

Response of the Riverside Park Community and Recreation Association to Request for Comments on Canoe Bay Proposal for Plan of Subdivision, Zoning Amendments and Official Plan Amendment for 3071 Riverside Drive

Introduction

This document was prepared in response to a request for comments regarding the circulated materials for the Plan of Sub-Division, Zoning by-law amendment and Official Plan Amendment on 3071 Riverside Drive.

City of Ottawa File N°: D07-16-17-0011, D02-02-17-0035 & D01-01-17-0008

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These comments represent the views of the Riverside Park Community and Recreation Association (RPCRA) . The RPCRA is a recognized community association representing over 10,000 residents of the Riverside Park area. The association is dedicated to:

- Maintaining and enhancing the quality of life, the environment and the community spirit of Riverside Park
- Promoting the interests of the residents of Riverside Park
- Liaising with local Events and Festivals to promote community values
- Representing the concerns of the residents of Riverside Park to municipal, provincial and federal governments
- Website at: www.riversidepark.ca

The RPCRA did an on line survey between May 10 and May 31, 2017 and received 96 responses from the Riverside Park community representing a diversity of views. The survey results, including many free-form comments, have been shared with River Ward Councillor Riley Brockington and will be sent to the City and Canoe Bay separately. The survey results are available online via the RPCRA website or more directly at : <http://riversidepark.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Bayview-Survey-Results-2017-06-06.pdf>

Our main concerns are prioritized below, and incorporate the views of the community as we perceive them through countless one on one discussions, open meetings of the Association, and the results of our online survey of residents' views.

1. Zoning and Proposed Changes to Official Plan

- The RPCRA is concerned about the apparent proposal to change the zoning of the entire parcel except Area D from institutional to **General Mixed Use “GM”**. We were informed at FEDCO and also included in the RFO that the most intensive component would be R5 (medium density with ancillary uses). The **GM** zoning is very wide ranging and allows multiple uses that would preclude the community and the City as a whole from having any certainty as to what would ultimately be built. The possibility that the entire property might be rezoned to **GM** is very problematic for nearby residents.

R1: Rather than a blanket zoning proposal for the majority of the development, zoning should be proposed separately for each contiguous homogeneous block of land use within the proposed development. The zoning for each block should be the minimum zoning that would permit the uses being currently proposed for that block.

- Changes now being entertained for the Official Plan, specifically its Riverside Park Secondary Plan, are of concern to the RPCRA and for the entire collection of Riverside Park neighbourhoods because they threaten to weaken the Secondary Plan and have not been discussed by the community in that context. The existing Secondary Plan specifically itemizes the allowable areas in Riverside Park where high density is permitted. We believe that the proposed development requires extensive changes to the Riverside Park Secondary Plan.
- While the Official Plan must evolve to keep up with the times, we argue that long term planning principles should not be sacrificed based on the financial goals of a single development.

R2: Any changes to the Riverside Park Secondary Plan that are required in order to enable this development should be discussed and made clear to the stakeholders through a separate, formal, prerequisite process to update the Secondary Plan.

R3: The current proposal describes high density development that is primarily targeted to senior citizens. We are concerned that this purported use could later be changed to general purpose apartments (for example) without requirement for rezoning and an associated land use review process. In this scenario, the size and density of this proposed development carries added risk that the existing character of the neighbourhood would be adversely affected beyond the discussion points . We ask that the City take particular care in the zoning and land use approvals to mitigate against this possible outcome.

2. Density

- The Canoe Bay concept plan presented to FEDCO was a significant deviation from the principles outlined in the 2009 concept plan prepared by the City of Ottawa Planning Department and endorsed by the community and City Council at that time. The current proposal further increases the density of the development beyond the initial Canoe Bay concept plan for instance bungalows to townhouses on the north side and three stories vice two stories along Riverside Drive. In response to community complaints about the sale process, residents were assured that land use issues (such as density and commercial development) would be reviewed through a series of hearings – the City’s standard land use and zoning review processes. The community, is most concerned about the currently proposed density, and the impacts that it implies – traffic, noise, environmental, greenspace ratio, etc.
- The RPCRA is concerned at the number of dwelling units proposed on the site (624) and the impact this type of intense development will have on the surrounding area including pressures on the site itself, traffic and noise. Community consultations dating back to 2009 and approved by Council were to limit development on the Bayview property to Low and Medium density. We have been told the 2009 concept plan was changed after the OCLDC Request For Information process because some prospective bidders indicated that they could not make enough money. We were informed that the losing #2 bid for this property was \$12 million with 400 units and no commercial. That plan would have aligned more closely with the 2009 Council approved and Community endorsed concept plan.
- CMHC provides a guide for Medium Density housing: “Medium-density housing accommodates a range of 30 to 90 units per hectare” ([source CMHC: https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/98132.htm](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/98132.htm)). According to these guidelines, at the top end of 90 dwellings per hectare, this property should max out at 387 dwellings. This plan proposes 624 units, more than 60% over the CMHC upper limit.

R4 - We recommend that the city seek out a clear definition /guide for medium density to allow the community and developer to better understand what medium density should be.

