

October 16, 2019

Calgary Planning Commission
The City of Calgary

Dear Members of the Calgary Planning Commission:

**October 17, 2019 Agenda
Planning Item 7.2.1 Policy Amendment and Land Use Amendment in Hillhurst (Ward 7) at multiple properties, LOC2019-0058, CPC2019-1293**

This letter is in response to the late letter dated October 15, 2019 forwarded by the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association ("HSCA") planning committee regarding the Ocgrow Kensington submission. The following comments help clarify the context of the concerns raised. We are providing this response document late in the process additional to administration's measured and appropriate review. We have added the "What We Heard" report prepared in April 2019 as a context document.

Process. The application has carefully followed the prescribed process for amending the ARP and the zoning for the site. The scope has been deliberately limited to the specific site. This proposal is a risk with the goal of being catalytic, but even as a standalone proposal it will greatly improve 14th Street. Due to these risks, a protracted process has been selected that first seeks assurances of density and height prior to DP submission. A broader study of 14th Street would be welcomed and could benefit future proposals, but the restrictive and out-of-date ARP on 14th Street has been preventing development. It is hoped that this proposal will set the stage for other improvements to be forthcoming on this important street. The applicant has been proactive in being early to engage the HSCA, prior to open houses and plan submissions. The community has expressed how much they appreciated being their first point of contact. This has resulted in the community being involved in deliberations for the past nine months starting with communication in February 2019 leading to a first presentation on March 14, 2019. This was followed up with the HSCA-recommended process of numerous engagement steps starting with the open house and numerous other working sessions with concerted efforts to listen and respond. The listening to community concerns has resulted in the applicant making numerous revisions including significant reductions in density/ heights, and additional reductions due to significant stepping to reduce shadowing to the 20m height. Attached is the "What We Heard" report where 44 out of 46 responses are positive demonstrating overwhelmingly positive support.

The Community Benefit Package. The applicant has had numerous meetings on this topic alone over the past five months with the community on the process and content of the community benefit package. Numerous options have been discussed and presented with concept drawings and renderings backed up with cost estimates. These were submitted to City administration and guidance was formally provided by The City on items that The City can support. These items include, in addition to public realm enhancements contiguous to the site, enhancements to other adjacent areas on 14th Street with sculpture, paving, benches, lighting, trees and planters, crosswalk enhancements, layby parking, and bus shelters, to name a few. The community has been an integral part of this consultation. The community has not yet responded to the options presented since The City provided guidance in July 2019. The applicant has proposed to further consult with the community on the details of the final amenity package for inclusion in the DP submission. The reference to a plaza on 14th Street has been discussed, but as this parcel of land across the street is privately held by a different owner, the logistics and



costs to achieve such an objective are very complicated, unless The City purchases the land which could then be enhanced by the applicant.

30 Metres. The ask to allow amenity space as part of the mechanical penthouse adds people to an otherwise lifeless structure making it easier for the design of the top of building to be attractive. Given the unfortunate roofscapes on most buildings, this approach—where public amenity enhances the top (versus mechanical only—should be encouraged instead of discouraged). The proposed by-law defines the appropriate restraints needed to mitigate any potential impacts. The reality is that the size of the mechanical penthouse equipment will be much the same with or without the added public space. This requested variance of the existing mechanical penthouse rule fosters the opportunity to create a beautiful form at the top that reflects life and vitality rather than the norm of arbitrary geometric shapes created to shroud mechanical space—without increasing the real building height.

We appreciate the attention and time you have given to this application.

Yours truly,
Riddell Kurczaba
Architecture Engineering Interior Design Ltd.

Brook Melchin, Architect, AAA, MRAIC
Senior Architect

