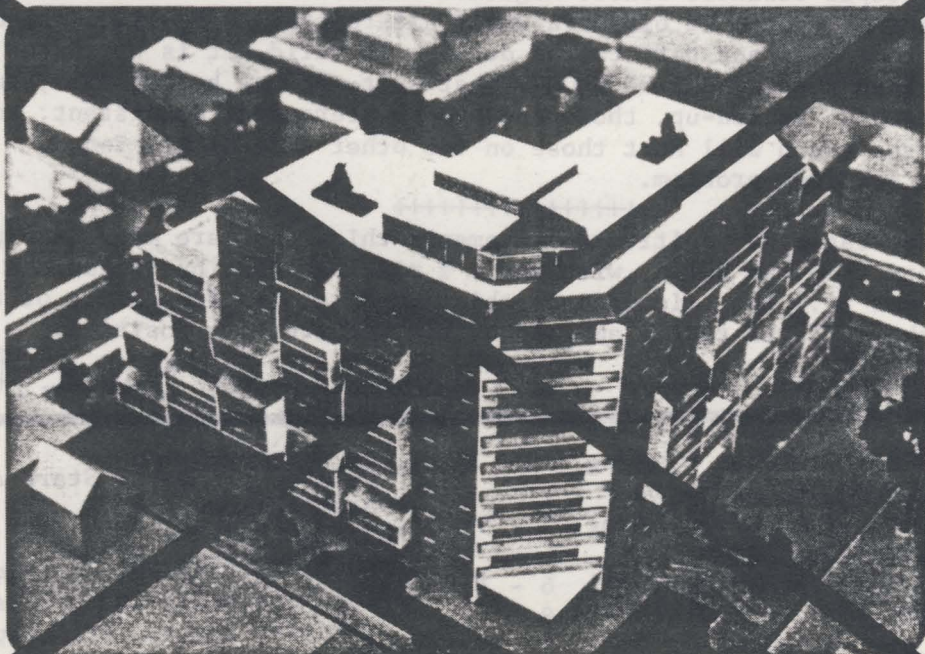


THE DOWNTOWN LONDON **MetroBulletin**

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER 2 JUNE, 1981 SPECIAL EDITION ISSUED MONTHLY \$2.50
THE MAGAZINE FOR DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS, BUSINESSPEOPLE, CONSUMERS, & DOWNTOWNERS

THE CRUSADE OF THE TALBOT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: *THEIR* *MISSION?* **SABOTAGE DOWNTOWN RENEWAL**



THIS ISSUE ALSO INCLUDES AN
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
WITH MAYOR GLEESON,
COMPLETE MAP OF
ALL DOWNTOWN
PARKING &
MORE

WE'RE BACK

Welcome to the second issue of Downtown London's ONLY magazine for downtown businesspeople.

The response to the first issue was extremely positive, so much so that we have produced a super 26 page blockbuster issue -PLUS A BONUS large size map showing everything the businessman and consumer wanted to know about PARKING, but was too confused to ask.

As promised, our subscription price went up, to the outrageous amount of \$15 for 12 issues. Those who got in at the old rates are thus rewarded.

We hope you'll read everything in this issue. Much material is contextually related to other articles in this issue and last issue. For example, core area development is discussed in all 4 major articles plus one letter.

And if we weren't correct in a number of assertions, we could sure be sued for libel. But we've got our facts straight & thus our accusations too.

Our next issue will be out on August 4, rather than July 15th. This will give me time for a break to fix the house, take the kids to some tourist trap like Wonderland or something. The next issue will probably be more on the lines of a standard 16-pager. Without advertising, extra pages cost money.

+++++

A personal annoyance that comes up when I go on my offensives is business-people who like to say "With all your talent, why don't you do something positive with all your energy?" The Mayor said it once, the Free Press editorials have said it, many Board members have said (their fantasy is for me to ask for one of those vacancies on the Board.) it from the B.I.A., and disillusioned but die-hard advocates of collectivist action (those who greeted the B.I.A. concept enthusiastically and are now disappointed with it) would like me to save the B.I.A.

I think people have their terms backward. These folks assume that negative criticism, no matter how correct, is bad, and well-intentioned blunders are good, positive action.

That's crazy. Well intentioned blunders with other peoples money is lazy, arrogant & stupid business sense. Negative criticism that is correct is really positive criticism because it offers a valid alternative to foolish action. A critic who is accurate need not perform the duty to be valid. It is the issue that is at stake. This issue is: RIGHT OR WRONG. That's it. We may be negative, but by God, we're researched, backed-up, thorough, cross-referenced, consistent, and fair.

But the truth will hurt those on the other side of the fence.

That's not my problem.

+++++

In any case, my positive achievements this issue are many, the parking map alone is more than the B.I.A. with their 1/4 million bucks has done in a year and half. (And they know it.) The existence of this magazine, the fine state of the kiosks, and many other efforts that I am responsible for are very positive.

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER, BEST, MRC

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3 EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

the MAYOR AL GLEESON

INTERVIEWED

BY

MARC

EMERY

TALKS ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN-COMPETITION-STREET CLEANING - MALLS - REGULATION - B.I.A.

The interview commenced with the Mayor reiterating his position as outlined in the Free Press article of May 13 (see pg.25); in response to the question:

MetroBulletin: "Should the Council protect individual business interests anywhere in London from new competition? What example do you see your office setting, particularly in regards to the downtown?"

Mayor Gleeson: "I feel protective to it but on an individual basis we shouldn't prohibit competition. When it comes to the expansion of the suburban malls, the degree of concern expressed along the lines of "the downtown will suffer if so & so expands their mall" is not substantiated with facts. I think the degree to

**IF THE MALLS
COULD ADD A
DEPT. STORE**

**---I DON'T
THINK THE
DOWNTOWN
COULD HOLD
ITS OWN**

which downtown revenue will be negatively affected is debateable. Unfortunately, Council is left in the position of judging competition and its impact."

MetroBulletin: "If White-Oaks, Westmount, Wharncliffe Rd. Developments received everything they wanted in expansions, do you see the downtown suffering or would they adapt to the new market conditions?"

The MAYOR: "In the short term, I think dept. stores and retail outlets of a general nature would experience lower sales, but in the long term, say 1990, I think the downtown will experience increased sales.

I try to explain to these people that the "market" they regard is not, if we may use an analogy, "A flat pie", and that a business is limited or entitled to a certain defined slice. In reality the pie expands and contracts and you get your slice or fall off. The "market" will expand to accommodate good businesses."

The Mayor however, does not support the full expansion of the suburban malls, particularly in the case of a dept. store in the White Oaks Mall.

THE MAYOR: "I support the recommendation of (planning) committee which states that there are to be no more new dept. stores in any mall beyond the number in the downtown. So we would need a 3rd dept. store downtown before we approved any other proposals anywhere else."

When asked if the market conditions were such that a 3rd dept. store seemed likely to set up downtown, in view of the declining core population, suburban expansion, etc., the MAYOR replied:

"I think it's very realistic. London has a small town attitude. Our downtown is still vibrant, busy and cannot be compared with trends elsewhere which might indicate otherwise. If restrictions were lifted and the malls could add a dept. store, I don't think the downtown could hold its own."

When asked if merchant fears about "an endangered downtown" was really fear about their own business bottom line, and then worded ominously as a statement that appears to echo "the downtown merchants", in order to protect their business from effective competitive forces, the MAYOR responded:

"I understand business people talking free enterprise yet objecting to a competitor who sets up across the street. That's a natural response.

But we have to listen to the concerns of merchants. Yet you also have to understand that a hundred people objecting to a proposal is different from one person objecting to it.

My attitude is essentially a free

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW 4

enterprise position; in fact I'm viewed by some as being perhaps too much in favour of free enterprise.

I've taken the position that I have to be completely convinced government intervention is necessary before I prohibit/delay/recommend staging a business development."

When asked where Council was going to draw the line, the MAYOR replied:

" If its whether we have to choose between laissez-faire or authoritarian rule, well, I feel we're working within an acceptable framework of modified free enterprise."

A discussion of U.S. President Reagan's economic philosophy ensued.

THE MAYOR: " Even Mr. Reagan, in the short term, is using regulation prohibiting Japanese imports to give a practical adjustment allowance to the auto industry."

The MetroBulletin pointed out that this was a hypocritical and contradictory element in view of Mr. Reagan's expressed policy: the Mayor agreed with current U.S. auto policy that such restrictions were necessary to get " the auto industry in an advantageous position before freeing market forces."

The MetroBulletin last issue made a projection of downtown growth for London last issue which indicated that contemporary trends show that the downtown will experience a shift in economic make-up towards greater office-commercial-residential from the traditional retail-commercial.

In an interview elsewhere in this issue, the President of Alcor Investments commented that his company views downtown future growth with virtually identical conclusions. When asked about his opinion on the shape of London's downtown 10 years from now, the MAYOR replied:

" I don't disagree with you as far as speculating that the core will feature more emphasis on head offices, offices, etc. We will see more office designation, but ultimately I think this will lead to more retail development."

When asked about the myriad of zoning restrictions - Director of Planning Larry Draho pointed out to the MetroBulletin that there are over 1,500 separate zones throughout the city - the Mayor replied:

**I'M VIEWED
BY SOME AS
BEING TOO
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FREE
ENTERPRISE.**

" I believe in policies to encourage development downtown."

When the interviewer explained the difficulties of one developer (an article in this issue refers to the issue of Blue-land Enterprises), and the easy access to delaying & nuisance tactics by certain " community associations ", the Mayor agreed there " was too much opportunity to take advantage of the legal system to obstruct."

" The new White Paper issued by the provincial government indicates that local councils will have more autonomy in final decisions on planning matters."

Third parties like the OMB are appealed to regularly, and 3 appeals have gone to the Cabinet in the last year and a half.

In the case of the malls, a 7-week proceeding with 3 developers, a host of lawyers, etc., all costing the taxpayers alot of money. "

Returning to the theme of a " free market" or "regulations" as they apply to London a discussion of the current taxi bylaws (city gov't licencing & price-fixing) and the proposed sign bylaws took place.

THE MAYOR: " You can't accept an open system along the lines of the free market. We've all become used to various levels of control."

As an individual, I would like as less government as possible, but people talk less government and want more."

When asked what example a Mayor should set, when it came to "more" or "less government", the MAYOR replied:

" I have a position but other peoples' views have to be accommodated."

" At one time I recommended that taxi-cab licencing be abolished, but its so complicated an issue and so difficult to administer now that I'd rather spend my time more usefully on other things."

At this time I favour cab regulations & licencing."

THE MetroBulletin: " Why?"

THE MAYOR: " I think abolishing it now would be chaotic. Here, we have a business that has flourished under protectionism, in fact you can re-sell your cab lic-

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ence for \$2500 (original cost:\$50.00) just because of licencing.