- Additionally, in the City of Ottawa official plan “building and profile compatibility there are provisions regarding the scale and massing of buildings. While it was originally stated in the Canoe Bay concept plan that there would be 2 towers, in this plan there are actually the equivalent of 3-5 connected towers. This “massive structure” (as referred to by the Urban Design Review panel) is high density, not medium density. This will negatively affect the height profile of the community along the Riverside Drive portion as driving from south to north, you go from existing townhouses, to a large 6 story complex and back to proposed town homes and existing single family homes. As a result, there is significant impact to the skyline of the area especially as it sits across from Mooney’s Bay and the Rideau River. The height was to be restricted to 6 stories but with the ventilation and other equipment on top it will actually be 7 stories.
- Views of existing and new residents in the complex are blocked and minimized as the 3 story mixed use commercial cuts off the opportunity for new residents in the back area of the proposed development to see the Mooney’s Bay water body. This does not efficiently use the existing view of the water, and diminishes the view plane that currently exists. The original Canoe Bay concept plan allowed a mixed use area along the Riverside Drive frontage that proposed to accommodate two story construction with small scale Neighbourhood Commercial uses on the ground floor and residential on a second story. This latest proposal calls for 3 stories along Riverside Drive which contradicts the October 24, 2016 report to FEDCO. The City of Ottawa Secondary Plan - Riverside Park 8.4.5 under Site Development states “ensure future development will be compatible in scale and character with existing development” and “to guide the development so that it maintains the quiet, healthy and safe character of the neighbourhood”

R5 - We recommend that the height of these buildings be assessed to conform to the existing community profile and report made to FEDCO.

- Area density in River Ward is increasing as a whole. It is crucial that the planning department look at the overall pressures being placed on the community and not just on a per site basis. For example:
 - Norberry Apartments (Springland) - approx. 200 additional units are proposed.
 - 770 Brookfield – approx. 500 units were envisioned in a recent proposal
 - 3071 Riverside Drive – approx. 624 units
 - Youth Services Bureau Ottawa- 39 units at 2887 Riverside Drive

3. Commercial

- The developer should articulate more fully the business case for the commercial component of this development. There is an existing commercial space on neighbouring properties which is under utilized. Additionally, the traffic, noise and fluctuation of activity during business hours were not part of the intended vision of the community for this site. Issues of delivery, garbage collection, safety, crime, loitering and pollution were raised by residents regarding adding commercial to this site.

R6 - We recommend that the developers clearly articulate the business plan for this proposed commercial development as part of their development plan.

4. Daycare

- There are currently 5 daycare centres within a 3 km radius of the site. While the addition of a daycare would complement the area in general, it is not clear if it would be filling a need and may not conform to the stated purpose of the site for seniors living. The traffic study notes the extra

pressure that would be placed on Riverside Drive, Springland and Walkley and indicates that traffic laws may be ignored to access the daycare by employees placing increased pressure on neighbourhood streets.

- The proposed location of the daycare is questioned, it seems to be an ad hoc afterthought and not well thought out. Perhaps the location of a daycare if built could be shifted to the basement of one of the Retirement buildings or in one of the commercial spaces along Riverside Dr. The proposed location interrupts the connectivity from the east side of the development on Springland towards Mooney's Bay beach and connected bike paths. Also, what would happen if the daycare goes bankrupt or closes? This has already happened to two daycares in this area, St Elias and the Montessori school.
- The RPCRA believes that users of the daycare would have similar habits and would increase peak traffic congestion on site and on the surrounding streets of Walkley, Springland, Mooney's Bay Place and Ridgewood. It is not clear how many spaces would be open for this daycare, however given the proposed site plan and an estimate of 50 child spaces - that could mean 50 other singular vehicles that would need to access the site during peak rush hour times.

R7 - We recommend that the Daycare component be reviewed in light of these concerns and that further details and information be provided.

5. General Comments

- The Environmental report indicates that there is a significant water body, however that there is no area of "Natural Significance". The RPCRA disagrees with this analysis given that there are many ecosystems and riparian zones along the Rideau waterway that could be affected if water runoff and drainage is not managed on the site (during and after construction). The geotechnical survey identifies the need to pump out water during excavation as the current proposal looks to build below the water table. There also needs to be sufficient attention to where this water will flow and how properties around the site will be affected.
- The plan does call for 200 bicycle spots to be included in the retirement / senior's development underground complex only. In order to be connected and truly bike accessible this proposal should allow for members of the public to also have bike available spaces.
- Handicapped spaces are not accounted for in this development. This is a crucial element that is not discussed, however is crucial as this is a targeted senior's development. Currently parking spots are allotted a 5.2m in length and 2.6m in width.
- During construction there will be significant changes to the site. The city will need to ensure the rights of home owners bordering to have all environmental issues mitigated / dealt with (dust and noise), as well as changes to their properties (for example: changes to drainage patterns as a result of the hill being excavated). Also noise on weekends would be an issue and start times need to be addressed.
- The RPCRA also feels that the baseline growth rate of 1% in communities south of the site is underestimated. Increased population growth south of Hunt Club is scheduled to continue under the City of Ottawa official plan well into 2020. Further consideration of the increased traffic on Riverside Drive needs to be included in this analysis especially as there is also continued pressure on our streets during special events and weekends

- Town homes vs. Bungalows – throughout the documents and technical reports bungalows are referenced on the north part of the site in Block 1 and 2. However the draft plan of subdivision notes it as townhouses. This needs to be clarified.
- While designs of buildings C, D, and E are provided there still needs to be information provided on the design of other structures including the daycare, town homes/bungalows.
- Given that this is a senior design living area, what considerations are being implemented to account for disabled and aged individuals? This should voluntarily be articulated by the developer and presented as part of their plans
- Are there any plans to use new section 37 guidelines for zoning By Law amendment for Bayview?

R8 - We recommend that these 9 issues (general comments) be researched and formally addressed to residents.