise.

My guess, they will negotiate down before the OMB, there will be street wall changes and a total reduction of 15-storeys from the two towers but that the project will still break the escarpment plane.

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By KevinLove (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 10:39:46 in reply to [Comment 122649](#)

I will not comment on the aesthetics of the design, as everyone will have a different opinion. However, in terms of function, I disagree with the assertion that the plans for the mansion and public plaza will create wasted space. As shown on the renderings, the plaza appears to be useful public space. See:

<http://www.lambdevcorp.com/tvcity.php>

However, the space between the towers does not appear to have any use. That I will call wasted space.

Similarly, the setback from the sidewalk appears to be counter-productive for retail. What is useful is to have large windows right next to the sidewalk so that people can see what goods are for sale. So-called "window shopping." And to have doors directly onto the sidewalk. That way, people who are walking or cycling by can see what is for sale and go directly into the shop to buy it.

What is extremely inconvenient and annoying is to have retail set back from the sidewalk so that: 1) I need binoculars to determine what is being sold, and; 2) I am inconvenienced by

having to haul my body and all the stuff I bought back and forth across the setback.

It is OK to have a small setback of 2 metres to provide for cycle parking. Everyone wants to park their bike right next to the shop door. That's just convenient. But any distance greater than that is a nuisance.

Comment edited by KevinLove on 2018-03-21 10:42:26

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 14:14:34 in reply to [Comment 122671](#)

the DNA website actually states that creating new public greenspace/gathering spaces in their hood, and protecting heritage sites is a priority.....

[Permalink](#) | [Context](#)

By RobF (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 15:57:47 in reply to [Comment 122644](#)

There is a debate about lot coverage vs height, and trade-offs with each approach.

Ideally, we'd be less binary and think about what they each achieve given the context. But I don't agree that open space between buildings is simply wasted space ... it often is, but it doesn't have to be. The reality is that most towers-in-park buildings from the 1960s could use the space around them better ... that moat of grass around them is seldom landscaped well or open to actual use, so it is really just a green roof for the underground parking it conceals.

I find this whole debate odd ... lower Manhattan in the late 19th century had some of the worst living conditions and highest densities in modern urban history, but no high-rises. The problem wasn't strictly scale, lot coverage, or height, but unit density and household density and how that related to access to light and ventilation (i.e. over-crowding and unhealthy conditions). See: <http://gvshp.org/blog/2016/04/11/tenemen...>

As an aside, the knee-jerk aversion to "density" is somewhat of a lingering effect of the "slum" tenement building and a creeping tendency toward environmental determinism in how we think about urban space and urban social problems.

Vancouverism ... especially the tower on a low-rise podium was intended to be a hybrid that gives you the best of both. Like all things it works as long as people are sensible and don't turn it into a mindless formula. The odd exception to a pattern enlivens things. Too many exceptions and you have a muddle. And not everywhere needs or can "fit" a tower. It depends on the context ...

Comment edited by RobF on 2018-03-20 16:01:32

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By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 17:29:06 in reply to [Comment 122645](#)

again, I find myself agreeing with you....seems like the only space we disagree on is the difference (I don't think there is any) between a 30 storey building and a 40 storey building.

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By RobF (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 18:24:33 in reply to [Comment 122650](#)

We are coming at it a little differently ... I've spent time at OMB hearings and tend to see this as having a cumulative effect in terms of the ability of the City to regulate height and density. The discussion might evolve post-OMB depending on how the LPAT influences things.

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By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 21:19:59 in reply to [Comment 122654](#)

makes sense....and yes I agree with you there. Which is why I'm actually hopeful for this OMB case and the precedent it should set downtown. Lol... different angle than you're taking I realize, but we both agree there is a cumulative effect.

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By fmurray (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 21:15:29

Thank you, Nicholas.

I have to take issue with this statement: "It's frustrating to see people who already have homes in our city trying to prevent other people from moving in. This is one of the biggest problems underway in Hamilton today: people who already own their nice luxury condo or Victorian home trying to block others from moving into their neighbourhood."

This is pure ridiculousness, and is not true in the Durand and DNA (although you don't mention us by name, Jason). We are already the densest neighbourhood in the city and we have learned that we have to deal with developers from the beginning. We have all rented in our lifetimes, and one of our board members is renting currently. We would love to have more tenants on our board and are working towards that goal.

Design matters, and not everyone thinks Brad Lamb's vision is "beautiful". In fact, many think the buildings are pure ugly. But one of the important aspects is how the buildings interact with their surroundings and the interaction with the street. We are not all enamoured with Lamb's vision of having retail tucked underneath the towers.

So when should we put our comments forward? When shovels are in the ground? Too late!

It's amazing to me that three groups: The NA, the Design Review Panel and Planning Staff have all questioned various aspects of the design, but those in other neighbourhoods - Kirkendall and Strathcona see it as OK to criticize their fellow Hamiltonians in favour of a Toronto developer's vision. Allow the development to go ahead, shut up or you are just NIMBY! That phrase NIMBY is used as a weapon, and I've learned that people who use it have stopped listening.

FYI, there was a lot of feedback from tenants in buildings around 163 Jackson, but a revealing comment at Planning Committee told the story about why there may have been few written comments: The addresses on the notices to the surrounding apartments used previous tenants' names -- they were working from an old list, so many of the notices were not read and ended up in the garbage. Some tenants arranged a meeting with the Councillor last year to discuss their concerns. Facts are important to report the whole story.

