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## Proposed St. Lawrence condo raises eyebrows over height, contamination

By Duncan McAllister

Residents of St. Lawrence Neighbourhood are of mixed minds after catching a glimpse of a new project that may soon drastically alter the urban landscape of the neighbourhood.

An application has been submitted by Context Development Inc. for a 46-storey condominium complex with 451 units, eight floors of retail space and street-level parking to be located at 18 Lower Jarvis, the site of an existing parking lot just south of the St. Lawrence Market.

Opinions expressed at the meeting in St. James' Cathedral, attended by nearly 100 residents, were split, although there are still many hurdles to overcome. Parking, traffic, schools, and soil contamination were just a few of the concerns raised at the meeting.

The Sept. 24 meeting got underway with an introduction by Kyle Knoeck, senior city planner. Robert Glover, urban planner for the developer, explained the proposed concept.

Leslie Silver a director of the nearby David B. Archer Co-op, said, "It's going to stand out as considerably taller than anything else anywhere in this area," adding that the development would have a considerable impact



Business owner, left, says the skyscraper condo would be good for the area. Coun. Pam McConnell listens. Above, a portion of the tower displayed at the meeting by developers.

on traffic as well as sun and light to adjacent buildings. Her fervent observations were met with a round of applause.

Ray Bacquie of iTrans explained the extent of the traffic studies that were conducted and Glover spoke about the minimal effect that the complex would actually have with regard to sunlight.

A 7-year resident and business owner says from what she's seen of other Context buildings, Mozo and Spire,

that "they attract a certain resident and customer [who] are only going to enhance the area and help clean it up."

Local resident Ewa Jarmicka quite bluntly asked the panel: "Has anyone walked through the neighborhood thoughtfully, street by street to see what really matters here?" She would rather see an eight- or 10-storey building in a low-rise neighborhood.

City planners were unavailable at press time to explain

why notices of the public meeting were not mailed to residents of Henry Lane Terrace.

That heavily populated street is just across the street on the east from the proposed condo complex. The city is required to notify landowners and residents within 120 metres of any proposed project for community consultation.

Robin, a 6-year area resident, said, "I actually think it's a great project." He feels that as more people have moved into the area over time, the community has changed. "There's less crime, there's less panhandling."

One resident expressed concern over schools. With an increase in new families and a lot of new children, there are only three schools within five minutes of the proposed new building that are filled to overflowing. "So where are these children going to go?" she asks.

Plans call for a 483 space, above-ground parking facility. The site of the original factory has caused concern regarding contamination of the deeper soil. Randy, a local resident is concerned about the danger of contamination.

The southern end of the proposed site borders on the CN rail tracks on land that was originally zoned for

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