

June 30, 2010

Councillor Michael Martin
Chair, Planning and Building Committee
Town of the Blue Mountains
26 Bridge Street East
Thornbury ON N0H 2P0

Re: **136965 Ontario Ltd. (Angelotti)**

The intent of this letter to the Town of Blue Mountains Planning and Building Committee is to make clear our understanding of all of the issues surrounding this proposed development known as 1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti.

Traffic

It is currently proposed that this development would have 204 surface parking spaces with a possible additional 129 underground spaces. These 333 parking spaces would be accessed from King Street East (Highway 26), the main thoroughfare through town as a busy stretch of road leading to the downtown core on Bruce Street. We can expect severe congestion as we are currently witnessing with the bridge being refurbished.

Parking

The developer will build a municipal parking lot of 204 spaces and turn this over to the Town for use by the tenants of the apartment building, medical office building and the public. The for profit apartments do not provide for their own private tenant parking.

Visual Impact Analysis of 3 Storey and 5 Storey Apartment Buildings

As part of the proponent's Planning Justification Report submission, a Visual Impact Statement was provided. Planning Staff asked for four specific views, however the consultant only provided two, and provided several others not requested by Staff. Specifically Staff asked what the project would look like when standing on McCauley Street looking south from Bay Street. This very important view from Bayview Park was omitted. When standing at Bay and McCauley streets the five story façade will be as high as the trees currently located on the McCauley Street easement and will continue to the east along Huron Street 94.7 metres (310 feet) terminating just short of the road allowance leading to Bay Street, located half way down the block to Elgin Street.

Likewise if one is to view the site of proposed building from the medical centre lands looking north, the five storey building height will be the same as the existing trees on the

McCauley Street easement. The even the size of the Cidery is dwarfed by the five story apartment block and to a lesser extent the threes storey apartment block.

Several of the other pictures found in the report are incorrect and fail to show the proper location of the building on the site and can mislead the reader on the visual impact of the building on the site and surrounding land uses.

Lessons from the Terrasan Craigleith Development

The following concerns expressed during the Terrasan Craigleith Development OPA meeting are applicable to the 1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti development.

Density (Terrasan Craigleith Development)

At the June 28th Council meeting it was indicated that 400 - 500 people would reside in the western residential lands, the eastern lands would have commercial facilities along with a central multi story institutional building. This would constitute a built out scenario on 60Ha. Concern over density was expressed by several Councillors.

Whereas the 1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti development proposal would have 169 units with a possible two tenants per unit or 338 residents located on 1.1Ha of land. Nowhere in the OP does the document permit this kind of high density, Bonus Density or otherwise. This is an extreme divergence from the 20 residential units this land is currently zoned for.

Building Height of Proposed Retirement Building (Terrasan Craigleith Development)

The proposed multi storey retirement home on the Terrasan lands is not contiguous to existing development, therefore ‘Planning Division staff are not concerned with permissible height’ Page 9, Mr. Finbow’s Report PL 10.64 to Council June 28th.

If one uses the same criteria for the 1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti development, in that the building location is contiguous to existing development, the surrounding land uses will suffer from; a negative visual impact, mass/scale of the building creating a negative impact, a significant negative shadow impact.

Shadow Study (1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti development)

The shadow study prepared does not use solstice dates as normally would be done. Only one shadow plan for winter is provided and at noon, the most favourable time. A complete shadow study would show the neighbours to the north of the project in the building shadow for very long periods of time, both winter and summer.

Storm Water Study

The 1.1 Ha site will disperse all site water through an oil/grit separator before dumping directly into Nottawasauga Bay at Bayview Park north of the Rotary Pavilion. No provision to store storm water on site has been provided. The report also notes that the oil/grit separator is not 100% efficient with a percentage of contaminants entering the Bay.

Precedent to the Official Plan & Zoning By-Law Amendments

This project will set a dangerous precedent for future developers and the possible citification of The Town of Blue Mountains.

The Official Plan states that densities within residential areas for low-rise apartments should be from 40 to 60 units per hectare. This proposed development will have a density of 169 units for a 1.1 hectare site.

A Sense of Place

The 1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti development contravenes the principles in “A Sense of Place”, the town’s development and design guidelines. “Heights of buildings are generally one to three storeys. These sizes contribute to establishing a comfortable human scale environment and village-like character.”

Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

Likewise the development which is located within the CIP study area is not in keeping with the recently introduced CIP. From the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Strategy, page 43

“Mixed-Use Redevelopment

The emphasis for all development on the land should be on street-fronting buildings that feature interesting and detailed façades that are oriented to the human scale.”

When standing on Huron Street or on the Georgian Trail, the development does not represent a project that is oriented to “human scale”.

And from the PUDSS study, 8.1 Infill Development Guidelines, page 67

“The overall goal for infill development is the continuation and extension of the form and character of the main street type development in the cores of the Thornbury and Clarksburg commercial areas to the other areas within the Thornbury commercial area and the Craighleith commercial area. This includes encouraging developments that are visually interesting, are appropriately scaled and massed, provide a strong street edge presence, have pedestrian-scaled façades, and are safe and functional”.

