DRAFT v.1.2

March 3, 2024

**Hunt Club Community Association**

**Affordable Housing Committee**

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**Riverwood Park:**

**Proposed Pathway**

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**Board Meeting**

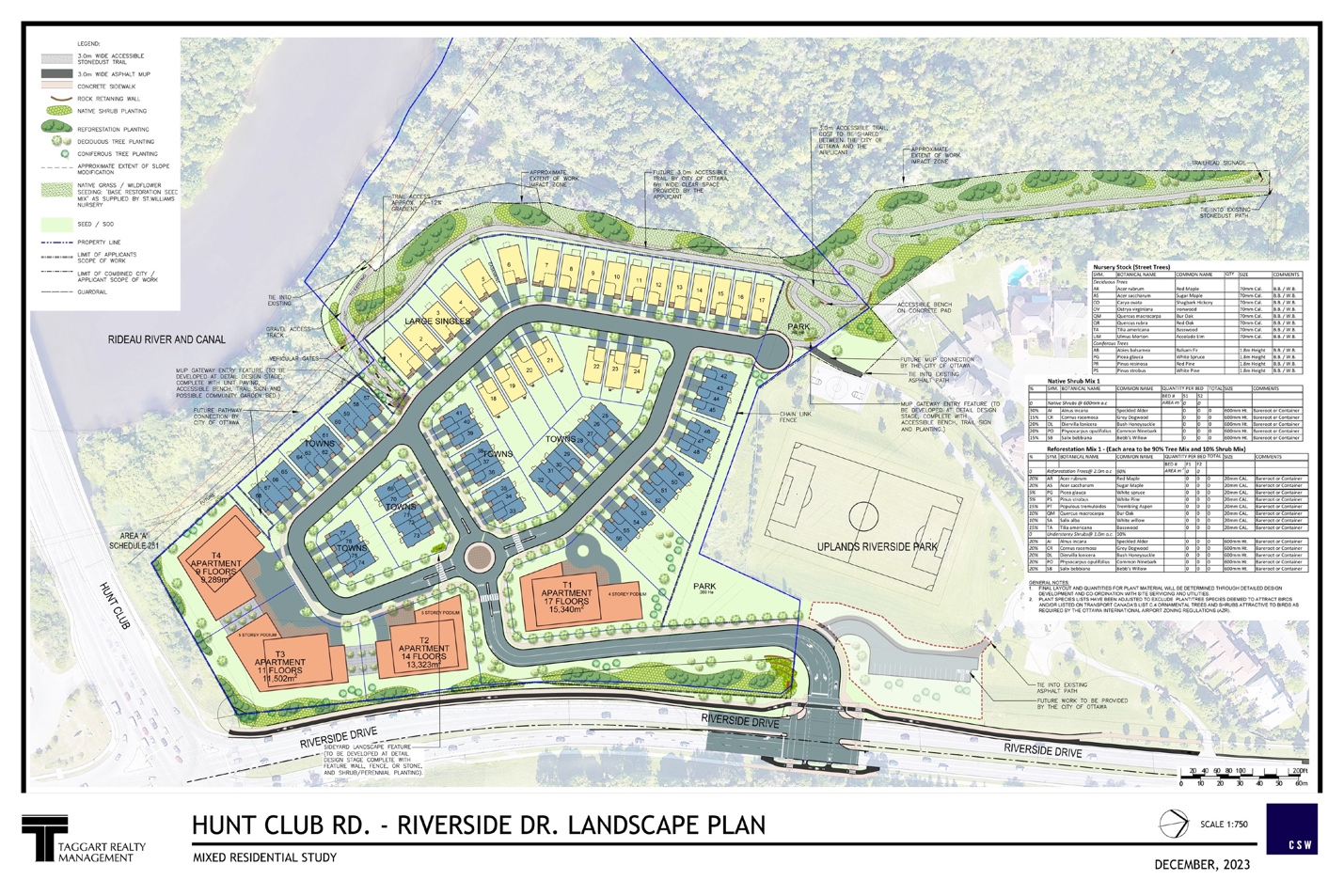
**March 4, 2024**

**Introduction**

* **The HCCA’s Affordable Housing Committee has prepared a discussion paper on the proposed multi-use pathway through Riverwood Park *(circulated separately).***
* **We are requesting the Board’s approval to share this discussion paper with City staff and the developer in order to draw their attention to some key issues.**
* **There is some urgency to this request. The initial design of the proposed pathway is likely to be approved by City staff in the near future.**

**St. Mary’s – Landscape Plan**

* **The Taggart Corporation proposes to build some 600 new homes at the corner of Riverside Drive and Hunt Club Road. This proposal includes a Multi-Use Pathway (MUP) through Riverwood Park.**



**Timelines**

* **In March 2023, the HCCA provided initial comments and questions to the City of Ottawa and the developer. Our focus was on:**
  + **The potential for affordable housing**
  + **The need for improved transportation infrastructure**
  + **Access to retail services**
  + **Active transportation (including the MUP)**
* **In September 2023, the developer responded to these questions. In particular, Taggart provided examples of recent projects which include affordable housing units.**
* **In December 2023, the developer submitted a revised Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and other supporting documents. This study provided valuable information, but raised some key questions about the route of the pathway.**

**Site Visit - Field Naturalists**

* **In February 2024, the HCCA hosted a site visit with experts from the Ottawa Field Naturalists’ Club to examine the proposed route of the pathway.**



**Priority Trees – At Risk**

* **The site visit found several “priority trees” which are in danger of removal (see red circles below).** 

**Butternut**

* **Butternut trees are “endangered” under both provincial and federal legislation. They are in “imminent danger of extinction”.**
* **The developer’s Environmental Impact Study found two Butternuts. One of them (left) is very healthy, but the EIS recommends removing both of them.**

**A tree trunk with a rope around it

Description automatically generated **

**Yellow Birch**

* **There is a Yellow Birch which is over 250 years old. It’s so old that it was mistaken for a “Black Cherry”. Several other old-growth birches are at risk.**

**A person standing in the snow next to a tree

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**Peachleaf Willow**

* **At the edge of the “work impact zone”, there is a Peachleaf Willow which is about 70’ tall. It is a contender for the “champion” tree of its kind in Canada.**

**A tree trunk in the woods

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**Nature Walk – May 2024**

* **As a follow-up to the site visit, the OFNC has agreed to co-host a “Nature Walk” in Riverwood Park in May. Councillor Brockington has offered his help to promote this walk.**

A person standing in the snow with a dog

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**Decision Required**

* **There is support among HCCA members for a multi-use pathway through Riverwood Park, provided that best efforts are made to mitigate the adverse impacts on the park.**
* **Where possible, the route of the pathway and the width of the “work impact zone” should be adjusted to protect the healthy Butternuts, the old-growth Yellow Birches, and the “champion” Peachleaf Willow.**
* **To this end, the Affordable Housing Committee seeks approval to:**
  + **share the discussion paper with City staff and the developer in order to draw their attention to our findings;**
  + **advocate for the protection of “priority trees” at risk of removal, such as the endangered Butternut trees;**
  + **seek further information from City staff about the stewardship of Riverwood Park and report back as required.**