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Council Members of the Municipality of East Hants,

I am writing this letter to show our support for the new proposed changes to the Village Core Zone Density Increase. In making these changes VC would now permit up to 16 units as of right through site-plan approval.

Tolson Developments has been working with the Municipality of East Hants since 2010 on developing the Village Core. What drew us to this zone was the ability to mix both commercial and residential. However, we soon realized that it was very difficult to combine both aspects in such a small footprint. Tolson Developments would love to add to vibrancy of a "Village Core" but the current regulations are very confining.

Please see below for a comparison of the current regulations versus the proposed increased density. In this comparison I have not deducted any square footage for common areas or hallways just to keep it even and simple. I have allowed for both scenarios to have a 3-story building and 75% of the main floor as commercial.

Current VC Allowance.

835 Sq M or 8987 Sq Ft Gross Floor Area

Each Floor would be 2996 Sq Feet (3-Storys)

Commercial on main floor would be 2247 Sq Ft. (75%)

Remaining Residential would be 6741 Sq Ft Divided by **12 units 561 Sq feet per unit.**

Proposed New Density

1584 Sq M or 17050 Sq Ft Gross floor area

Each floor would be 5683 Sq Ft (3-Storys)

Commercial on main floor would be 4262 Sq Ft. (75%)

Remaining Residential would be 12,788 Sq Ft Divided by **16 units 800 sq ft per unit.**

The current policy also did not make financial sense. Yes, I said it the F word. Developers have to look at the financial aspect. From funding of the project to the monthly income, the numbers

must pay the bills. We also have to look at trends in the economy meaning we have to look at rentability. Tolson Developments has just completed construction of an as of right 11 unit building which consists of 10 one-bedroom units, and one 2 bedroom unit. At the time of development, we knew there was a need for one-bedroom units in the area.

We had initially designed a 6 unit building in the VC with larger units, but had to change it as the minimum in the zoning was 8 units and maximum was 12 so we went to 11 smaller units fitting within the guidelines. Due to the size of the lot we had to go all residential with the ability to convert to commercial ground floor in the future.

With today's economy and people are now having to share accommodations with roommates, as you can see with the scenario above comparing the current VC and the proposed density it is easier to build a 2-bedroom unit in 800 square feet than 500 plus square feet. This is still not ideal and in fact the allowance should be even greater. Remember these sizes still have to have common areas deducted from them making the units even smaller. The new policies will also double the amount of commercial space available.

Other aspects of the zone that should be considered are the amount of street facing glazing. There is a requirement to have 60% glazing on the front façade. Regarding the environment, this flies in the face of global warming. We all know that glass can not insulate as well as a wall can. So, residents will encounter greater heat loss in the winter which will increase their power bills and the heat gain in the summer will be unbearable. Another lesser fact is the cost of window blinds for such large windows, it may seem like a minor thing to some, however a majority of tenants living in this zone are employed in the service industry, so spending \$500 on window coverings isn't usually part of their budget. The stipulation of glazing was an architectural feature however features can be achieved in other ways.

My next concern is the parking ratio. As a developer, I tend to agree with the 1.5 parking ratio, as a lot of our tenants in this area tend to work outside of the community. So having enough parking is a good thing. That being said, I also have quite a few tenants who walk to work. For instance, just in the past month alone I have had two groups of tenants that are moving from the Lantz area into units of ours because they walk to work (McDonald's, Sobeys, Elmsdale Plaza Area) and don't have vehicles. As a developer, I am going to strive to have as much parking as physically possible, however if the ratio of 1.5 spaces per unit is not met this should not be a reason to limit the density of the project. If a tenant has two cars and only one spot is available, they will then have a choice, don't rent at this building or sell a vehicle. The other benefit of having more commercial space available is that more people can work and live in the same area. Instead of leaving the area to work.

In conclusion, we are very much in favour of the proposed changes to the increased density of the Village Core. This will allow for more ability to develop the area in the way in which it was intended - to have small vibrant businesses mixed in with a walkable area for residents.

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