Community Improvement Plan Vision

The vision of the CIP was established by input obtained at the public meeting held on June 3, 2009, which was attended by 38 people who were asked questions regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in all three commercial areas and participated in a visioning workshop; and, input from the CIP Steering Committee and Town Staff wherein they stated;

“Have new developments that complement the existing character. New developments in the commercial areas should complement, and be compatible with, the existing character of the area. Compatible development, however, does not mean identical development, but rather stresses harmony of new developments with the existing commercial areas and surrounding neighbourhoods”.

Georgian Trail

Currently The Town has ownership of the rail lands and easement on McCauley Street where the Georgian Trail should be located.

The Commercial Concept Plan and its residential component would have the Trail remain on Huron Street, as a sidewalk for use by ground floor tenants and trails users alike.

Seniors' Housing?

Whether they are condominiums or rentals (which is unclear at this time as noted by Colin Travis in his presentation at the Planning and Building Committee Meeting May 5, 2010), there can be no discrimination on the basis of age. This proposed 5-storey

building would be open to anyone who chooses to live there. The Town has absolutely no way to ensure that only seniors would be living there. (refer Appendix A)

The Housing Needs Study also refutes the need for high density living. It states “While there is likely to be some increase in the demand for apartment units, the increase is expected to be muted due primarily to the rural/recreational nature of the Town, the local market preference for ground related housing, the regional dominance of the Collingwood apartment market, and the limited amount and concentration of services and amenities seen as critical to successful high density development in the Town “.

The Housing Needs Study does not detail the anticipated seniors housing needs for future seniors from The Town of Blue Mountains. Any housing for seniors should be directed to our seniors and current citizens to relocate within the community for downsizing (“age in place”).

On the other hand, the waiting lists for Nursing Homes (Long-term Care) are often lengthy in Grey County and across Ontario.

Marketing Study

Neither the developer nor the town has conducted a marketing study to confirm the need for 169 new seniors units or to establish a price at which such units would need to be sold. The Terrasan Development has also identified a seniors housing facility in its proposal. At this time it is unclear if it would be attainable housing or market prices.

Why is this project such a High Priority with the Town?

The Town of Blue Mountains Council is being proactive in the concern for local medical facilities.

Currently the Meaford Hospital is short of doctors and without an influx of doctors to the region it will close. Both the Town of Blue Mountains and eventually Meaford wish to establish first class medical office facilities to attract the much need doctors.

Council entered into an agreement with 1136955 Ontario Inc. which outlines a Commercial Concept Plan wherein land would be given to the Town on Highway 26 for the building of the medical office facility. At that time “it was recognized by all parties that although shown on the Concept Plan (two mid rise apartment buildings), there was no commitment to any approval by Council” Page 5 Travis & Associates Inc PJR However since the Council Endorsement on June 2, 2008 of the Concept Plan, several Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) have been signed by all parties, as part of

complex arrangement for Developer lands to be turned over to the Town and The Cidery, once again in those MOU's a disclaimer citing the developer's residential lands will have to go through normal approval channels and stand on its own planning merits. The developer in his Planning Justification Report has suggested the following wording, refer Tab 1 Draft Amendment to the Official Plan of Town of The Blue Mountains Page 5, last paragraph, which clearly states "Recognition of the five storey height limit and increase in unit yield will require the developer to convey lands for the Medical Centre, provide public parking, convey lands for the Georgian Trail Route in order to meet the requirements of Section 11.7 of the Official Plan." This was not written by Town staff, but by the developer who clearly believes he is getting Bonus Zoning which the Council cannot grant except in the Blue Mountain Village recreational rental area.

The Town has undertaken the start of a general review of the OP, development of a Housing Plan, a Community Improvement Plan, a Sustainability Plan and many more studies and it should be through this lengthy process that increased density and height should be discussed, by Council, planning staff and the Citizens. There is a need for "strong process" to use words of Mayor Anderson from the Terrasan OPA meeting. One meeting on very short notice does not constitute suitable citizen feedback on such an enormous deviation from the OP, as is the case with the 1136965 Ontario Inc. – Angelotti development, and serves no one but the developer.

It is hoped that this presentation and document helps the Planning and Building Committee fully understand the issues of this project, and in your deliberations come to the same conclusions which we have, maintain the existing zoning for 20 residential units.

On behalf of
Thornbury/Clarksburg Citizens' Coalition

Bruce D Taylor
Adjunct Professor of Architectural Technology, Humber College

Cc D. Finbow
P. Graham
TBM Councillors

Appendix A

Categories of seniors' housing in Ontario:

- **Retirement homes** (assisted living) are for ambulatory, self-sufficient people who need some assistance with some tasks. *Not regulated*
- **Nursing homes** (long-term care) are for those people who require full-time nursing care and a wide range of support services. *Regulated*
- **For-profit seniors' housing** is merely accommodation that has been marketed to mature adults, often in the 55+ range. *Not regulated*
- **Non-profit seniors' housing buildings** (supportive housing) are owned by municipal governments or various charitable and non-profit organizations. They are regulated by the provincial government for seniors (65+) and offer housing usually at below market rates as well as offering a portion of units as rent-geared-to-income. *Regulated*