If we decontrolled the industry it would lead to other problems."

MetroBulletin: "Such as?"

THE MAYOR: "Well, you'd see more individuals using their own cars, more part-time taxis, and this would hurt the major brokers.

Individual drivers would be difficult to control, which we'd still want to do even if we set free the price structure or the limitations on the number of vehicles acting as cabs."

The taxi-cab bylaw is over 20 8½" x 14" pages.

THE MAYOR: "Of course the taxicab bylaws are difficult to administer.

THE MetroBulletin: "So in whose interests are we regulating the industry for? With open competition, it would be cheaper for students, low income people, the elderly to take cabs, it would increase jobs and reduce the amount of work going through City Hall."

THE MAYOR: "I've heard those arguments. It wouldn't bother me to get out of the price-fixing or rates."

The MetroBulletin: "But who are we regulating for?"

The Mayor: "I suppose to protect the advantages to those in the industry.

I really don't know where the pluses and minuses come out when you add it all up, but as I have said, for the time involved, I'd rather look at other problems.

As to the proposed 6 pg. sign bylaw, I'm not a fan of it. I'm fearful of the bylaw."

The Mayor declined however, to say at this time if he would vote against it, but adding: "I haven't seen the problem identified that the bylaw is supposed to resolve."

The MetroBulletin: "How do you feel about Dundas St. being closed off to traffic for a pedestrian mall next summer?"

THE MAYOR: "Council has proposed nothing but I've felt the concern by a number of merchants opposed.

One of the concerns was

that a block on Dundas St. (between Wellington & Waterloo) would be disenfranchised from the proposal. Another opinion was that a trial period would not be productive.

We were fooled by London East, myself included. "[A curved road, closed traffic pedestrian-only concept that the East London B.I.A. proposed and convinced the City to contribute several hundred thousand dollars towards. The area has been devastated since.]

The MetroBulletin: "What do you think of the Downtown B.I.A., their performance so far?"

THE MAYOR: "Generally I think the B.I.A. is moving quite well. Without a unified movement downtown, business could suffer some.

Their collective approach to the downtown as regards promotion ("Discover Downtown - Its Luvly"), whether good or bad, is commendable.

The collective selling of a downtown is necessary. I appreciate their concern for the cleaning and maintenance of downtown. I was pleased they were out on the street cleaning that Tuesday.

The MetroBulletin: "Unfortunately it would appear that grassroots support is lacking as only some of the Board Of Management were involved. Otherwise, do you think there was a valid message they wanted to send to City Hall?"

THE MAYOR: I'm aware the downtown is inadequately cleaned, particularly over weekends. They don't have to convince me. I expect to have that situation changed by this summer. As for the city doing sidewalk snow removal, I would be supportive of this and hopefully if some merchants take the initiative, this can be put forward.

The procedure would be for a merchant, group of merchants or an organization to send a letter to the City Engineer who would forward recommendations to the Environment & Transportation Comm., who would make a recommendation to Council."

The Mayor acknowledged that the downtown does pay 13-14% of the entire city budget in its taxes. (con'd on pg.26)

MB: "IN WHOSE INTERESTS IS COUNCIL PASSING REGULATORY LAWS FOR?"
MAYOR: "I SUPPOSE TO PROTECT THE ADVANTAGES TO THOSE IN THE INDUSTRY."

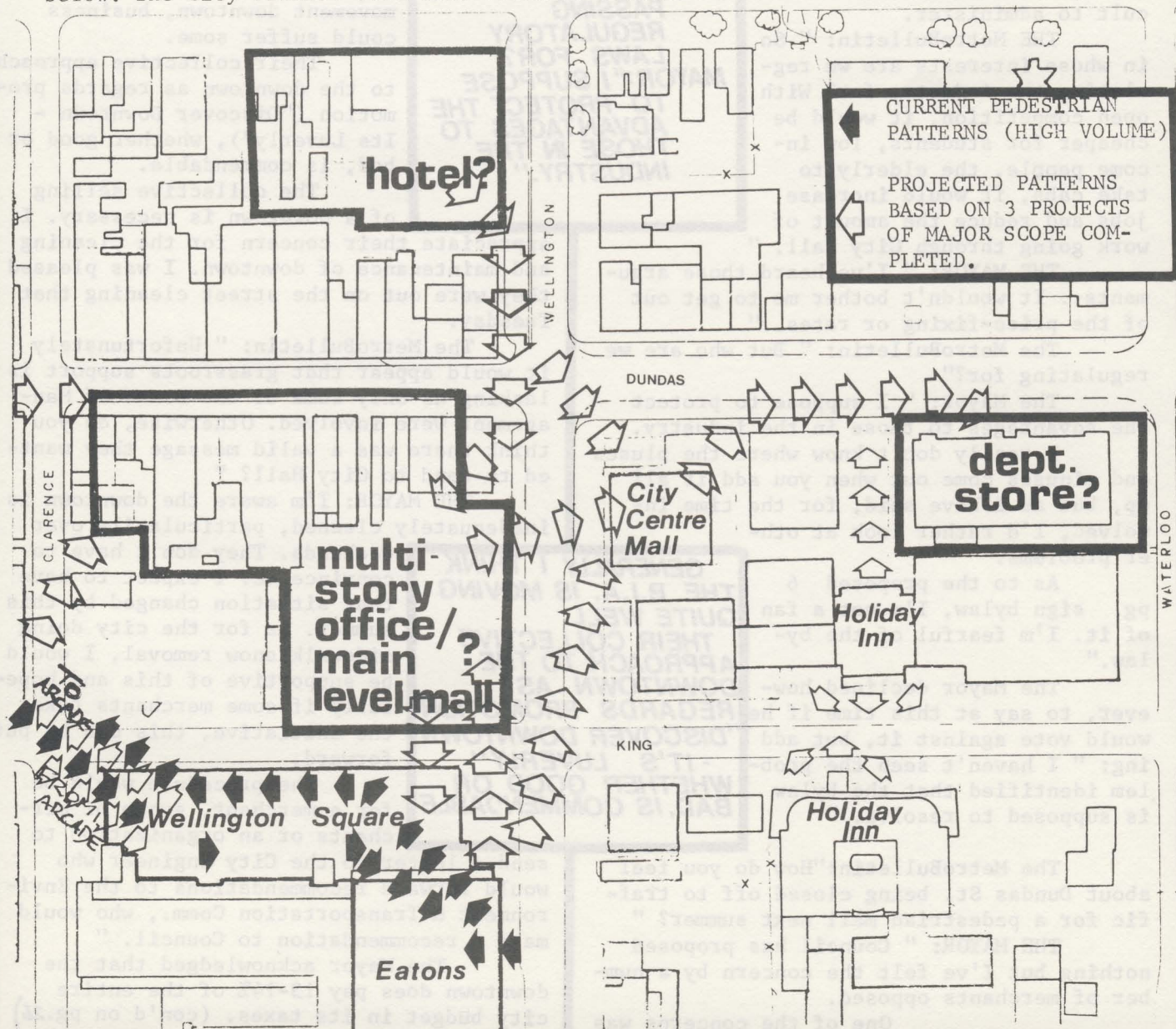
GENERALLY I THINK THE B.I.A. IS MOVING QUITE WELL.
THEIR COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO THE DOWNTOWN AS REGARDS PROMOTION "DISCOVER DOWNTOWN - IT'S LUVERLY" WHETHER GOOD OR BAD, IS COMMENDABLE

DOWNTOWN IN 1986: WOW!

Missing from last issue's discussion on the implications of City Councils decision to extend the "core area designation" to Waterloo from Wellington, was a reference chart referred to as "Sketch A".

The importance of that sketch, at the time, was to illustrate the opinion of the Researcher-Administrator of Planning at City Hall that the extension would encourage a major anchor dept. store to locate at the old Armouries location. He felt this would stretch the pedestrian traffic to such an extent that two downtowns would evolve.

The 'West' downtown, or the area from the Bell building to Simpsons to the Arcade would be one major sphere, the 'eastern' sphere would be the area indicated on the map below. The City Planner felt this would be detrimental to the "economic stability" of



the existing core.

Since then the MetroBulletin has learned that the entire south side of Dundas St. between Clarence & Wellington will be in for serious redevelopment on a major scale. Most merchants and property owners mention Alcor Investments as to the origin of purchase offers on their property lots.

This was neither confirmed nor denied by Alcor President Lloyd Bishop, but a number of lots are either owned, managed by Alcor, or owned by lawyers at the firm Ivey & Dowler, (Richard Ivey Q.C. is the ultimate owner of Alcor Investments).

Alcor Investments owns a significant share of City Centre Mall.

Both owners of the burned out buildings at 263 and 265 Dundas St., John Whaley (Q.C.) and Grant Barker (Ivey & Dowler) respectively, acknowledge that their property will be part of a redevelopment of the block.

None of the property owners the MetroBulletin talked to seemed unhappy at the prospect of being bought out, most seemed pleasantly resigned to selling, though reserved about discussing the subject too much.

As one merchant said: "I think its a good idea. Someone has to take the bull by the horns."

This exciting prospect will come as welcome news to merchants and public who fret that investment is leaving the core for the suburbs. And if it is true that the development will eventually be done by Alcor, then I will anticipate the result will reflect Mr. Bishop's comment on the projects of his company; "Everything we do is first class."

Such redevelopment will take place in interesting proximity to "the 2nd hotel" site, (formerly the YMCA) and the dept. store prospect-the Armouries; both geographically and in time. All three developments could be expected to materialize -if they do- in the 1984 to 1986 period

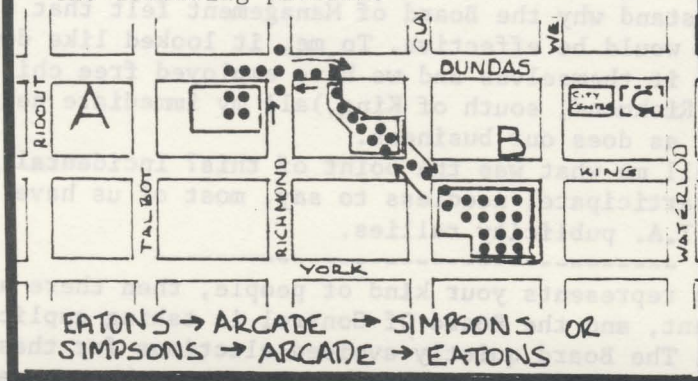
The MetroBulletin wonders whether such is coincidence, or a genius in the business hard at work.

If all three projects are completed, the area will be a powerhouse draw. It will contain the 2 major core area convention centres, City Centre Mall, Wellington Square, Eatons, the speculated Mall/office tower, Northern Life Building, the Dept. store-Armouries.