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By ergopepsi (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 11:10:33 in reply to [Comment 122657](#)

The DNA only represents the people on the DNA and no-one else. Same with any 'NA'. You can't just start a group and claim to represent your neighbourhood. I'd like to see city council explicitly state that a neighbourhood association represents only those (12) people in that

association. It needs to be made clear. You were not elected. You do not represent most of the people in Durand. If an individual or a business allows you to represent them then fine. Otherwise cool the power trip.

It goes down like steel wool but comes out like an angel from heaven. - Mr Krabs

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By surly (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 10:53:31 in reply to [Comment 122657](#)

"one of our board members is renting currently" what's the number of renters versus homeowners in Durand? Shouldn't there be more renter representation?

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By fmurray (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 12:46:50 in reply to [Comment 122673](#)

Yes, as I said, we are trying to reach out to residents in apartment buildings. If you have a solution for that, let me know.

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By fmurray (registered) | Posted March 22, 2018 at 12:05:54 in reply to [Comment 122676](#)

I should clarify that I was talking about board members, one being a tenant (but all of us having been renters throughout our lives). We do represent many renters as members of the DNA. Also, paid membership is not necessary if tenants (or anyone) approach the Association for information or advice.

We would like more outreach into apartment buildings and are working on this goal with a city staffer. The locked doors are a challenge.

The DNA is resident-led and all board members are volunteers.

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By KevinLove (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 10:14:59 in reply to [Comment 122657](#)

We are not all enamoured with Lamb's vision of having retail tucked underneath the towers.

Why not? Sorry, I don't understand this. I can understand concerns about the type of retail. For example, I understand wanting a grocery store.

But no retail at all? Please be so kind as to unpack the nature of this concern.

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By fmurray (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 12:45:39 in reply to [Comment 122670](#)

Yes, we want retail/commercial space - for sure. But the design shows retail entrances behind columns and underneath the towers, instead of opening onto the street as called for in the city's Tall Building Guidelines.

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By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 22, 2018 at 12:32:23 in reply to [Comment 122675](#)

I would suggest reading through the detailed drawings Lamb has made available on his website. The 4 retail spaces in this project are probably the nicest retail units in the lower city. Full windows facing the sidewalk, with sidewalk entrances from Hunter. The ceilings are 23 feet high. This is slightly higher than the rooftop of the Pinehurst Mansion.

For comparison sake, the AGH pavilion is 18 feet high ceilings.

Retail won't be 'tucked' away in this project. It will be THE feature for all pedestrians, cyclists and drivers heading through this area. Stand next to Pinehurst and then envision ceiling heights that high all along the Caroline/Hunter streetscape. The lobby and retail units will be grand.

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By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 20, 2018 at 21:22:28 in reply to [Comment 122657](#)

you're well within your rights to voice your concerns. I'm glad to live in a country where that is allowed and encouraged. I'm simply voicing my view too. I happen to think his design is stunning. But I realize others disagree. I'm cool with that.

Durand is not a dense neighbourhood whatsoever by world standards. And even if it was, there never comes a point where one can expect to wall off their neighbourhood from new investment. NYC and Brooklyn have some of the densest hoods in North America and they keep getting more dense. We have a LONG way to go before we worry about being 'too dense'.

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By fmurray (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 09:05:27 in reply to [Comment 122660](#)

Again, you're not listening.

I did not say Durand is "too dense", or "densest in the world". It IS the densest neighbourhood in Hamilton. And we welcome new development, and in fact will be happy when there are residents living where the CH "spaceship" currently takes up space. We are not walled off, not in the slightest. There's that scream of NIMBY! again. Stop saying that, and maybe you will hear valid concerns.

All of the above can be true, and at the same time we would like to have the developer listen to our concerns and perhaps put aside his hate for podiums in order to create a good pedestrian experience. And 618 units on .4 hectares is too much. It's too much in the opinion of Design Review Panel and Planning Staff and the NA, and the immediate neighbours to the east and west of the site.

One tower would be sufficient on that site.

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By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 09:17:21 in reply to [Comment 122666](#)

according to development standards Canada-wide, that site can absolutely host 2 buildings. I would love to hear valid concerns on this project. So far the only one that resonates with me is the sterile looking streetscape in the renderings. However, having looked through the detailed drawings of the site plan, I realize that some of the brightest and nicest retail space in Hamilton is planned for the street-front. The architect rendering just doesn't show it well.

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By RobF (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 10:51:37
in reply to [Comment 122667](#)

Toronto uses a 25 metre minimum separation between towers as a standard ... just like our new DTSP and zoning will require. So no it can't host 2 buildings above 44 metres in height as proposed. To my knowledge there are no development standards Canada-wide with respect to this ... just best practices that take the form of guidelines or zoning requirements.

<http://www.woodbull.ca/resources/wood-bu...>

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By rednic (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 18:49:29

I'm interested why is the word affordable is not mentioned your article? Are these just the unfortunates that can be moved on to Brantford when the time comes ? A successful city is inclusive (or does that only count for social policies)

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By JasonL (registered) | Posted March 21, 2018 at 21:17:32 in reply to
[Comment 122684](#)

this isn't an affordable housing project. It's a privately built, market-rate complex. A successful city is inclusive....and provides new investment of both affordable and market-rate housing.

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