

Residents for Sustainable Development in Guelph
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Lois Giles,
City of Guelph,
59 Carden Street,
Guelph, ON,
N1H 3A1

April 19, 2006

Re: Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 29 – policies and land use designations relating to commercial uses

Dear Ms Giles,

Please accept this as formal notification of Residents for Sustainable Development's desire to appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board the March 20, 2006 council decision to approve the above amendment to the city's Official Plan.

As indicated in my written submissions and my presentations to council on this issue there are several reasons for opposing the change in commercial policy as approved by council.

- The policy is based on market viability not community/public interest.
- The public had no real input into the development of the scenarios which form the basis of the policy.
- The public had no input into the development of the criteria to be used to assess the scenarios.
- There was no real choice offered to citizens once those scenarios were developed.
- Alternative scenarios were supposed to be developed. Each of the three market-based options offered for public input in 2005 was essentially the same.
- The city has no mandate from the citizens to adopt the policy. Only developers and associated organizations support the policy as approved.
- The public was hindered from participating in the process:
 - public meetings were held during holidays when many families would be away or otherwise occupied;

- the city's own newsletter did not mention the CPR or the submission deadline;
 - requests from several people for a meeting change from day time to evenings were denied;
 - a request to speak at a committee meeting was denied on the day of the meeting, even after notice in writing had been sent to the planning staff and to the council members.
- The commercial policy as approved is contrary to the declared purpose (1.3), operating principles (2.2) and major goals (2.3) of the City's Official Plan
 - The commercial policy as approved is contrary to the "community vision" outlined by the City's Strategic Plan.
 - The commercial policy as approved runs contrary to the *SmartGuelph* principles, which came from a public process involving more than 1,000 Guelph residents.
 - The commercial policy as approved runs contrary to the goals of the South Gordon District Centre plan, which came from a broadly-based community process.
 - The commercial policy as approved runs contrary to recent provincial policy direction.
 - With traffic continuing to be an issue in this city, the move toward larger stores means a larger service area, and thus even more traffic.
 - The commercial policy as approved abandons the concept of communities within the city, each served by its own commercial centre, and places in jeopardy the existing centres.
 - With all the retail action focused on the new power centres, many of the stores in the existing community centres will feel commercial pressure to move to the edge of the city.
 - To move away from community-based shopping would not only ensure greater automobile use and more traffic, it would be unfair to those without their own vehicles, elderly, the infirm and others who rely on nearby shopping.
 - To move away from community-based shopping would be unfair to those who have made home-buying decisions based on the availability of local amenities, and will reduce the value of those homes.

Please confirm this appeal has been registered. Our application fee for \$125 is enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Bennett