If one observes our pedestrian flow chart that reflects trends as they are today and then compares these with impact of the redeveloped area, we can only predict a shift of emphasis away from the sector of downtown nearest the river. The over-all implications of all this though will be to inject fabulous commercial potential to any business within 4 blocks of this area, and that includes all retailers downtown.

(What will downtown be like in 1990? In the 21st century? President of Alcor Investments, Lloyd Bishop, is interviewed on what his company likes and sees in the future of downtown growth on pg. 22)

B) Pedestrian traffic is aligning into the following pattern:



**Current consumer
High volume
Pedestrian traffic**

Mall experiment delayed until next year

The proposed temporary closure of a section of Dundas Street in the core area for use as a pedestrian shopping mall has been delayed until next summer.

Hal Sorrenti, chairman of the downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) board, told Western Ontario Business the experiment to determine the viability of the mall will be delayed until next summer in order that proper planning can take place.

The BIA had proposed to go ahead with the plan to close a section of Dundas Street between Wellington and Richmond streets for two months this summer but was set back due to opposition of some merchants and inadequate planning, Sorrenti said.

"We realize now that a project of such a scale should not be tackled on a part-time basis," he said.

The group is currently in the process of hiring a permanent executive director to oversee operations of the BIA. The job is expected to be filled by July 1, he said.

Sorrenti said he hopes the BIA will be able to put the mall plan in place by the long weekend in May next year and run it throughout the summer. If the experiment proves successful, the BIA proposes to close the street off totally and encourage revitalization of buildings and better use of second and third floor retail/commercial space.

on the pedestrian-only Dundas St. mall would be made available to the MetroBulletin so that the merchants who paid for this report could finally read highlights of it. The MetroBulletin has previously employed legal counsel in appealing to the Mayor and the Board of Directors of the B.I.A. to obtain a copy. The 60-pg. draft report has already circulated to a number of downtown businesspeople.

When the MetroBulletin went to obtain the Draft report from the B.I.A. office, we were informed that it would not be made available to us. Period.

We have no recourse but to point out then that Hal Sorrenti, Chairman of the B.I.A., after promising us the report's availability, then reneging, is a liar. In future we shall regard his statements in such light.

On the subject of the B.I.A., why isn't anyone ever in their office? The sign on the door used to say 'Monday-Wednesday-Friday 9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.', but on 14 occasions in 2 months, this wasn't the case (in our experience alone!). Now they've taken that sign down and there are no hours specified! Also, the secretary's notes to the effect of 'be back at 2.00 p.m.' are not to be believed. We've dutifully returned on these half dozen times to locked doors.

Did you get a green 8½" x 11" flyer hand delivered to your door by the B.I.A. asking for your participation in a sweep-up-downtown blitz?

Their poster began, "Rise and Shine with your shovel & broom" and specified the time 6.30 to 8.30, but not whether it was morning or evening. The 'rise and shine' part would suggest morning but it turned out to be evening.

I can't understand why the Board of Management felt that using Boy Scouts to clean up the downtown would be effective. To me, it looked like downtown merchants are too lazy to clean it themselves and we have employed free child labour to do this. And yet on my block (Richmond, south of King,) all my immediate neighbours sweep their fronts every morning, as does our business.

Can anyone tell me what was the point of this? Incidentally, few if any merchants showed up to participate, needless to say, most of us have better things to do than be part of B.I.A. publicity rallies.

If this group represents your kind of people, then there are 2 vacancies on the Board of Management, and the Board Of Control is taking applications for this 'voluntary' position. The Board quietly avoided elections for these 2 positions, so merchants will need to take a careful look at why & how the two vacancies get filled.

This item appeared in the May 25th issue of Western Ontario Business.

Note that throughout the article is the expressed intention of going through with the project regardless of merchant opinion.

It is unlikely there will be a vote by merchants as the so-called "information brochure" by the B.I.A. has even yet to be prepared.

The B.I.A. has yet to even receive the full report describing the whys & hows of their own project.

THE Board Chairman stated at the May 12 Board meeting that the Draft Copy of The Laventhol & Harwich report

Craig Scott, President of Scott's of London, sent this inquiry to City Hall on May 13:

" Re: The Burned-out building on the south side of Dundas St. at Wellington St.,

Why has this eyesore been left for so long?
Please try to rectify this by either having
the building demolished, or have the scaffold-
ing moved back to the store front and not out
to the edge of the road. "

The MetroBulletin talked to both the owners of 263 & 265 Dundas, their properties are illustrated below.

Mr. John Whaley, who is owner of the property at 263 Dundas, the largely burned-out building with the scaffolding in front of it, assures us that the building will be demolished within 4 weeks, then levelled. Currently, it is necessary for them to brace the mutual wall that is also part of Dack's.

Mr. Whaley expects that the property will eventually be part of a redevelopment of the neighbourhood.

Grant Barker, a lawyer at Ivey & Dowler, owns the property at 265 Dundas, pictured below. He hopes to have a short-term tenant in the main level in the not too distant future although he was unable to say exactly when. He also expects the property to become part of a major redevelopment program.



265 Dundas



263 Dundas

THIS APPEARED IN
THE GAZETTE, Montreal, Monday, May 4, 1981

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

ALLAN SINGER has been taken to court for conducting his business in English



HIS CRIME:

He has operated a business the past 31 years using his native language

HIS POSSIBLE PUNISHMENT:

Bill 101 (section 205 a & b) calls for fines of up to \$1,000 for first offence and up to \$5,000 for 2nd offence and (article 208) allows the destruction or removal at his expense of any non-French sign on his property.

ISN'T THIS ONE OF HISTORY'S SUPREME IRONIES?

Allan Singer a soldier in World War II who fought under the Canadian flag to uphold human rights against tyranny, racism and fascism will now be charged for attempting to use his mother tongue.

A VICTORY FOR ALLAN SINGER IS A VICTORY FOR ALL QUEBECERS AND INDEED JUSTICE.

**DO YOU BELIEVE
IN HIS CRIME
AND PUNISHMENT**

YES

☐
☐

NO

If you have marked an "X" in the "NO" BOX, please help support this brave, principled man in his fight against oppression.

Please contribute to: **THE ALLAN SINGER DEFENCE FUND**

c/o THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE MOVEMENT,

P.O. Box 925, Montreal H3X 3Y1

484-2729

CORE
AREA

SABOTAGE

Last issue, we showed the ominous repercussions of the declining 'growth' of residential population in the Central Business District and the surrounding areas most pertinent to continued vitality of our business community.

A map and chart is shown on this page indicates these shifts (reprinted from May D.L. MB).

It is no surprise to anyone to note commercial areas require a considerable population within walking or convenient distance from the core. One only needs to look at Westmount Mall, White-Oaks Mall, Oakridge Mall, even Byron's new plaza -all are surrounded by a sprawling upper-middle class suburb and several high density apartment buildings (most around 20 stories high).

All Planners at City Hall acknowledge this is a desirable and essential component for commercial survival. The free movement of people clearly shows that people wish to locate near commercial facilities & vice-versa.

Our story deals with one developer's frustration in attempting to build a unique 10-story condominium building on the site of an abandoned public school.

The condominium (shown on pg.12) has been planned on the site of the now-defunct Talbot St. Public School. The school was closed due to the lack of families moving into the area, another sure signal of declining vibrancy in a typical core neighbourhood.

In fact, after it was abandoned by the

London Board Of Education, the P.U.C. placed thousands of dollars worth of playground equipment on the site -which rusted and deteriorated due to non-use.

The condominium proposal was originally a 12-story plan, but scaled down to 10 stories: the now 90-unit family-oriented complex is the project of Bluland Enterprises; the President & principle owner is Edward Blumas.

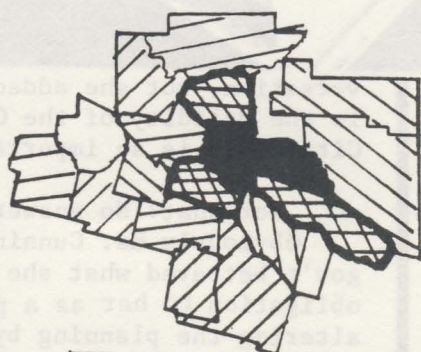
Mr. Blumas was the highest bidder on the property in September 1978; a \$10,000 deposit was given to the B.O.E. pending completion of the sale. This deposit was the first transaction that up to this day has seen Mr. Blumas' company spend over \$320,000 in efforts largely to combat a small fanatical fringe group who for no concrete reason -as we shall later see-

oppose the development. While the initial deposit to the Board is an inconvenient tie up of funds, most of the other money spent will never be recovered and will ultimately be passed onto the future residents. If the project is refused (it is currently before the provincial Cabinet for final decision), well, that's a lot of money down the drain.

The importance of this situation to downtown businesspeople is this: If this developer loses this struggle after 3 years and over a 1/3 of a million dollars to build a neighbourhoods most unique residential complex, in an area where MOST RESIDENTS SUPPORT THE PROJECT; where the project has been ap-

POPULATION - HISTORICAL and PROJECTED

Area	1966	1981	1991	2001
Central				
London	18271	14500	13500	14000
WESTMOUNT	826	13000	16000	19000
WHITE-OAKS	875	14500	21000	25000
MEDWAY	3535	16500	22000	25000
WEST				
LONDON	8810	14500	17500	23000
EAST				
LONDON	16024	12000	11000	11000
STONEV				
BROOK	4140	10000	12000	14000
MASONVILLE	1495	2500	6000	11000

POPULATION
GROWTH & DECLINE

■ DOWN OVER 20%

▨ DOWN 1% to 20%

□ NO CHANGE

▩ UP 10% - 20%

▧ UP 25% - 45%

▦ UP 50% - 100%

▨ MASSIVE INCREASE 150% - 1200%

proved by Planning Committee, Council, the Ontario Municipality Board & is now before the Cabinet;

if he loses his right to build on his own property, then other developers considering renovations, developments and renewals, will surely think again.

If the Cabinet does rule against Blumland Enterprises, the shock waves will eventually destroy or cripple much of the future of our downtown; NO POPULATION GROWTH, NO COMMERCIAL GROWTH.

With inflation, severe competition from malls, and suburban expansions all very weighted on the downtown, this incident is an outrage to those who believe in the sacredness of property rights, sound core-redevelopment and commercial vitality.

It is an outrage that a fringe group commanding a nominal membership of 47 residences in the "area" covered by the Talbot Community Association can manipulate all the laws, bureaucracies, boards, and courts to do this.

In a phone conversation, Ms. Connie Cunningham, chairperson of the Talbot Community Ass., was asked repeatedly what concrete reason her group could offer to substantiate her group's opposition to this development.

