

Community Association Letter



May 11, 2020

Allan Singh, MPlan
Planner 1 | File Manager
Community Planning North
The City of Calgary

RE: LOC2020-0003 | 818, 822, 826 16th Street NW | Land Use Amendment from R-C2 and R-CG to all R-CG, with Minor ARP Amendment -Comments on Re-Application

Dear Mr. Allan Singh,

The Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee (HSPC) would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above application from CivicWorks and Riverview Custom Homes. Our comments are based on Hillhurst Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP), area context and the preliminary site layout plans provided by the applicant. We have a mix of comments, both supportive and in opposition to certain aspects of the development. HSPC has also tried our best to ensure that neighbours are informed and can provide feedback, however the recent COVID situation has prevented flyer delivery.

Our community has experienced substantial redevelopment in the last 11 years since the Transit Oriented Development policies were adopted by Council; we have successfully welcomed ~1,800 neighbours into Hillhurst Sunnyside since 2009. The subject application represents one of the larger multi-family redevelopments within the lower profile, primarily residential areas of Hillhurst.

This application more than doubles the number of units allowed. **Through the ARP, we believe that additional housing can be accommodated within key areas designated for increased density.** The proposed development reconfigures the three lots, placing 20 units into what was formerly mostly an R-C2 area. The current R-C2/R-CG designations would only allow 12 units– this seems an excessive increase for homeowners that purchased in an R-C2 neighbourhood, especially those adjacent to the South and East. In general, HSCA would like to see that any changes to the ARP/LUB require a minimum of community support.

We would strongly prefer a Concurrent Land Use Redesignation and Development Permit Application to ensure that that the building and site design integrates with the community fabric.

The community supports building to the **current** ARP and land-use designations to increase density; however, these designations have not been fully utilized in our community. Many areas have capacity for increased density under current designations. Opportunistic up-zoning is often very unfair to neighbours who purchased homes in lower density areas.

Proposed Land Use and Hillhurst Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan Amendment

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- M-CG is the generally the designation between 14 St NW and 5A St NW while the eastern and western parts of the community have a lower density R-C2 designation.
 - The subject site is within in the ARP Low Density Conservation area, dedicated to family-oriented housing to ensure a range of housing choices within the community.
- ARP Section 2.3.1 states that *“the intent of the conservation policy is to improve existing neighbourhood quality and character while permitting low profile infill development that is compatible with surrounding dwellings...New development or redevelopment should be designed in a such a way as to be unintrusive and blend with the surrounding housing”*.
- While important policy work is underway with the City of Calgary’s Guidebook for Great Communities, Multi Community Planning and Renewed Land Use Bylaw, it is important to consider this application on its merits and on community engagement as it stands against the current ARP and the current Land Use Bylaw.

Proposed R-CG Designation

- We were advised that the applicant is seeking the R-CG designation to account for a 20-unit “farmhouse style” townhouse development that provides street-facing access and activates the alley in the rear.
 - The proposed front setback appears to line up with the buildings; however the south with the end units need to be appropriately staggered and set further back.
 - We are in support of ground-oriented housing with front porches to activate the street.- Not sure if there is enough room for functional porches.
 - Lot coverage is a challenge due to the proposed density; there is no private amenity space provided and more hard surface to accommodate the internal driveway.
 - Given some of the challenges with adding 20 units where there are currently three single-detached dwellings, increased density can be achieved within the current Land Use Designation for the three parcels (e.g., duplex + duplex + 4plex) with associated secondary suites.
- We would like assurance that the development does not exceed 3 storeys. The R-CG land use allows for up to 9m buildings; the applicant has not indicated that the proposed development has a maximum height of 9m. A Concurrent Submission is preferable. Few details on the design were provided.

Site Layout and Circulation

- There are concerns about the internal driveway, its sharp turn from the alley and concerns about snow removal off the site, and emergency access to the dead-end parking access.
- The proposed Molok underground storage waste bins are a positive consideration; however, HSCA is not certain about the proposed location.

Parking

- Parking appears to be the #1 concern from neighbours. While we understand from the applicant that ground-floor garage parking has been provided for the main individual units, we note that this area is a parking permit-controlled area.
 - While most of Sunnyside-Hillhurst is very accessible via transit the HSCA and the community understands that rarely means that residents will not own a vehicle, or two.
 - Only one spot is provided for each main unit and the basement units have no parking whatsoever.

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- Neighbours pointed out the parking challenges in the area as a result of the existing condos to the north, 14 Street NW commercial/retail, seniors' residence and medical uses and the upcoming, large-scale Riley Park Health Centre (former Grace Hospital site) redevelopment.
- There is only one visitor parking stall provided onsite. Visitor parking is challenging due to the constraints on 8th Avenue where there is a fire hydrant and bus stop.
- We request that the following ARP policy be enforced by City of Calgary Roads/Calgary Parking Authority and have policy written into the Direct Control bylaw to ensure compliance:
"Dwellings in new multifamily developments are not to receive parking passes regardless of their off-street parking provisions" (Section 3.4.3).

Social & Environmental Considerations

- Hillhurst Sunnyside is proud of its sociodemographic diversity. The ARP envisions a range of housing types including affordable housing and dwellings for families to support local infrastructure and inner city schools
- The ARP promotes sustainability. We would like to encourage that the existing buildings be repurposed or that the applicant host salvaging opportunities for building materials.

Community Engagement

- The applicant, CivicWorks, previously engaged the community for their first application, however they have not engaged the community for their second application at the site. The HSCA has had success during the period of COVID with online community sessions and would appreciate any effort to reach out to the community.
- Riverview reached out to the HSCA in fall 2019. The applicant was advised to speak with affected neighbours. We also stressed the importance of design and street-friendly design
 - Riverview presented initial concepts at the September 10, 2019 meeting; neighbours attended the meeting to share their feedback and concerns.
- CivicWorks reached out to the HSCA to book a presentation at the January 14, 2020 meeting.
 - We were informed that a sign was posted on the site and letters were dropped off at adjacent neighbours' homes to advise them to attend the meeting, while 125 postcards were delivered to homes in the area.
 - Neighbours (those who received postcards only) expressed that they would have liked more notice of the planning application. Those neighbours were not invited to attend the January 14th planning committee meeting and requested that an open house from the developer so that they can get more informed and ask questions.
 - The Cedarbrae Gardens condo complex to the north of the site was not notified via the applicant. A concerned neighbour provided HSCA with the condo board's contact information; we forwarded a copy of the application and invited comments from the condo board and residents.
- HSCA volunteers delivered 130 informational flyers to the immediate area to invite residents to provide direct comments to the City of Calgary File Manager copying the HSCA Planning Committee, the Ward 7 office and to the applicant.
 - We would defer to neighbours on site-specific concerns and trust that their feedback is factored into the review process.

Please keep us apprised as this application progresses.

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Sincerely,

Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee
Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association

cc: Matt Crowley, Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee Chair
Mark Beckman, Lorna Cordeiro, Andrew Hoskin, Kathleen Kenney, Bob McKercher, Glenn
Wierza, Infill Subcommittee Members, HSPC
Lisa Chong, Community Planning & Engagement Coordinator, HSCA
Boris Karn, Urban Planner, CivicWorks, Applicant
Circulation Control, Planning and Development
Dale Calkins, Senior Policy & Planning Advisor, Ward 7 Councillor's office