November 9, 2012  City Hall Clerks Office
Public Works Committee - for immediate review

RE: Immediate removal of NO PARKING and TOW-AWAY signs between 4-6pm on the NORTH side of King Street West between Caroline Street and Queen Street

Immediate removal of Construction boarded barrier on King STREET, at the SW corner of King St. West at Hess St. Safety barriers may remain on the sidewalk, if necessary.

The unsightly, wooden barriers went up and 16 parking meters were shut down and Tow-away signs posted around November 2011. This severely impacted 27 small businesses, mostly retail and restaurants on the North side of King Street West, whose clients shop after work and eat dinner between 4-6pm. Numerous clients and patrons would receive up to $75.00 in parking fines which have resulted in frustration, permanent lost business and overall decline and avoidance by the public of this charming section of downtown Hamilton. These businesses have suffered both financial and patron losses during all of last year’s Christmas season, throughout all of 2012 and now as we approach the next Christmas season, we feel our patience has reached its reasonable end.

One developer should never be allowed to hold 27 small businesses hostage for such an extended period of time.

It is with passion and conviction that I submit this repeated appeal on behalf of the King West BIA that you direct your immediate efforts to ensure that the perceived safety hazard of “the collapse of the North facing wall onto King Street traffic” is no longer a valid threat. At this point we, the businesses, find that reasoning to be misleading if not entirely false. This safety concern may have been true at the beginning, but now there is active movement of workers and equipment on all floors of this partially completed building every day. Surely the issue of reinforcement and safety would have been addressed as a priority and completed. The roof is already being installed and this construction stage along with interior walls and floors could not have progressed so far if the exterior wall was in danger of falling down onto the street! It is clear that the developer is in no hurry to remove those barriers as they provide additional free, public space from which to stage his construction efforts.

I am resolute that the positive economic impact to Hamilton of the collective BIA businesses is significant and that our concerns to ensure easy access to our entrances and attract more people to this downtown area have been ignored way too long.

Please also recognize that the removal of the parking restriction and removal of the Tow-away signs between 4-6pm can and should be done immediately, regardless of the existence of the barriers across the street. We feel that traffic in this two block section is not subjected to excessive congestion during that time and we thank you for your immediate and prompt attention to this urgent matter.

Respectfully,

Lia Hess Chairman, King West BIA