Our first phone conversation was this

Ms. Cunningham: "We oppose the height and density"

MB: "Why is that bad?"

Ms. Cunningham: (pause) well, we would like to see the area remain two-storey residential, even though the developer likes to point out that the area has a 4 story & 6 story apartment already."

Ed. note: it contains 2 10-story buildings both a block from the proposed site.

MB: "But why is a 10-story building

intrinsically bad?"

Ms. Cunningham: "We feel it would be better if it stayed low-rise two-family."

MB: "But why then, is that intrinsically good?"

Ms. Cunningham: "It keeps people in touch."

MB: "But let's deal with the building. Can you give me a single concrete reason why a 10-story resident-owned building is bad for your neighbourhood? How does this preclude "keeping in touch"?"

Ed. note -whatever "keeping in touch" means

Ms. Cunningham: (frustrated) "Boy, Marc, what a dumb question, I could give you six hours of reasons why high density is bad."

MB: "OK, great, could you give 2 minutes worth right now?"

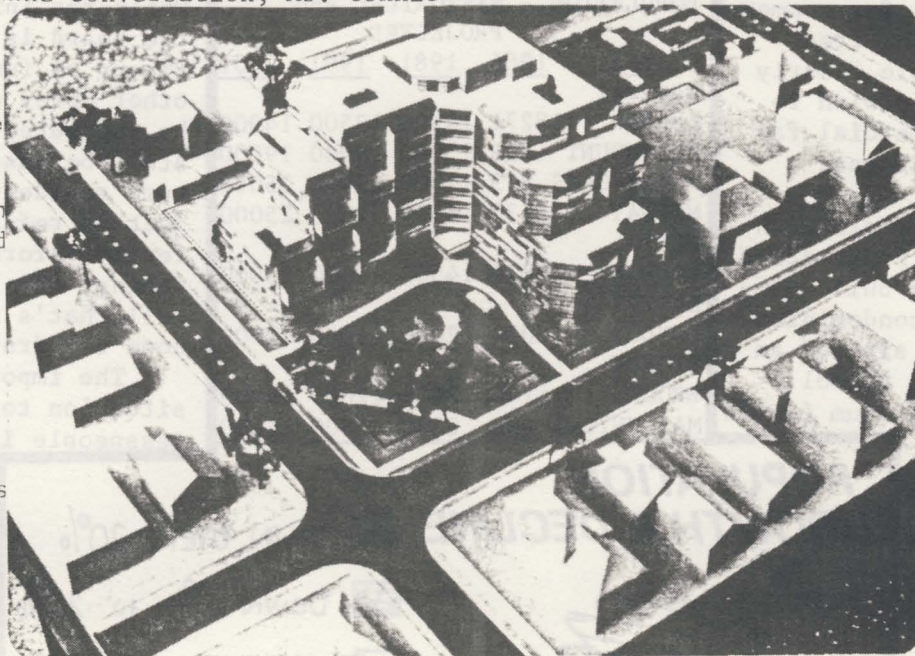
Ms. Cunningham decided to end the conversation at this point however, saying she was busy. I was anxious to hear some of the six hours of reasoning, so I inquired as to when she could talk to me. She asked us to

call back in two days, which we did, as we were anxious to hear 6 hours of reasons why 10 story buildings were bad.

In our next conversation, she said a visit by us to interview her further would be unnecessary because she had already sited the most important objections in our preceding phone conversation, but she added, "the whole issue is the validity of the Official Plan of the City. This is an important criterion."

For what? No answer.

Obviously Ms. Cunningham feels local gov't betrayed what she perceives as their obligation to her as a property owner by altering the planning by-laws. But she should see this as a complaint about unstable gov't and not as a crusade against



another person's valid property rights.

At no point did I get a concrete objection, whether valid or not, like:

"its ugly" or "it'll cause property values to drop, etc."

When asked what "area" her group represented she said, Richmond to the river, Oxford to Kent. The MetroBulletin checked the assessment rolls of the city, and found that there are over 800 residences in this area, thus her membership constitutes less 5% of the neighbourhood.



The now abandoned school site

Another resident that opposes the development said this was his major reason for objecting:

"That poor senior citizens home a block away (a 10 story building) won't get enough sunlight."

The MetroBulletin didn't believe what we were hearing so we said: Isn't that why lightbulbs, heating, etc. were invented so we wouldn't have to rely on sunlight around the clock?

"No, I think sunlight is essential."

The MetroBulletin will agree sunlight is nice, even essential is you have a farm or garden, but can a building a block away from this project have a franchise on it to the point where other buildings should not exist? The man quoted refused to let us print his name, but he does live on Barton St.

We went to the senior citizens building to see if they would receive inadequate sunlight, and we can report that in the instances where the Earth's axis are such that

the sun is blocked, it would only be at dusk and sunset (occasionally).

These were the best arguments they were to offer. Opponents also use phrases like "to preserve the identity of the neighbourhood."

The identity, in reality, that the Talbot Comm. Ass. claims to speak for or even refer to is made up of numerous apartment buildings, many high rise, dozens of offices, retail outlets, single dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, student residences (a fair number in need of repair). Over 50% of all residents are students, tenants, transients, etc. who have no real stake in the community.

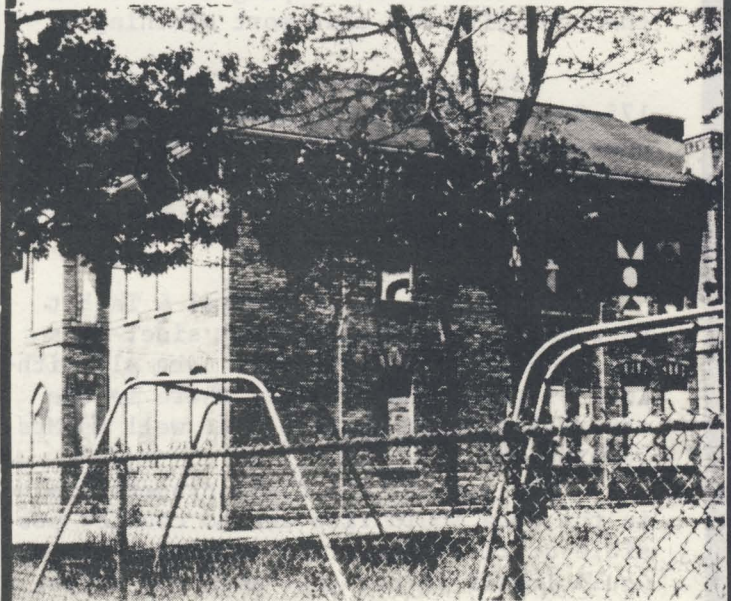
The law is designed so that any fanatical "community association" can use taxpayers money (supplied in no small part by downtown businesses & property owners and developers) to gum up the works to everyone's detriment (all in the name of "community identity")

Things are not so cushy or convenient for the developer who must fight to build on his own property.

Mr. Blumas has individual, signed affidavits from residences in the immediate area that total 96 owners of property (not including transients or tenants).

These affidavits, often with supportive or encouraging comments, were supplied voluntarily.

Mr. Blumas claims to have taken 3 sur-



Note the abandoned playground apparatus.

veys in order to maintain constant community rapport. The MetroBulletin has on file 2

of these surveys, each one taken after each concession or change in plans.

On one survey, Mr. Blumas has over 150 residences in approval of the project (this includes properties where the resident was not necessarily the owner, but there is no duplication of units.)

Some of the surveys contain interesting & favourable comments. We called the owners of one owner-resident at 177 Central Ave., the family of Patricia and Steve Taft and their two children. We talked to Patricia Taft, who was more concerned than ever over the fate of Mr. Blumas' project. 1½ yrs. ago she signed a statement approving the concept, today she says:

" If the developers don't do something, I'm going to lose. The neighbourhood needs a perk-up along the idea of a building Mr. Blumas has in mind. I know my property values will increase with the development.

I'd buy one of his condominiums, myself.

I feel strongly that the Talbot Community Association is the personality of one person -Connie Cunningham- and I know many neighbours who strongly disagree with her actions to stop the development.

I have always found Mrs. Cunningham unable to give me concrete reasons why she opposes the development. She always likes to talk about keeping in touch with the community and that sort of thing. "

Ed. note, Mrs. Cunningham lives at 175 Central. All 5 residences east of 175 Central support the development. To the west of 175 Central are 3 homes run by Childrens Aid Society and the next three residences support the project.

The site is at Central & Talbot (see map), on the south east side. Thus the above 8 homes in favour are all within 1 block of the project. There is one other dissenting household as well as Mrs. Cunningham.

To support his claim property value in the area would rise and to counter possible criticism that his development would impair values (not much has arisen in this regard however, even from those vigorously opposed), Mr. Blumas had appraisals of the area made and the impact of his development geared into the findings. There was no indicator that the val-

ues would not continue to rise. Vitality and growth is ultimately a higher priced commodity than stagnation.

The area around Talbot & Central is pleasant though not the style of Regent St. or even St. George St., north of Oxford, where all homes are occupied by their owners and the area is almost exclusively 2 story residential.

It is obvious that a mixed area like Talbot & Central must grow or decay.

It can be noted that City Planning Dept. official Philip Hawes-Smith was particularly impressed with the Blumas proposal. The city planners are well aware of the necessity of encouraging residential growth in the city's core.

The Planning dept. then recommended rezoning the site from its designation of educational or institutional (an obsolete designation now that the school was closed) to high density residential.

Mr. Hawes-Smith, in an interview, pointed out that the property is awkwardly shaped and only highly imaginative architecture could employ the land for anything.

" The Talbot Community Association didn't want to see anything to do with apartments or condominiums unless it was 2 or 3 story walk-up apartments.

Not to be too scathing, but I'll say that the number of good walk-up apts. in the city are very limited.

The architects proposal was quite stylish and beyond the standard high-rise. It recedes gradually rather than straight up."(See front cover and rendering on pg. 12).

Mr. Blumas pointed out that his condominiums will have a grass park for the children of residents, but this will be available to the entire neighbourhood.

At this point(Planning Committee), the Talbot Community Ass. was first heard from. But in a letter to Committee, a Mr. Leslie Edwards wrote:

" I have lived in the area for over 2 years and I have never heard from the Talbot Community Ass. until there was a development proposed in the area. I feel this organization is too negative to be productive. The development proposed can only enhance the area."

Productive or not, Ms. Cunningham certainly has the time to engage in every possible legal & bureaucratic manipulation. Most of these avenues come at the taxpay-

ers expense, unlike Mr. Blumas, who must ultimately pass on the growing financial burden to future owners of his condominiums.

But here is the distressing prospect. The " Association " has even appealed the Ontario Municiple Board ruling (which they asked for in the first place), normally the final authority on these matters; to the Cabinet of the Provincial gov't.

