

Swanston, Denise

From: Emily Aspinwall s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 3:28 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Rezoning Application for 815-825 Commercial Drive

Hi,

I live next door to this development, in the s.22(1) Personal and Confidential building and I have a few concerns to express.

I support the construction of more affordable rental housing across the city and in the neighbourhood. My challenge in supporting this development is as follows:

- The replacement of more affordable rental stock with rentals that are out of most lower (and middle) income people's range. The prices listed below are far higher than many people can afford. This is an ongoing trend of people are being priced out of the Grandview Woodlands (and other) neighbourhood(s). This causes stressful dislocation and for people to be removed from familiar and connected support systems and services. Where will people live?
- This type of development contributes to the ongoing process of gentrification. Perhaps this one building alone might be ok, but what does it mean for property speculation and development in the coming years? What kinds of pressure will it put on buildings such as Alma Blackwell and other surrounding housing (further contributing to the ongoing affordability crisis)? In addition, if it is anything like other new developments around, the stores that will go in the main floor will be not accessible, either in cost or feel, to the lower income people in the neighbourhood.
- The spot re-zoning to 6 stories for this building concerns me. It will tower over our building, change the feel of the neighbourhood and will set a precedent for other developers to do the same, creating incentive for more gentrification and loss of affordable housing.
- Developers continue to make money off these types of development at the expense of those of us who live in the neighbourhood. This inequity creates despair and cynicism in the system, creating much greater problems.

Please consider the people who live in this neighbourhood and the long-term viability of affordability when considering this proposal. You are the City and have the power to decide how our neighbourhoods will move forward. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your consideration of my input.

~Emily Aspinwall

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Swanston, Denise

From: Michele Valiquette s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 5:16 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Turn Down the Application for Re-Zoning at Adanac and Commercial

February 9, 2019

Dear Mayor and Members of Council,

Re: Application to rezone 815-825 Commercial Drive and 1680 Adanac from RM-4N District to CD-1 District to permit the development of a six-story mixed-use building (FSR 2.96), with 48 for-profit rental units

I submit the following comments to the February 12 public hearing on the rezoning application cited above.

I live s.22(1) Personal and Confidential of the block from the proposed development. I've lived here for 27 years. I support thoughtful change in my community and what the new Grandview Woodland area plan describes as "gentle densification." In certain circumstances, it may well make sense to vary zoning to allow more intense development. That said, I think that we have a duty to take care with such exceptions, to hold them to a high standard and to ensure that they are in the best interests of the broader community.

To learn more about the current development proposal, I attended the open house held at the Aboriginal Friendship Society in April; I read the Planning Department's report on the project, and I engaged in many conversations with my neighbours. And I have to say, I've come to the conclusion that the proposed development is not a good fit for our community. In short, I have concerns about the affordability of the units, the overall aesthetics and quality of the project, and the impact it will have on local infrastructure. I think we can and must do better,

I urge you to turn down the application before you to rezone 815-825 Commercial and 1680 Adanac. My reasons follow:

1. Regarding affordability: Both the developer and the planning department base their rationale for this project on the 38 for-profit, secured rental units and their supposed affordability. There is no doubt whatever that this city and this neighbourhood are in critical need of affordable rental housing. And it is also true that the for-profit rental housing which the project proposes technically qualifies as "affordable" under the City's Rental Incentive Guidelines. However, while the City may have policy may define rents in the proposed development as affordable – (\$1496 for a studio apartment, \$1730 for a one-bedroom suite, \$2505 for a two bedroom, \$3365 for a three bedroom) that certainly doesn't make them affordable in the real world. In fact, these rents beg the question, affordable for whom?

Fortunately, research can help answer that question. According to the Housing Income Limits developed by BC Housing (based on housing as 30% of income), in order to pay rent of \$1450 a household would need an annual income of \$58,000, while rent of \$1700 would require household income of \$68,000. In other words, the rental housing provided by this development would in all likelihood ***not be affordable for many of the***

people who have traditionally lived in this neighbourhood: students, single parents, young working people, pensioners...

This isn't acceptable. We can do – and have done – better. For alternatives I would suggest looking to the three examples of pre-existing truly affordable housing that in the two blocks immediately next door to the proposed development: housing for single parents, a First Nations Housing Co-op, and a social housing initiative for people on disabilities).

As I see it, a major problem facing is the policy regarding affordability set by the last council. Perhaps one way out of this would be to defer the present application pending a much-needed review and revision of the policy to bring it in line with actual incomes.

Because their project falls within city definitions of affordability, the developer is also asking to waive Development Cost Levies. They won't be providing a single any public amenities, no contributions to our very humble and heavily used children's park (on the next corner west), no public art, not a single bench... Really????

2. Overall Aesthetics and Quality of the Project: Surely the development we make exceptions for ought to be exceptional. In terms of aesthetics and quality the proposed building has very little to recommend it. To be blunt, the development is big, boxy and bland. It would present a blank, four foot wall to Adanac, a parkade entrance to the lane. There's nothing to distinguish it. To put the building in perspective, one could look again to the neighbour. Entre Nous Femmes provides 46 rental units – it is 3 and a half stories high and stretches over approximately 5 city lots. The buildings are set back in both front and back; there are courtyards for residents to gather and children to play. The proposed development covers pretty much every square inch of two relatively narrow city lots.

3. Impact on Local Infrastructure: The developer also proposes that in exchange for supposedly affordable rent, to provide fewer parking spaces than normally required. This will exacerbate an already impossible parking situation in the surrounding area. I also have concerns about the parkade for proposed development which leads out into the laneway on the south side of the building. I live in a coach house further down the laneway and this strikes me as an unsafe situation – the lane is heavily used by both vehicles and pedestrians. The additional traffic, the visibility issues with cars emerging from underground strike as factors that could compromise neighbourhood safety.

In sum, it seems that the development currently proposed for the corner of Adanac and Commercial is not a good fit for the neighbourhood. As I said earlier, we can do better. I urge you to turn down this application.

Yours truly,

Michele Valiquette

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