



August 24, 2012

City of London Planning Division
Planner | Barb Debbert
206 Dundas Street, London ON N6A 1G7

REGARDING: **File #OZ-7072/OZ-7073**

York Developments, 3313. 3341 and 3405 Wonderland Rd S.
Application to amend the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law Z-1

Thank you for the providing the Urban League of London the opportunity to comment on above application to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Z-1.

We note with concern that the property is located within the boundaries of the Southwest Area Plan and we find it curious that this particular application is being submitted to planning staff in advance of the completion of the Area Plan.

Given that the Southwest Area Plan is quickly nearing completion, **we request that the application to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law BE REFUSED**, and the proponent be encouraged to resubmit the application once the Area Plan has come into effect. From the perspective of the League and its members, even while acknowledging that we may have imperfect information on the nature of the application, this appears to be little more than an attempt at “queue jumping”.

This property is not an insignificant parcel, buried away in some back corner of the study area, with little likelihood of influencing subsequent development patterns in the area. Located at the corner of Wonderland and Wharncliffe Roads, this is, in fact, a key gateway location – Wonderland Road being the primary north/south arterial corridor from Highways 401 and 402. The vision of the draft Secondary Plan for this part of the Wonderland Corridor, arrived at after several years of community and stakeholder consultation, is one that is distinctly different from that proposed by the developer. In the draft Plan, this section of the Wonderland Corridor is designated as *Main Street Commercial Corridor*, a mixed-use area of street-oriented building form. The designation which the proponent is requesting, New Format Regional Commercial, is fundamentally different from this in both form and function. This isn't “commercial creep” but “commercial pole vault”, interfering with the planned and orderly development of the Wonderland Corridor along its entire length.

Development at this particular location is premature in any event as it is not growth-related, and the suggested uses and building form contained in the proponent's application could be accommodated further north along Wonderland Road towards Southdale Road where the

required land use designations are already in place, or at least could be easily brought into accord with the vision contained in the Southwest Area Plan.

Allowing this particular type and form of development at this particular location will certainly have a negative impact on future development patterns in the vicinity. It will surely make it much more difficult to create a “main street commercial” look and feel to this critical part of the Corridor.

If the City of London is serious about community planning – if it wants to protect the integrity of the process and truly encourage the engagement of citizens in planning the future of their city – it simply must discourage these types of end-runs around municipal planning policy. It is disrespectful of public process, imprudent, and wasteful of the time, energy and costs associated with long-term planning for the future.

With best regards,

Greg Thompson,

President, Urban League of London