If they, for some incredible reason, rule against Mr. Blumas, then he is out over \$300,000 in costs plus the cost of reselling the property (if then possible) at a loss. When builders and construction industry giants are going bankrupt it seems every day, then this is certainly enough to put an average contractor or builder in serious trouble.

As Mr. Blumas was remarking: " These people, at almost no cost to themselves, try to bankrupt developers by having their money tied up forever, and with todays borrowing rates, property taxes, etc. this is no joke. As a businessperson, you understand the term 'cash flow problems'. - In our industry that can be a killer. I believe this is their ultimate intention."

When the downtown desperately needs increased residential growth, the prospect of this unique development going down to defeat due to an unreasoning and unrepresentative (and downright suspect) association is frightening enough. The implications however, are even more ominous.

If Mr. Blumas' loses, it will scare an already cautious industry away from the area. You'll notice development always slows down in any given area wherever these " community minded" types are prone to go on a witch-hunt.

Downtown London is surrounded by these "community associations" !

Not coincidentally, wherever these " urban guerillas ", as Connie Cunningham would describe herself, are most active, **POPULATION IN THOSE AREAS IS ON A MARKED DECLINE** (See chart).

We quote from Nick Martin's column in the Free Press of Mar. 9, 1981 (our population statistics in parentheses);

" The Urban League consists of community associations from Talbot [declining population of 20% in last 15 years], South London [20% decline], Broughdale [20% decline], the Coves [where is this area?], and Hamilton Rd. [20% decline also]."

Martin uses the phrase: " neighbour-hoods which feel most threatened by the creeping core."

Martin's article does not mention that the relative wealth per capita is also declining as well as the population in these areas.

These dangerous anti-growth groups currently have enough clout with certain left & left-leaning politicians that our vitality as a commercial core is severely threatened, not to mention the vitality of the residential neighbourhoods themselves.

But if you think these groups' activities go against everyone's interests, nothing tops the arguments made by the lawyer retained by the Talbot Community Association. In a letter to the Ministry of Housing, Lawyer Jack Smuggler presents his major objections.

One of the more absurd is this:

" Another matter which bears consideration is the social character of the proposed development. A ten story luxury condominium will INJECT AN ENTIRELY NEW SOCIAL CLASS INTO THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

In the past, the Talbot Com. area has been largely populated by lower and middle income groups. Insufficient attention has been devoted to the repercussions of such a " high class " development."

Talk about keeping " the Poor " poor! Any rational person would look upon the injection of a high class development (especially in these times) as a Godsend. Not this lawyer.

Mr. Smuggler correctly points out that: " The Talbot Com. area currently suffers from the lack of viable neighbourhood park ". Mr. Smuggler fails to point out in this brief to the province that Mr/ Blumas' proposal includes a grass-covered park area for neighbourhood use.

This is a gross distortion of facts! And from a lawyer of all people (tsk tsk).

In an incorrect assertion, Mr. Smuggler says: " The construction of a 10-story apt. building on the Talbot School site would lead to unforeseen traffic congestion in this area."

If one calculates that all 90 units

Wherever these "urban guerrillas" are most active:

POPULATION IN THOSE AREAS IS ON A MARKED DECLINE.

MANUAL FOR STARTING A 'COMMUNITY ASSOC.'

INTRODUCTION

In this day & age, its not ideas or ethics that count, its numbers. And let's face it, there are already so many "community associations" around that to have an impact we must PROCEED ON A GRAND SCALE!

To some extent this has already been done; as all community associations from the core are united as "The Urban League", paid membership and input limited to very few people but whose group carries a disproportionately large amount of clout. Our association must make U.L. look like small potatoes in comparison.

CHOOSING YOUR NAME

Our name must be devoid of definite ideas or specifics. Choose one that encompasses a large geographic area & simultaneously suggests great altruistic intentions. Our constitution and charter should follow this idea too, but both are options, since they may contain some ethics or principles which could ultimately hamper our activities. A fine title would be: Association for the GENERAL IMPROVEMENT OF MANKIND AND GREATER EAST LONDON IN PARTICULAR LEAGUE."

Sounds important, doesn't it?

THE AREA THAT "NEEDS" REPRESENTATION

Now we must choose the 'area' we 'represent'.

Let's cut the city in half say, and concentrate on the core and east London, the area where jobs and development are most needed (SO we can chase jobs & developers out, of course!)

RECRUITING MEMBERS

You mail out 80,000 cards to everyone in your district (approx. $\frac{1}{2}$ the city) informing them they have just been accepted as a member of the league. If they DO NOT wish to belong, THEY must send in the card indicating this.

Knowing most people would be insulted by such presumptuousness, only about 200 cards will be returned 'declining' membership.

PRESTO! You now represent 79,800 households, instantly making you the biggest lobby group in the city. Your political career has just begun!

ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (RIGHT OR WRONG!)

You need one real firebrand, preferably a single mother or a thick lensed bearded university graduate (preferably with a degree in humanities as opposed to concrete earth-bound degrees like engineering, physics, or medicine).

Thus we can be assured of immediate sympathy & acceptance from the plague host of other 'socially minded' groups like the 'Coalition of Social Issues' (a great name!), the 'Status of Womens' Group', the extreme-left wing of the Liberal Party known as the NDP, feminists, day-care subsidy fanatics, and trendy professors at U.W.O.

PUBLICITY

With one or two of these fired-up types making waves, inevitably Nick Martin of the Free Press will find your doorstep and write a very sympathetic fluff piece on your latest escapade (known necessarily as a 'cause')

THE VICTIM

You don't have a cause yet?

Well, no problem, just open the phone book to 'developers', close your eyes, and let your fingers do the walking!

Found your victim? Great.

EMERGENCY CAUSES

In the unique circumstance there aren't any developers you can assassinate (financially), this lack can be remedied with a blistering attack on the lack of day-care. Real trendy stuff.

MORE PUBLICITY

Issue press releases galore, get a lawyer from legal aid or a gov't grant to pay for it. See what other gov't grants you can apply for.

Good luck, but with the law like it is, you won't need it.

REMEMBER!

Slogans are important. And governments and other altruistic groups have set many fine examples.

Classics like 'Count yourself In' (don't add: 'or you go to jail' and "member of the B.I.A." (don't add: 'whether you like it or not') have proven success records.

Other by-words are "co-operation" for 'forced compliance'; and words like 'neighbourhood' & 'community' will give you opportunities to avoid addressing facts & ideas.

AND FINALLY...

You must always display;

- A) A contempt for individual property rights
- B) Disgust for competition
- C) Emotional frothing at the mouth
- D) A lack of concrete ideas & facts
- E) People in your group who have no experience in what they are criticizing

and F) A stubborn inability to understand how wealth & productivity evolves

NOW YOU ARE ALL SET TO GO

P.S. Don't Worry
About Any Serious Opposition,
Most Business People
Hate To Make Waves.

Betty Lang, owner of Robert Holmes Ltd. bookstore, sent a letter to the City Engineer on Feb. 19 of this year imploring the City to take some action on effective snow removal in the core area.

Mrs. Lang has pursued this for years, but may finally have struck some co-operation with recently appointed City Engineer D'Arcy Dutton.

Her main complaints are that:

1) when the city plows the roads in the core, the snow piles up on the sidewalk, making it impossible for a merchant to dispose of. Merchants conversely, when clearing their sidewalk, have no choice but to pile it back on the road. This makes a very dangerous situation for cabs, buses, cross-traffic pedestrian movement, etc.

2) snow is not being removed from bus areas. She says, "rather than do this, city workers cover these spots with sand, creating a hazard for passengers stepping to and from the sidewalk.

3) there has been far too much time allowed to elapse after a snow storm before the City Crews are out on the job in the downtown.

Mrs. Lang does not believe it practical or fiscally responsible for merchants to ask that the city take all the snow off both sidewalks & roads. She would like the by-law enforced that requires merchants to clean their sidewalk in front of their business. The city however, could take away the bulk snow quantities that are plowed from the road and to the curb, as well as the bulk shovelled to the curb from the sidewalk.

She has received assurances from the City Engineer that this will commence this winter. Congratulations on all that work & final success, Mrs. Lang!

We feel it fair to point out that 2 of the 3 'eyesores' shown on our front cover of last issue are cleaned & polished. The old Polka-Dot outlet beside the Capitol is clean and the old George's Pinball Arcade has been snappily refurbished for a clothing store which opens imminently at 233 Dundas called "Second Fiddle". The front of 233 Dundas looks really nice. Good job!

In a conversation with City officials on commercial uses of the sidewalk, we inquired what it takes to get permission to hold a sidewalk sale, just in case any merchants downtown would like to get one off the ground.

All that's necessary is to obtain signatures of over 50% of the businesses on a block (both sides though), and you're set. Sounds like a good idea for this summer!

We interviewed Minister in charge of Consumer & Corporate Affairs, Gordon Walker, MPP -London South on "regulation & gov't intervention".

His responsibility is such that he is able to kill any bill if so inclined. The control over this ministry that is responsible for 25% of all legislation (an ominous fact however) is, in his word: "total".

His working philosophy is: "If it isn't broke, don't attempt to fix it."

We brought up the new regulations and restrictions that have been placed on commodity & stock brokerage houses, many of which are in the downtown. We pointed out that the Ontario Securities Exchange has amended some regulations to absurd and ridiculous lengths, and these come under Mr. Walker's Ministry. How does this happen?

"I rely on the other commissions, like the TSC (Toronto Stock Exchange). If they think it makes sense, I take their advice. Since I've been here only a short while (as Minister of C&CA), I can't know everything."

Hmmm. Not the kind of fix-it man I had in mind.

uh -oh. We goofed. On our PARKING MAP, we left out a park lot by Mercury Blueprinting, on Wellington halfway between York & King, on the east side.

If you want to mark it in, its \$1.40 for a 2H park. Other data not available but its a comparatively small lot.

A SPECIAL REPORT:

Plenty Of It!

Most merchants will cite parking as one of the aggravating features that deter consumers from shopping more frequently downtown; the consumer doesn't know where to find it, where space is reliably available, complaints that time on meters is too short, etc. & etcetra!


But is this really true, or an excuse to avoid action that will require a little activity on behalf of core merchants.

We asked Traffic Dept. at City Hall; they feel there is adequate parking downtown, except possibly in the two weeks before Christmas, but congestion is common in all parking lots throughout the city during the festive season.

Mr. Honsburger of Traffic stated: "In a free enterprise system, if there is a real demand, as opposed to a perceived demand, we'll see more parking lots. If there aren't any being developed, then I can only conclude there are enough."

