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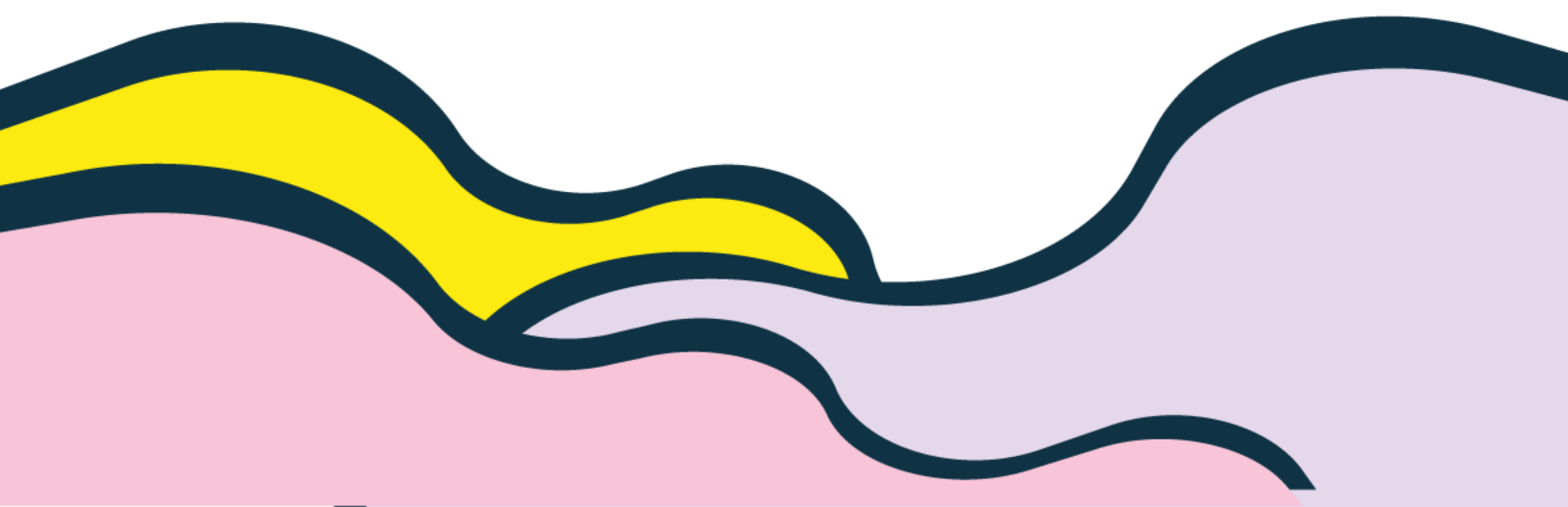
To the members of Oxford County Council:


Dec 1, 2021

Regarding: OP 21-02-6 & SB 21-01-6 (Erie Thames Powerlines Corporation)

First off – I am just an ordinary citizen that only has an interest in planning matters and have been peeling back the layers of the planning process over the years. I have also lowered my expectations of the impact of mine and others public input into the planning process, particularly as it relates to the community of Ingersoll. Recently I lowered it another notch.

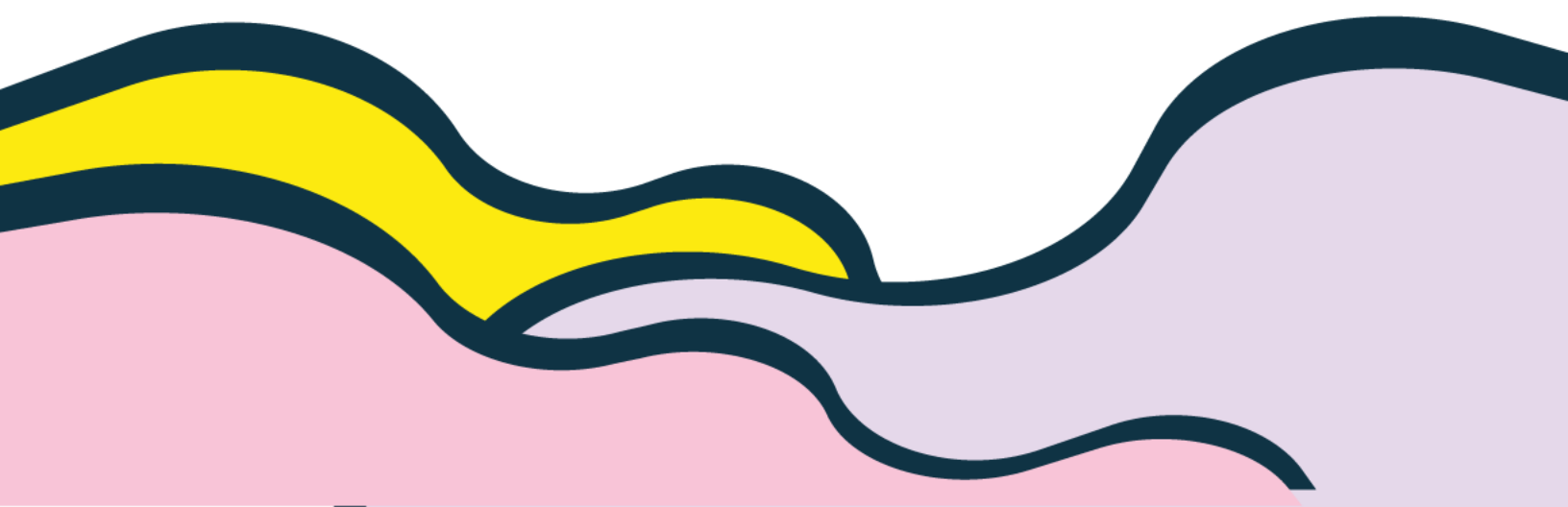
Secondly – I do not believe that the public was considered appropriately in the lead up to the decision by the majority of Ingersoll council to approve the zoning and related requests by the applicant. Two letters of which one was mine asked for a consideration to look at addressing the deficit in smaller units within the Town of Ingersoll. These letters were only mentioned at the end of the presentation. There are no statistics or yard stick measurement that defines what an appropriate mix of housing is or what defines affordable. One thing that is known is that since 1979 there have been no new builds of apartment buildings in the Town of Ingersoll and there are two multi-story apartment buildings that have been on the planning books since the late 1980's. There are seniors even within the area of this proposed development that would love to cash out the equity in their homes and find a more suitable sized housing option of which there are none in the Town of Ingersoll. I believe that the application should be rejected.






