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■ Thorncroft Ct.
Thornbury, On
N0H 2P0

September 14, 2020

Mayor and Council
The Town of The Blue Mountains
32 Mill Street,
Thornbury, Ontario
N0H 2P0

To the Mayor and Members of Council

Re: Attainable Housing

As an interested citizen, I am voicing my concerns and raising questions regarding the justification and implementation of this project. Having read various articles, comments and criticisms, it appears to be a very controversial project.

I was shocked and insulted by the comments of Councillor Sampson in the Sept 3 edition of "Collingwood Today" regarding the "attainable housing project" where he states, "I don't want to talk to the person who is living in a million dollar house as to what they think we should do with building specifics. I want to hear from the people who will be actually living there" His dismissive and dictatorial attitude directed at a significant portion of Thornbury residents is disgusting and extremely concerning. Healthy and strenuous discussion (both pro and con) is a vital part of a healthy democratic process. As luck would have it, my wife and I may now be one of those residents who own a million-dollar home. We are in our seventies. Our home is our equity. Our home is our future independence and financial security.

When we purchased our home on Thorncroft Ct. seven years ago my wife and I were surprised housing costs here were not far below those of Milton, resulting in a transfer of equity to our new home. Did we gain? Would we do it again? Absolutely! The people, the Bay, the character of the Town, the beauty of the valley, the orchards and the outdoor activities make this area extremely desirable. Maybe those who move here from the urban sprawl and congestion of the GTA are in a much better position to appreciate and realize the absolute necessity to protect the area from rampant and uncontrolled development.

- We can all sympathize with the lack of housing for those in lower income brackets but I question the direction Council is taking.
- I find it inconceivable that anyone earning one hundred thousand dollars a year is not capable of living without government assistance.

- Where is the incentive to move forward? With subsidized rent, a resident can just increase their lifestyle with no intentions of acquiring that next home.
- If Town staff are eligible, does this constitute a conflict of interest for Council ?
- Given the wide range of financial eligibility, will there be a sliding scale for monthly rent
- I believe it naive to think that anyone has the right to live and work in the same area. There is nothing in the Charter of Rights that states citizens have the right to live, work and retire in the same area. My son lives in Milton and works in Mississauga. Prior to growth and development, it was a casual twenty minute drive. Today, it is a forty-five minute to an hour commute. People live in Guelph, Kitchener, Waterloo and work in the GTA. You don't have to like it. You don't have to agree with it. This is a reality of life today and Council needs to recognize this.
- Is the thirty hours a week requirement based on fifty-two week employment or is this tailored to seasonal workers who also qualify for EI? Is "attainable housing" a vehicle to subsidize local businesses that primarily provide minimum wage positions. We live in a supply and demand market. Maybe these companies should focus on the success of their employees and not on maximizing profits. Consider lowering business taxes to encourage them to increase their wage schedule. If they then fail, chances are the market was over-populated and they could not effectively compete.
- Do residents have to prove eligibility on an annual basis to maintain residency?
- How are residents dealt with when they exceed the financial maximum?
- The project shows retail on the ground floor. Will this threaten the apparent fragility of existing businesses in the downtown core and encourage retail spread?
- If Council does not adhere to the Town's maximum height limit, it will certainly invite challenges from developers on future proposals regardless of how the Town may justify the additional stories for this project. Council has opened "pandora's box" Where will it stop?
- Regardless of the above, the project has merit but I suggest it has been rushed and without adequate presentations to the public. There are many unanswered questions and concerns.

In conclusion I believe, Councillor Sampson owes the residents of The Town of Blue Mountains a public apology for his comments as mentioned above OR he should resign his position on Council as he seems unwilling to represent a significant portion of the electorate. Secondly, Council needs to effectively address the many questions and concerns with this project.

Respectfully (a concerned citizen)
Rick and Julie Tipping