Mr. Honsburger explained that minor prejudices towards the lack of free parking might contribute to an adverse attitude towards downtown parking, and the lack of covered parking: "Wellington Square is always full early, but kitty-corner to Wellington Square is a big lot (see map, bounded by York, Wellington & Free Press building -Editor) where space is always available, but it's not covered. However, mall parking in the suburbs isn't covered either and its often 50 or 75 yards to get inside a suburban mall from where you park. To get to Eatons or Wellington Square from the CITY PARKING lot at the described location is about the same distance. But people complain about the distance a person has to walk to get to Eatons, but never complain about the same distance at a mall."

Consumers from the suburbs or outlying areas around London are unfamiliar with parking in the core & are intimidated when the situation of Covent Garden Parking being full, King St is one way, etc. This can fluster a number of consumers not used to driving in London's downtown.

Other cities have big green & white  signs to indicate where parking can be found. These are always useful to out-of-towners or casual consumers visiting downtown in their car. It is not the policy of this paper to recommend any solution to a problem by requiring increase government involvement or spending, but the city should be able to provide information on where to purchase these signs, their cost of purchase & installation, etc. If the MetroBulletin receives enough inquiries we will do the work required and get back to our subscribers on this matter.

When asked if the city was planning to get into the parking business itself, Mr. Honsburger replied that in the core area, the only involvement would be policing & collection of monies from meters on privately owned land (involvement requested by the property/business owners adjacent) such as the parking area behind the businesses on the west side of Richmond St. between Oxford & Piccadilly (ie. the location of Pickles, Computer Circuit, etc.).

For the consideration of downtown merchants & businesspeople, the MetroBulletin includes in this issue, to every paid subscriber, an 11" x 17" map which indicates all the parking lots in the downtown, their capacity, the usual number of vacancies at a peak period, whether the lot is covered, open, or underground, cost & accessibility to vans and campers.

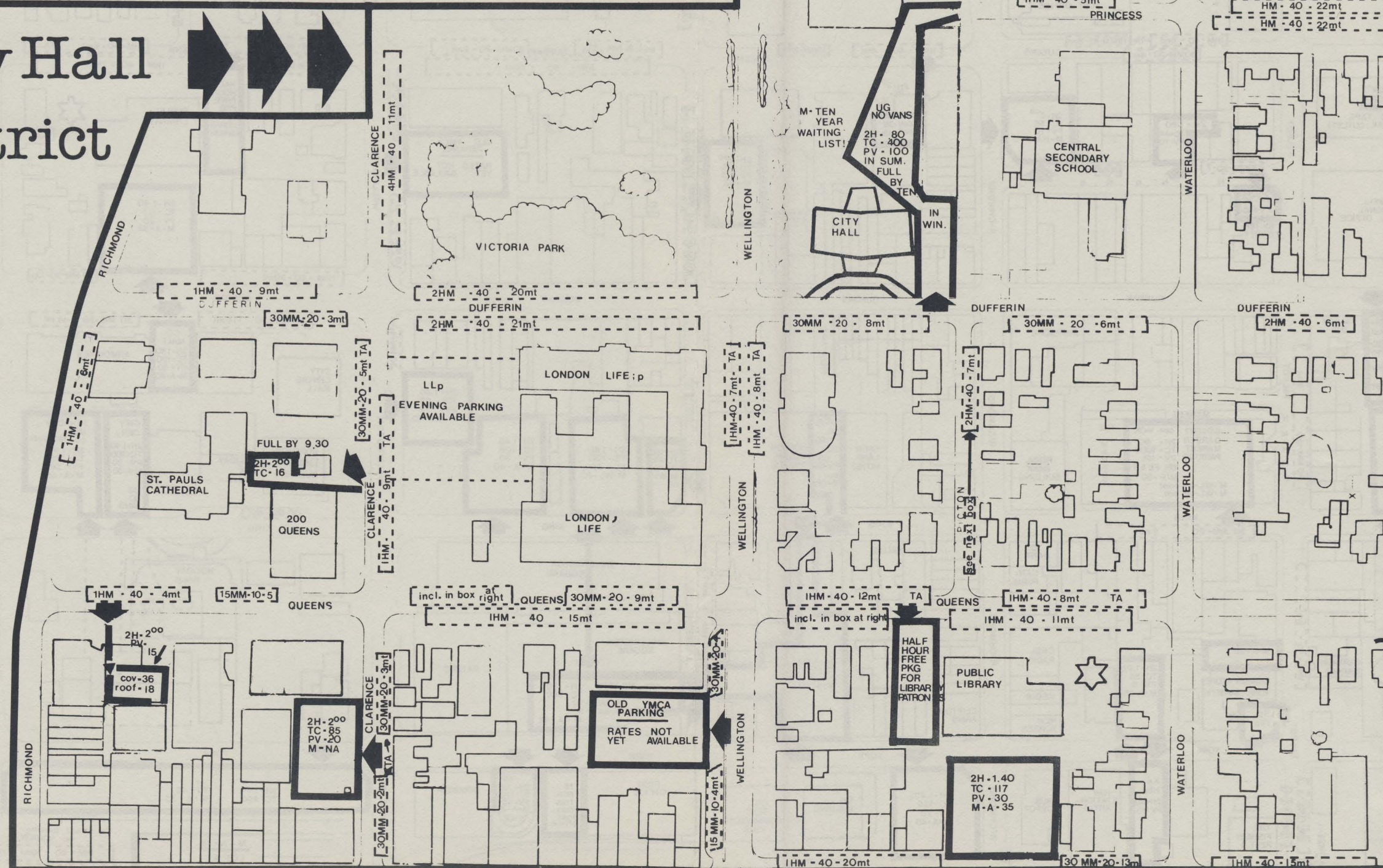
Street parking meters are also included, listing maximum time permitted, cost and numbers in a given block or area.

Reprints that you may hand out to customers or display in your store are available from the MetroBulletin at the following rates: 1 for 50¢, 7 for \$1, 75 for \$10, 1000 for \$75, 5000 for \$275, 10000 for \$475.

If this map, which illustrates all available parking at all corners of the core, gets circulated enough, or if merchants get together & buy an ad in the Free Press/Pennysaver & encourage people to clip it out, then this magazine anticipates some very good short & long term benefits for all of us.

These maps show all the general parking available downtown to the public. Parking exclusively for a business' employees & customers are not included except in a few significant examples (ie. Free Press-CFPL visitor parking, The Fishery Restaurant, The Keg, etc.). The few included are indicated with broken lines adjacent or within the property bounds referred to.

- City Hall
District /



- Locations of major retail outlets are indicated to make this map easier to use.

Designer & Editor: Downtown London MetroBulletin.

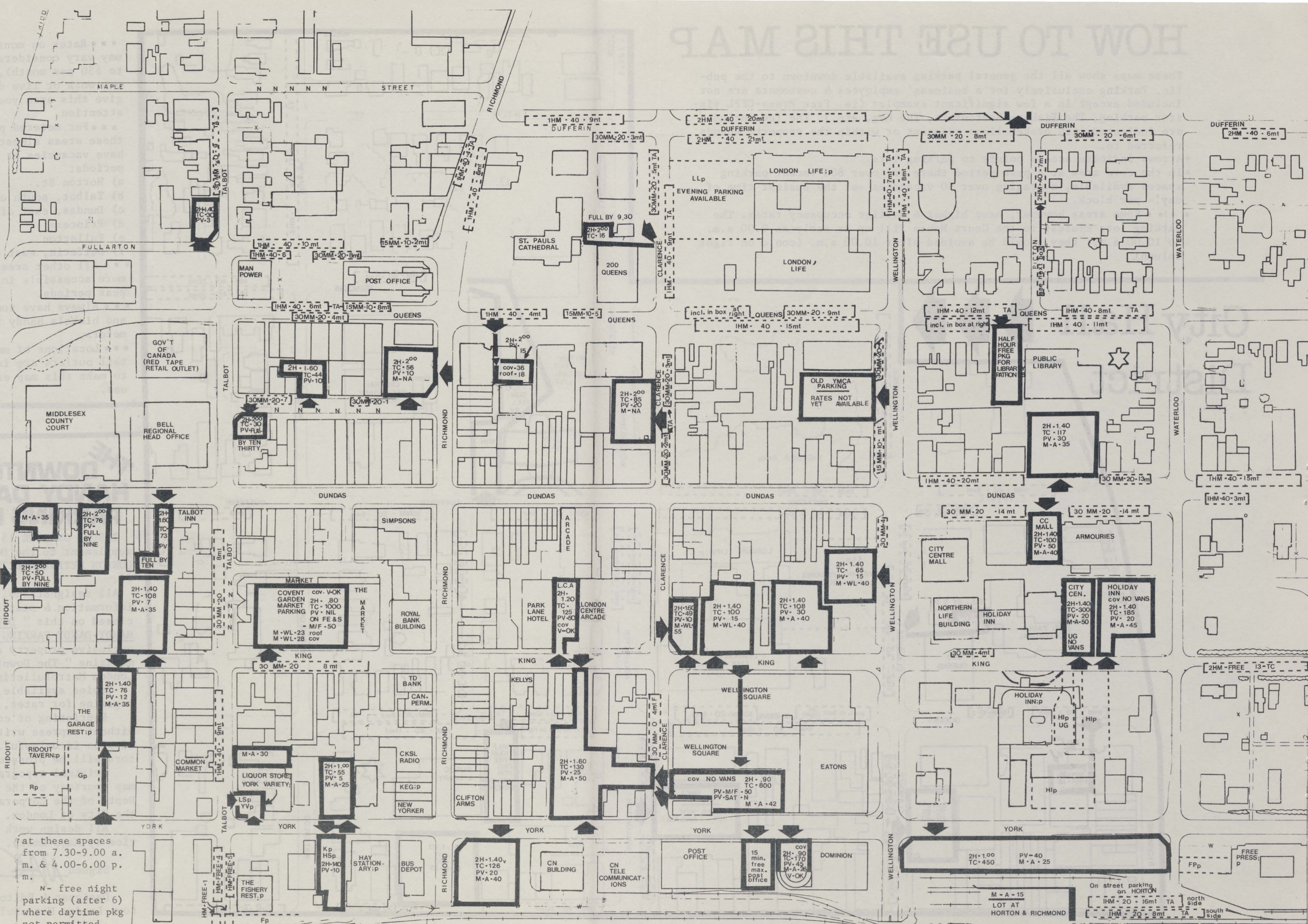
LEGEND
PARKING LOTS
2H- cost of two hours parking
eg. 2H-1.40 means two hours parking will cost \$1.40
tc- total capacity of the lot
eg. TC-117 means the total capacity of the lot is 117 vehicles.
pv - peak period vacancy. At their busiest time, the numerals after PV indicates how many spaces would still be available. In most instances, 11.00 a.m. was used as the time for measurement. Where full on or before 11.00 a.m. is indicated.
eg. PV-16 means that even at their busiest time (averaging) there was still sixteen spaces available.
M -monthly pkg.
A -available
WL -waiting list
NA -not available

eg. M-A-50 means monthly parking is available at \$50 per month.
cov -covered pkg.
ug -underground parking
NO VANS-No vans capable of entering lot
V-OK-Vans able to gain access to parking lot.