Thirdly – Property rights exist to ensure continued enjoyment or utilization of the lands by the owner subject to the rules and laws of the land. It was erroneously stated at the council meeting that this is private land, and the owner has the right to do as they wish. Their rights extend to the conditions to which the property is zoned at. It is councils' decision on whether the land can be zoned for other uses subject to the LPAT or the province. Council also requested that the concerned residents hire their own planner to counter the County planner's recommendation for approval. Rejecting the County planner's recommendation was deemed suicidal by one member of council. If Council are fearful of making good decisions for the community in my opinion because of the cost of defending them, then why bother the public for their input. A further aside is that the profitability of a proposal is not appropriate for either council or staff to mention during a discussion. That should be up to the proponent to bring up. I would suggest that the application should be deferred and an investigation to decide whether council was deciding under duress or other influence in their non-unanimous decision.

Fourth – Although the Town engineer has agreed with a sightline study that was not available for review by the public or council, nothing was addressed in my opinion on the driveways backing out on to Holcroft. 10 units equals a 20-driveway equivalent as witnessed on several other developments including Kendell lane where virtually every home has a double wide driveway and a garage and parking in the summer spills out on to McKeand. Holcroft is a busy street as is Wonham and residents did express concerns that would likely only be addressed by a traffic study which has not been done. The current sidewalk will likely require a median strip as the number of curb cuts and slopes to have a sidewalk at the curb could be a hazard for walkers and sidewalk plow operators. But we will be told that like Kendell lane, that will be looked at during site plan review. As history has a habit of repeating, I suggest the application be rejected for further review of the safety and traffic impact.





Finally – I had no doubt that this land would be developed but I did have hope that perhaps our Hometown utility might do a rethink and perhaps turn the development in to a reduced carbon – low energy – multi-unit showcase in partnership with the County and the Town and the developer. I saw an opportunity to address seniors housing needs and cost of home ownership. I saw an opportunity to use the slope of the land to create walk out units without vehicles backing on to the slopes of Holcroft Street. I saw an opportunity for two up and two down fourplexes like one can see facing Southdale road in London that look like the large lot homes along Wonham. There are shared ownership homes that help folks get into the market and build equity. Affordability of housing does not have to mean subsidized.

The trouble I see about creating an appropriate mix is that there are no measurements to say what is appropriate and there are no penalties to the decision makers that choose to ignore housing deficits including smaller and rental units. I have learned recently that major subdivisions usually involve the CAO's before it goes before council. I must wonder if our housing issues would be lessened if the CAO's compensation was tied to measured goals for housing. Then we have these large developments that have phase 1 and phase 2 and so on to phase 5 that includes an apartment building designed to meet the overall density of the subdivision but there is nothing councils or the province can do to force a developer to finish phase 5. Imagine if that apartment was Phase 3? Would the developer look at the apartment build (There is overwhelming demand) as more of a priority if it prevented them from building the more lucrative single family or semi-detached homes?

My expectations are for a motion to receive as information without discussion. Anything above that including rejection of the request in favour of the applicant presenting a new more palatable design for the neighbourhood and the Town of Ingersoll and something that is more in line with the Future Oxford vision will be a bonus –

Tim Lobzun – Ingersoll

