

November 25, 2024

Councillor Riley Brockington
City of Ottawa

Re: Zoning By-law – Community Workshop

Dear Councillor Brockington,

You will recall that, at the September HCCA meeting, you asked for our input on how best to engage local residents with the New Zoning By-law review.

At the HCCA meetings in October and November, we discussed the need for engagement with this important review and explored some possible implications of the new Zoning By-law for the Hunt Club and Riverside Park communities.

As a result, we would suggest the following approach for a public consultation to be held after the second draft of the Zoning By-law is released in early 2025:

1. Drill down to the “community” level.

- Instead of a City-wide or Ward-wide workshop, it would be helpful to have a workshop focussed on zoning changes at the community level.
- In our case, we would recommend a joint workshop for the Hunt Club and Riverside Park communities, which have a lot in common. The two community associations could co-sponsor such a workshop.
- To promote discussion, we would recommend a brief presentation by one or two planners, with as much time as possible for questions and answers.

2. Discuss the City’s vision for the future of Hunt Club and Riverside Park.

- The proposed Zoning By-law implements the vision underlying the new Official Plan, including the goal of a gradual transformation from suburban to more urban neighbourhoods by 2046.
- We would invite City staff to explain how the Official Plan’s vision for the future will be applied specifically to the Hunt Club and Riverside Park communities.
- It would be helpful, for example, if the presenters could walk through the GeoOttawa map from Brookfield Drive to Hunt Club Road and explain the rationale for the major zoning changes.

3. Discuss the transition to the "Minor Corridor" zones.

- It appears that the most significant changes in our area will take place in the Riverside Park community, along Walkley Road and along Riverside Drive north of the CNR railway bridge.
- In these areas, a variety of "Residential First Density" (R1) zones, which are limited to single detached dwellings, will be converted to "Minor Corridor" (CM3) zones, which will permit commercial uses and much increased density (including apartments of up to six storeys).
- What impact will these changes have on local residents who live near these zones? In particular, how will the new commercial and residential uses affect traffic flows? We anticipate a lively discussion of the new Minor Corridor zones.

4. Discuss the transition to the "Neighbourhood" zones.

- Most of the low-rise areas in our community will transition from "Residential" to "Neighbourhood" zones.
- The most important changes for these areas will be the new provisions enabling a minimum of four units per lot and setting density targets for Neighbourhood zones.
- Other changes in these areas will involve new rules for setbacks, driveways, etc.
- It will be important to explore the impact of these zoning changes on residents of the proposed Neighbourhood zones in both the short and long term.

5. Clarify the purpose of the "Evolving Neighbourhood" overlay.

- Some zones are subject to an "Evolving Neighbourhood Overlay" in the Official Plan; these are areas "*where substantial increases of density are planned and where building form and massing is anticipated to change significantly from existing context*".
- In the proposed Zoning Map for Hunt Club and Riverside Park, most of the areas marked with this overlay are CM3 zones located along the Riverside and Walkley corridors.
- Other areas which are subject to this overlay include N3D zones in the Revelstoke neighbourhood and N4C zones for several high-density residential complexes:
 - Brookfield and Flannery (Ramsgate, Confederation Private),
 - Walkley and McCarthy (Provost Drive, Garwood Avenue), and
 - Cahill Drive (between Uplands and McCarthy).
- There is, however, no definition of this overlay in the proposed Zoning By-law and the criteria for applying this "Evolving" overlay in specific neighbourhoods are not available.
- In practice, it appears that the zoning for selected properties near transit stations and corridors will be boosted by one level (e.g. from N2 to N3).

6. Discuss the protection of green space.

- We applaud the fact that the new By-law will modernize the zoning for the open spaces in the Southern Corridor to the west of McCarthy Woods and to the north of Plante Drive (where the current "Light Industrial" zones will be changed to "Greenspace").
- At the same time, some NCC-owned land in the Southern Corridor is zoned as "Recreational", "Open Space", or "Development Reserve"¹. There are currently no indications that the NCC intends to release these lands for development, but there is no guarantee that it will not do so in future.
- We note, for example, that the NCC's lands between Merivale Road and Woodroffe Avenue, which are zoned as "Institutional", have recently been made available by the Canada Public Land Bank for residential development².

7. Use detailed maps and examples to illustrate the changes.

- The City's interactive zoning map is an excellent tool for identifying the "before" and "after" zones for specific addresses.
- It would be helpful, however, if the Zoning By-law team could prepare custom maps of the Hunt Club and Riverside Park communities for discussion purposes.
- The City's 3D Digital Twin, for example, could be used to help us visualize the impact of these zoning changes on our communities.
- In addition, it would be helpful to provide side-by-side comparisons of selected zones (e.g. R1K vs. N2E) with respect to building height, setbacks, parking spaces, numbers of units, etc.

We would welcome your views on these suggestions. Please let us know how we can best help to promote engagement with the New Zoning By-law review.

Sincerely,

Audrey Bélanger
President, Hunt Club Community Association

c.c. Dave Coyle, President, Riverside Park Community Association
c.c. HCCA Affordable Housing Committee

¹ <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=9cbdc85acfc643ec91adf10471e5f999>

² <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/services/infrastructure-buildings/public-lands-homes/bank-mapping-tool.html>