

Witness Statement of Jane Farrow

1. I reside at 69 Argyle Ave.
2. I function as Chair of the Steering Committee.
3. Active 18 came together first as an *ad hoc* committee as the West Queen West development proposals were announced. Its first meeting was September 2005. Even at that early stage we advocated quick action to establish a Working Committee.
4. Active 18 grew in size and formality as the issue took off. It is now incorporated. We have a web site with all the planning material assembled. We have an electronic membership of 180. We have hosted several community events to review the proposals, to generate community opinion and establish community instructions to Active 18's Steering Committee.
5. With the special leadership of Margie Zeidler the first important activity we undertook was the hosting of a *charrette*. The *charrette* was attended by an impressive group of advisors and various members of the community. It was lead by Ken Greenberg, a noted authority on urban design. The Report of that meeting will be presented as an exhibit.
6. The Steering Committee then outlined a position on the planning issues as we saw them at that stage. We hosted a public meeting of the members to debate and adopt a formal position for the organization.
7. Early on advocated an Area Plan be completed so the common problems could be dealt with.
8. We were always aware this position would need to be refined and that there would be some negotiations.
9. We were absolutely set on getting the message out that we wanted some development, intelligent intensification was proper and desirable. But we wanted to protect the quality of the neighbourhood.
10. We directed our 'legal team' John Sewell and Charles Campbell to start negotiations with the developers. They did. One of the developers refused to speak to us with us but two other did and we considered the range of options that emerged as possible.
11. We took a major role in the series of Working Group meetings that brought together various people to talk about the proposals. When the City did not produce an Area Plan as part of this process we put forward a draft of our own for discussion purposes.

12. We lobbied Community Council intensively when the Report of Planning came out at the end of June. We presented what we thought were desirable amendments. A very few were accepted.
13. The positions taken by the group represent compromise within the group after discussion. There may be different perspectives within the group but they would be hard to pin down because we have never come to a formal vote where majority ruled. We have all agreed, or deferred doubts as the various steps moved forward.
14. The 'core values' which emerged through all these proceedings are:

*Parks*

- a. 'No parks – no condos'; If sufficient and properly finished parks and open space was not *guaranteed* we would oppose any development. This is not our preferred position. We want development in the Triangle. We would compromise on the amount of park land to .4 hectares but **only if** parks, open space, trees and public art is properly financed to compensate for this inadequate amount of park land.

*Queen Street*

- b. The height along Queen St should be consistent with the rest of Queen Street and should protect sunlight on the north side.
- c. There should be wider sidewalks on the redeveloped south side of Queen St.
- d. The Queen Street façade should guarantee fine grain retail.
- e. We stress good building design.

*Mixed Use Space - Jobs*

- f. Strategies to promote employment downtown seem totally obvious to us and given the 'artist' hub already functioning in the neighbourhood we stressed the enhancement of 'artist space'. We want lots of space in the new buildings for artists to live AND work space for 'dirty, noisy, smelly' artist work which does not properly fit in a primarily residential building. We established a target for live work units 150 units which seems slight given there are already 80 such units in 48 Abell which it is proposed to tear down.
- g. Affordability of artist space was and is key for us. We were and are prepared to compromise to **secure affordable space**.

*Families and Subsidized housing*

- h. We want diversity in the neighbourhood, including families and including some folks in subsidised accommodation.

*Built Form*

- i. We looked to the planning evidence to guide us on built form. The height of buildings was not the first point of discussion. We want some new buildings. The further south of Queen St the more we were willing to accept taller buildings. Overall impact was important in this.

- j. We never actually voted on a maximum height. The original proposals, at 25 stories, were out of the question but that was abandoned. We always expected there would be trade-offs of height for appropriate community benefits.

*48 Abell*

- k. We prefer to save 48 Abell, for several reasons. We see it as an anchor for the neighbourhood. It has perfectly fine live work units now. Why tear them out of the neighbourhood to get less of what we need. We think the great waste of tearing down buildings that can be recycled is foolish.

*Environment*

- g. We pushed high environmental standards every chance we could.