PARKING METERS
MM-minute maximum
eg. 30MM means a thirty minute maximum park is permitted.
HM- hour maximum
-20-(second set of characters) means 20¢ cost
-4mt- four meters or four spaces for vehicles
eg. 30MM-20-7mt means a 30 minute maximum stay will cost 20¢ and there are 7 spots available
TA - tow away zone. No parking

at these spaces from 7.30-9.00 a.m. & 4.00-6.00 p.m.
N- free night parking (after 6) where daytime pkg not permitted.

On street parking on HORTON LOT AT HORTON & RICHMOND
[1HM-20-16mt TA] north side
[1HM-20-8mt TA] south side



◻ WHAT YOU CAN DO ◻

The first thing downtown businesspeople can do is stop complaining about parking and the "lack" of it.

This is not true

As our map indicates, there are 500 - 800 vacancies in the core even at the busiest time of . The problem for the driving public is the intimidation from the one-way streets, traffic congestion, no left turns, etc. Most people from outside the city tend to go to the two parking buildings (Wellington Square & Covent Garden), but when they are full, an infrequent visitor to the core can become quite flustered.

Our map, which will hopefully be promoted in one form or another, will aid downtown retailers, employees & consumers in finding convenient parking quickly and with ease.

The "parking problem" is simply a lack of promotion. Parking lots are one of the few industries that do not promote their product, and as is true in any such case; misinformation abounds. Without advertising, only negative information circulates, the nature of people to complain rather than compliment.

There must be an end to the circulation of incorrect parking information.

Since available & convenient parking is essential in combatting " the convenience of shopping at the suburban malls", it is up to individual merchants to promote the following:

- A) the facts, which show adequate and well distributed parking spaces are available.
- B) maps or clip-out ads in your own promotions showing the ease & availability of downtown parking (an example is shown)
- C) an arrangement with parking lots, particularly with CITI-COM CORP. (owners of half the lots in the core) to accept coupons from merchants which will essentially provide our clients with free parking.

Such arrangements can already be arranged with Covent Garden Parking, call them for details.

An arrangement could work like this; a store coupon would be furnished by as many businesses as we could round up into this program. It could be handed out to any of your customers that requests one and makes a minimum \$10 purchase. It could be valid for only that day (to prevent abuse or unnecessary duplication of benefits), or depending on the extent you wish to promote, valid for the next week (once) or fortnight(once).

If the MetroBulletin receives at least 20 or more businesses willing to participate in such a program, the MetroBulletin will initiate to the various parking businesses in the core an inquiry seeking their co-operation.

An example of the type of card that could be given out with a certain minimum purchase: (City Lights is used because your Editor is proprietor)

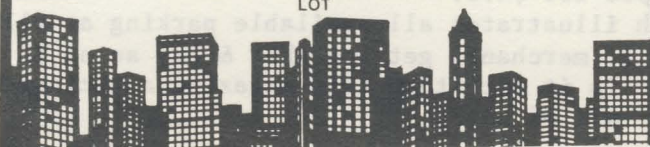
**"THE PARKING
PROBLEM IS
SIMPLY A LACK
OF PROMOTION"**

CITY LIGHTS BOOKSHOP



**TWO
HOUR**

**FREE FREE FREE FREE
PARKING**
AT ANY DOWNTOWN PARKING
LOT





The cost of such an offer is approx. \$1.40 (2 hour park) on a minimum \$10 purchase but only a certain percentage will request one. Since other stores will feature the FREE parking promotional card, only the first business visited will incur any expense.

The parking companies would then collect the aggregate total from each business at the end of the month or whatever can be arranged.

Isn't this a great idea? Of course it is.

So please don't let me be the only one expressing any support for it or nothing more can be done.

CALL ME NOW. WRITE. SEND SUGGESTIONS!

What a cushy deal. We do all the work, you just have to say "I like it" & "I'll participate in issuing cards" & presto, you are set. (Oh you lucky person you!)

RANDOM NOTES ON PARKING

While touring the entire core area, we found that at least 20%-25% of all vehicles parked at meters were "time expired" and liable for a \$3 fine (which increases with each 2 weeks that pass). About 1 in 10 of these had tickets on them, so we better pray they don't hire any more meter police for the Central Business District.

Most of the "offenders" were in the "15 minute maximum" and "30 minute maximum" meter areas, and occasionally in the 1 hr. areas.

Definitely these 15 minute meters should be abolished, it could take longer than that just to find someone to give change for a dollar in nickels & dimes (for the meter). They should be made into 30 minute meters, and many 30 minute meters should be made into 1 hr. meters.

An example of under-timed meters that should be changed is the series of meters from Waterloo halfway towards Wellington on Dundas (north side, see map). These are 30 minute maximum meters, yet on the busier side of Dundas north between Wellington & Waterloo, just east of Wellington, the meters are one hour maximum. Considering the time necessary to walk from Dundas & Waterloo to Simpsons and back, 30 minutes to do this and shop is too little.

DID YOU KNOW DEPT.

Did you know that the waiting list for monthly parking at the underground City Hall parking has had some people waiting 7 years now? Yep, that's right, and if you want to get in on the action, it'll be 1992 or 1993 before you get a spot.

Did you know that the burned out building on Dundas near Wellington will probably become a parking lot (albeit temporary) after it is demolished and levelled sometime this month? Razing the hulk of the building will proceed once the building where Dack's does business is secured from collapsing. Apparently without the support of the former building, the east wall of Dack's could collapse. Even secured, I'd hate to see the increase in heating costs for next winter at Dack's with a whole side now exposed.

Did you know that the old YM-YWCA building, almost razed, will probably be a parking lot as well? This is what we hear, so we included it in our parking map.

Did you know your tax dollars (Improvement Levy) are, in part, being used to finance the B.I.A.'s Parking Committee? Call them at 433-1979 and see what they have done lately. Nothing, you find? Your tax dollars at work!

An Interview with the President of Alcor Investments:

'BULLISH ON DOWNTOWN'

The MetroBulletin went to interview Lloyd Bishop, the President of Alcor Investments, to discuss 'rumours' this magazine had heard regarding potential redevelopment of Dundas St. between Clarence & Wellington, by Alcor.

That actual subject took up very little of the two-hour interview, a small portion of which is recorded below.

Alcor Investments also has a major share of City Centre Mall, right beside the unconfirmed area of redevelopment (see pg. for full details).

What was most apparent from our conversation and the ambitions of Alcor was their gung-ho attitude towards downtown investment & development. Their attitude towards the central business district is refreshingly contrary to the mall-paranoia that seems to be attributed to every core area business problem.

Alcor currently has plans for an office-commercial complex on Richmond St. between Hyman & Central, the project received zoning approval last and should proceed sometime in the next 18 months.

The MetroBulletin: Given the economic climate, particularly in the retail & building trade, your company appears quite aggressive.

Why does your company feel so "bullish" about Downtown London & Richmond Row?

LLOYD BISHOP: "I believe & our company believes the core-heartland is in & will experience tremendous renewal.

'Downtown people' are growing in numbers and our company is anticipating a trend towards a return to the core."

The MB: Then the expansions of malls and new developments like Cadillac-Fairview drawing business away from the core doesn't bother you?"

LLOYD BISHOP: "I think Alcor does believe in survival of the fittest. We're not afraid of malls. There will always be winners and losers in economic growth, so a fear of malls for that reason is inadequate.

It's also a self-perpetuating cynicism that is probably used to compensate for an individual businessperson's declining share of the market.

Remarks from businesspeople like 'malls steal my customers' are phrases they like to use when they are worried about their own bottom line rather than an

actual description of the downtown as a whole.

I don't believe malls & the downtown are incompatible."

The MB: "To do the work you do, planning long term projects, you must have a certain vision of the central business district for 1991 or even 2001. What does your company see?

LLOYD BISHOP: "Ten years from now? I think we'll see most downtown growth in office and residential developments.

That will keep the retail component fit. I feel the downtown rejuvenation, if it even needs 'renewal' or the use of those kinds of words, is going to come from increased workers downtown and core area residents.

We're anticipating that. If one is determined to worry about the future, then perhaps we can take the longer view, say 20 or 30 years from now.

The tele-communications events that are going to come to pass are going to revolutionize work, living, communication, and transportation.

Imagine the implications when data need not be delivered, mailed or discussed in person, just hooked up to your phone and sent instantly to its destination. Or tele-video screens in our offices will make an inter-city -or even inter-national- confer-

GROWTH IN THE DOWNTOWN IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS WILL BE IN OFFICE & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

A FEAR OF MALLS...IS A SELF-PERPETUATING CYNICISM...USED TO COMPENSATE FOR AN INDIVIDUAL'S...DECLINING SHARE OF THE MARKET.

ence convenient and instantaneous.

Their information will all be sent instantly and without any physical effort to them, whether leisure or work.

The repercussions to the paper industries (printing, newspapers), mass transit, etc. are vast.

The key here is that this will have a radical impact on a person's need to leave their home if their entertainment, work, information, etc. can all be delivered to their home instantly and cheaply.

With micro-fiche, home computers, pay Tv, etc. we are seeing that first bridge already.

Newspapers will soon be on Tv rather than on paper."

Tele-communications will have a radical impact on a person's need to leave their home

The MB: " That will be interesting to see how pulp & paper companies and newspapers deal with this. In fact, the first newspaper to go Tv will start in August of 1982 in OHIO, on pay Tv. They expect that ultimately this will supercede their paper edition. "

LLOYD BISHOP: " So in the longer view, the downtown will need people who work & live in the core.

I think people enjoy the company of other people and I think the downtown is and will be the place to socialize.

Unlike a suburb, the city centre is a city unto itself. It has everything. And in the future, people will have more time to exploit that."

A discussion of Planning & Zoning (by the City) ensued. " Planning protectionism " at the local level of gov't came up.

LLOYD BISHOP: " Now of course, there will always be businesspeople who cannot adapt to the economic forces; their investments may not be treated 'kindly', but the 'market' has needs.

You shouldn't today convince or legislate circumstances so that people invest in what future consumers won't want or need.

As to regulatory restraints from our company's point of view, we see none. Our applications are always dealt with in what we see as a very reasonable manner."

THE MB: " To our original subject, there is a burned-out building on Dundas near Wellington. Some merchants on the block who are somewhat concerned as to its future mentioned to me that Alcor owns this property. Is this true? "

LLOYD BISHOP: " It pains me to see that building like it is, it really does. But Alcor does not own it. John Whaley does.

