

Community Association Letter

File Number: LOC2020-0042 & DP2020-1959
Response Date: July 9, 2020

The WHCA Planning Committee (“WHPC”) has reviewed the revised applications noted above, in which the applicant is now seeking a land use re-designation from R-C2 to R-CG (previously, M-CG d82), along with a concurrent development permit application for the construction of a triplex (previously, a 4-plex) at 1902 2 Ave NW. **Note that the comments below are in addition to the previous comments submitted by the WHPC to the City on April 24, 2020.**

As stated previously, the WHPC is supportive of developments which are seen to have broad community support by way of them contributing positively to the community’s public realm either through (i) direct public realm improvements, or (ii) indirect positive effects. While the proposed amendments are an improvement to the original applications, the WHPC maintains its view that there are neither direct nor indirect public realm benefits from the proposed development.

Of particular concern is the detrimental impact on the pedestrian realm along 2 Ave and 18 St, which is a major pedestrian thoroughfare to a school, park, and playground. The proposed development would still require three driveway curb cuts, which is excessive and especially hazardous given the high volume of pedestrian traffic along this corridor.

This stretch of 2 Ave has already been impacted negatively by new development. Last year, the City approved a single detached home on a larger lot directly south of the applicant site with three garages all fronting 2 Ave, despite that lot having a rear laneway. The WHPC had expressed strong opposition to the driveway orientation on February 21, 2019 (DP2019-0360) and was disappointed that the City approved the application nonetheless.

If this proposed development at 1902 2 Ave NW were to proceed, there would be no possibility for pedestrians to walk down this section of 2 Ave, on either the north or south side, without having to navigate around multiple curb cuts. This is in direct contravention of the City’s mobility hierarchy, 2016 Pedestrian Strategy, and the 5A Network Guiding Principles (“5A Principles”) for walking and wheeling infrastructure approved by City Council earlier this year on January 13, 2020. The 5A Principles specifically mention having smoother surfaces for pathways as a desired goal in order to facilitate accessibility and safety for people of all ages and physical abilities.

Combined with the significant site-specific limitations described in detail in the April 24 comments, the WHPC continues to **strongly oppose** the land use re-designation of the 1902 2 Ave NW land parcel along with the accompanying development permit application. Given that the site is an undersized interior community lot lacking laneway access, development permitted under the current R-C2 zoning would be much more appropriate. For example, there have been semi-detached developments recently approved within the community on other R-C2 lots with similar characteristics.

With respect to where appropriate growth and densification might be targeted within the community, the WHPC looks forward to meaningful engagement and discussions with the City on the formation of the Riley Communities Local Growth Plan. The WHPC is committed to helping develop a strategic, mindful vision for growth which both addresses the interests of the community at large and the long-term objectives of the City.