

To Stratford City Council:

I wonder what the purpose of the Official Plan is when time and time again neighbourhoods have to suddenly organize and rally to fight against blatant breaches in the interest of greed.

Not all neighbourhoods, mind you. Only those that are lucky enough to have individuals available, willing and able to gather troops against the repeated attacks. Many other neighbourhoods are filled with excellent citizen taxpayers who are busy working and running their lives secure in the knowledge that the Official Plan and the City of Stratford are looking out for them. By the time they discover that this isn't true, they're living beside a giant construction site wondering how the 'developers' got away with it;

More trees, not less. More human-sized dwellings, fewer ugly, multi-storey blocks. More respect for taxpayers, not developer interests. And homes appropriate to the Official Plan for the neighbourhood, not barely-disguised giant boxes. When even the magical touch of an architectural rendering can't hide the brutishness of the design, we know the reality of the building will be far worse.

We've barely gotten over the time and expense of fighting the imposed Xinyi Glass plant and now we have to rise up again. And this zoning change will affect a huge swath of the historic neighbourhood that tourists, up until now, marvelled at the preservation of.

Council needs to decide on its vision for Stratford. Was it good for the city that the historic city hall was *not* torn down? Strip malls and concrete blocks may be more efficient for a short while, but preserving the architecture, character and humanity of a community will, in the long run, be a boon to Stratford, its citizens and yes, to tourists.

Thank you for your time,
Ted and Stephanie Niescier
Stratford