If we owned it, it wouldn't be like that. Everything we do is first class. Look at what we've done.."

When asked if the property might be in transit, Mr. Bishop declined comment.

Mr. Bishop stated that Alcor owns only one property on the block; a parking lot behind the TD bank at Well. & Dundas, although the MetroBulletin has found three references of Alcor registration at the registry office and 5 at the assessment office at City Hall.

When asked about this discrepancy between registry office, assessment office and his own statement, Mr. Bishop:

" I assure you, we only have one lot. We do manage another property."

When asked for a comment on a perception the MetroBulletin has gained regarding a possibility of Alcor being interested in a complete block -renewal of Dundas St. between Clarence & Wellington,

Mr. Bishop commented:

" Alcor has a significant share in City Centre Mall, so of course we are evidently interested in the downtown.

But for me to comment on any such financial transactions of such a sensitive nature is impossible."

Everything we do is first class.

THE MetroBulletin acknowledges that the word 'development' has been incorrectly spelled 'developement' throughout this issue. Sorry.

Sir:

Regarding the proposed pedestrian mall between Talbot & Wellington Streets, I would like to introduce my particular reason against it.

My business is on the north side of Dundas St. between Wellington & Waterloo, (across from the Armouries), so I was not one of the merchants whose name appeared on the petition opposing the mall.

Obviously none of the businesses on our side of Dundas will be a direct part of the new look nor will any of the others off Dundas. Yet we are in the core area commercial boundary and as such liable for the special business improvement tax in addition to our regular business tax.

The physical situation of our block in the core area is a precarious one since the proposed rerouting of traffic leaves us in limbo.

Every merchant in the core area realizes that solidarity is a vital element to our survival & success. If our block and others are not to be included in the direct benefits of a pedestrian mall then I suggest we be excluded from the B.I.A. and our special tax rescinded.

Let's eliminate the 'little red hen' syndrome. If all of us help to make the core area viable, all of us, then, should be included in the rewards.

Iris Whitham,
Middle Earth Studios
330-B Dundas St.

(More proof that you can't do business collectively -and fairly.-Ed.)

Sir:

Every shopping plaza in London that is successful has 4-lane streets by them and also high-rise apts..

Downtown London has neither of these. The plazas I refer to are Westmount, White-Oaks, Westown, Huron & High-bury shopping plazas. Not coincidentally, these are the ones that are most successful.

In the past the 'City Fathers' have seen fit to block high-rise development in the downtown for several years.

Years ago there was a group of developers pushing for high-rises downtown. They wanted the appropriate rezoning from Adelaide to the river (around Ridout),

Dundas to Central.

Their proposals were refused, but had the opposite happened, I am sure the downtown would find itself in an entirely different position.

Secondly; I have lived on the Glendale curve for 20 years. To get downtown, especially on Friday night or Saturday, I could expect to spend 1½ hours to get downtown, especially if I got caught in the King/Wellington/ York/ Ridout maze. (1½ hr. - 2 hr. round trip)

So our family invariably goes to White-Oaks or Westmount to get anything: the time it takes me to get there and back is about 1 hour, sometimes less.

You can appreciate that when we are all busy and need, say, a lawn mower belt or a few screws, nails, etc. to finish a job we are doing in the evening or on Saturdays.

Our neighbours, when we gathered recently, shared the same feelings. They just say: "Downtown? Forget it!".

When you drive downtown, it costs some small change for parking, only if you find a meter open. To find a one hour meter, the minimum time reasonable, you'll have to end up walking 4 or 5 blocks.

I think if downtown is to revitalize itself, the roads will have to be 4 lanes leading downtown.

What the city did to Oxford & Wharncliffe should be done to Beaconsfield & Horton. They should be joined and widened. You look at any progressive city and you get downtown by freeways and when you get there they have high rise apts. & office buildings.

Unless the core merchants and 'City Fathers' change the old concept of a conservative small town, we are going to be just that; a lot of conservative small town merchants struggling to make a conservative small town living.

To start, the area bounded by Ridout, the C.P.R. tracks, Adelaide and Dundas should be rezoned high-rise.

This area offers fabulous potential for developers, downtown merchants and the current residents.

This area is an older part of the city with many frame houses, updated with siding in many cases, but basically this is low-priced property now.

Redevelopers' interest in the

area would send up prices, good for current residents, yet cheaper than other parts of the city, good for developers. The influx of families/population would be good for everyone.

For this area, I am sure most people will gladly sell to developers at these increased prices, maybe up to 75% of the owners.

Will a little farsight, 5 or 15 years down the road, London's downtown could be revitalized commercially and residentially.

Russ Betterley,
66 Main St.,
Komoka, Ontario.
NOL IRO

The taxi fare structure in London could be thrown wide open with no restrictions from city council.

Faced with a recommendation Monday for an increase in city-regulated taxi fares, the environment and transportation committee instead urged city council to get out of the taxi fare business altogether.

"Why does the city set taxi rates?" asked Con. Orlando Zamprognia. "We should get out of the system. It has to be a competitive system."

Zamprognia told the committee he has advocated for years that council not regulate taxi rates but has never been able to convince a majority on council.

Ald. Gary Williams suggested that council set a range of rates within

which taxi owners could choose their own fares, but soon agreed with Zamprognia that council should take its hands off completely.

Police Insp. John Robinson advised the committee that unrestricted fares could drive some cabs out of business if they could not compete with lower fares offered by other taxi owners. He said visitors to London would be unaware what companies offered the best rates. There are about 242 cabs operating in London.

Committee vice-chairman Ald. Jim Tiller said in an interview he is not aware of any major Canadian city which does not set either a specific rate or a range of rates. "It's an all-or-nothing recommendation."

If city council does not accept the

DOES COUNCIL READ THE METROBULLETIN?
WE SENT SEVERAL COUNCILLORS A COPY.
OUR LAST ISSUE FEATURED AN ARTICLE
TALKING ABOUT THE RESTRICTIONS ON
COMPETITION IN THE LOCAL CAB INDUSTRY,
AND ITS EFFECT ON OUR CONSUMERS.

THREE
WEEKS
LATER
WE SEE
THIS IN
THE JUNE
9th Free
Press.

committee's recommendation next Monday, it will be faced with a motion from the taxi liaison subcommittee for an increase effective Oct. 1. That increase would leave mileage rates unchanged but would raise the initial cost of engaging a taxi to \$1.35 from 85 cents.

The committee's recommendation was a "bombshell" to Frank Saxon, president of the London Taxi Owners Association, who said later he had never seriously thought before about the implications of an unregulated system.

"I'll be calling a meeting (of owners) as soon as possible," Saxon said.

"This has never been proposed before."

Saxon said he opposes deregulation but wants to determine what the association thinks.

"From my own point of view it (deregulation) is ridiculous. It will completely disrupt the industry."

Saxon, who is with U-Need-A-Cab Ltd., said non-regulation would lead to price cutting and prompt drivers and owners to cut corners on the upkeep of their cabs and the amount of their insurance.

"The cars will deteriorate and that will be a real bad move. What sort of assurances are the public going to get?"

Bids to restrict competing businesses

Municipal councils who are being pressured by established businesses to reject prospective competition, Mayor Al Gleeson said Tuesday.

Gleeson told the London development advisory board that he wonders how far councils should go with their "political intrusion" into the business realm.

He said that a recent application for a Roaring Twenties restaurant on Highway 135 near Highway 401 attracted a wave of objectors to a land use committee meeting.

"It was the first time since I have been on council that we have had a number of restaurant owners and operators of every size come down to object."

Gleeson added that those opposing

the Roaring Twenties plan came from as far away as Horton Street. However, the committee recommended the restaurant proposal to council.

"It was an objection to increased competition," said Gleeson, who later noted entry in the restaurant

industry usually is quite easy.

He said it was paradoxical that while people often complain of government meddling in their affairs, government is now being asked to step in to protect their business interests.

The mayor's comments followed a discussion on the shopping mall battle in London. Rather than complain about the number of companies bidding for council and Ontario Municipal Board endorsement of their proposals, it was "better to be in a position of having too many applications for malls than none at all," he said

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LAST WORDS

(THE MAYOR SPEAKS ON THE DOWNTOWN -con'd from page 5).

The MetroBulletin: " Mr. Flitton, the liason to the B.I.A. from Council, is enthused about elections to the Board of Management by the downtown 'members', as are a few other Council members. Its seen as a method to garner grassroots support & involvement.

How do you feel about this possibility? "

THE MAYOR: " I'm not excited about elections to the Board Of Management.

I think they should be given a chance to demonstrate what they can do.

I'd say 4 years would be a fair period for them to prove their worth, then I'd do a review of their performance.

As to their spending of money, I'd say promotion initially makes sense. I have less regard for how their money is spent when it comes to specifics, whether promotion, beautification, or whatever."

The above interview was conducted on Tuesday June 2 by Editor Marc Emery.

MetroBulletin

Correspondence should be mailed to:
P.O. Box 2214, Station A, London,
Ontario, N6A 4E3.

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DELIVER
TO:

CORE AREA SABOTAGE (con'd from pg. 15)
proposed, own a vehicle, then we have an additional 90 cars. The building will be at the corner of 2 main collector streets, Talbot & Central; neither of which currently suffer from overuse.

Most cars will exit the buildings parking between 6.30 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. and return at 3.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.. Assuming all 90 cars return & leave in those given parameters, then we will have a total of one car entering or leaving the lot every 2 minutes. Access to the lot could be made from Talbot or Central, so the extra usage on either will be one car every 4 minutes between 6.30-9.30 a.m., and 3.30 to 6.30 p.m.

15 extra cars per hour qualifies as congestion?

After soaking taxpayers of hundreds of thousands of dollars through planning committees, debates, hearings, delays, & OMB hearings (not to mention the costs of Mr. Blumas), Jack Smugler entered an appeal of the OMB decision to the Ontario Cabinet, who have yet to return their verdict.

The appeal is essentially a technical nature, and from this we can tell that the manouvre is really a further delay tactic, courtesy of the taxpayer.

The entire debate illustrates one point clearly.

" Official Plans " and "zoning bylaws " are impossible to administer and are arbitrary, insecure, and unpredictable designations.

These planning codes are unable to anticipate or allow growth & redevelopment.

The property rights of the current residents are hardly in debate here because no alteration of their individually owned property is taking place.

The access to sabotaging an individual's right to build on his own property is scandalous.

And what of, if we are talking 'rights', the rights of Mr. Blumas?

What about the rights of the majority of property owners who support the development? What about the property rights of the taxpayer who must subsidize this farce?

These dangerous Anti-growth groups currently have enough clout with certain left & left-leaning politicians that our vitality as a commercial core is severely threatened.