

Calgary Planning Commission Member Comments



For CPC2021-0421 / LOC2019-0100
heard at Calgary Planning Commission
Meeting 2021 April 22



Member	Reasons for Decision or Comments
<p>Commissioner Sonego</p>	<p>Reasons for supporting Administration’s recommendation of Refusal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are so few locations in our city that have a consistent streetwall and a “main street” character. These areas are precious. They are valued by local residents, visitors from other communities, and tourists to the city, and modern planning principles would suggest these areas need to be protected and even enhanced over time. Significant public investment has already been made to support the vision of 17 Avenue SW as a “main street” destination in the city, and the use of “drive-through,” specifically with an entrance/exit from 17 Avenue SW, runs contrary to the pedestrian-oriented “main street” vision. • It is acknowledged that the existing situation is problematic and has led to issues of social disorder. However, approving the use of “drive-through” with access to and from 17 Avenue SW in this particular location could result in the use existing on the site in perpetuity, even as consumer and mobility preferences change over time. There are so many locations in the city, and even in the general vicinity of the subject site, for which a drive-through could be considered appropriate. As cities around the world (including in Canada) are in the process of removing vehicle infrastructure from their main streets to allow for enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities, it could be considered regressive to allow for a drive-through in this strategic location. The focus for this portion of 17 Avenue SW needs to be on the future, not on the current situation.
<p>Commissioner Scott</p>	<p>Reasons for opposition to Administration’s recommendation of Refusal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not support the Recommendation from Administration and supported the failed motion to file the Recommendation for the reasons outlined below. I fully appreciate and sympathize with the position of Administration from a broader policy perspective and respect the goals and objectives of the Main Street and Beltline ARP with respect to 17th Avenue as a whole. However, in this case the reality of the existing undesirable situation from a behavioural, overall site condition and transportation / pedestrian conflict perspective warrants an evaluation that is based on current reality and acknowledges a

	<p>need for flexibility and practicality while delivering as good an outcome as possible given the circumstances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Applicant and Administration were asked to re-evaluate the proposed DC bylaw and amendments to the Beltline ARP to provide additional guidance to deliver as best an outcome as possible for the redevelopment of this site, and the resulting redesignation and policy amendments accomplish this, recognizing improvements are necessary to the site and use to improved operational conditions and the street edge condition.• The proposed bylaw and policy amendments will result in a building position and operational model that creates an improved street edge condition and far superior design quality over the existing use in its present form.• The retained driveway crossing on 17th Avenue – while not ideal – will be improved from the existing condition by reducing queuing and backed-up traffic across the sidewalk and onto 17th Avenue. Direction is provided to the Applicant to improve the driveway condition and street edge with various treatments and enhancements that will significantly improve the existing pedestrian / vehicle interaction condition and overall pedestrian experience at this location.• Right in/right out access on 17th Avenue is preferable to forcing all vehicle traffic to use 16th Avenue to access the site for parking and drive-through given the residential interface on 16th Avenue, and future opportunity to extend traffic calming and pedestrianization of 16th Avenue west of 9th Street.• The current and likely long-term reality is that this segment of 17th Avenue as it approaches the 14th Street arterial requires efficient traffic flow to manage congestion for cars and transit and improving the driveway access and queuing condition would be a benefit.• Proceeding with the redesignation and policy amendments facilitates a much-improved outcome over the Applicant/owner's currently available option of renovation of the existing building and retention of the existing drive through condition.• On balance, allowing the applicant to refresh the site and incorporate pedestrian-scaled design elements that improve the pedestrian experience as much as possible is a far superior solution to the alternative.
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