Community Association Response

HSCA
Planning Committee

September 1, 2021

Emailed to: matt.rockley@calgary.ca, Evan.goldstrom@calgary.ca

RE: DP2020-6663 | 1110-1126 Gladstone Road NW | DP Amendment Application

Dear Mr. Goldstrom and Mr. Rockley,

The Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee (HSPC) would like to thank you for the opportunity to again comment on the above proposed DP revisions. Many of the comments from our previous letter dated May 31, 2021 still apply, and so a copy is included as an appendix to this letter. Updated comments below reflect those of the planning committee and some directly affected neighbours who live adjacent to the proposed development in response to recent amendments made.

Key suggestion:

- **NW corner be revised to a 3 storey townhouse podium with upper stories stepped back to better interface with the adjacent low density district and heritage homes across the lane. This is likely to be appealed by neighbours if unable to be addressed as there seems to be different interpretations in application of statutory ARP policy in this location, which was discussed as well at the Council hearing on the land use.**

Further comments on proposed revisions:

Amended building height and stepbacks at 5th and 6th floor to match Council direction during the land use

- This site was originally allocated a maximum 26 metre height on the east side and a maximum 16 metre height on the west side. The design could reflect this intent and the interfaces could be more sensitively integrated with adjacent lower density development.
- Include a sympathetic interface including setbacks/ stepbacks with immediately adjacent parcels to the west which are not part of the development and are currently M-CG - although at present have small homes on them (the massing model shown by the applicant on these lots is not built or proposed).

Revised sculptural piece on east side of building

- Add fenestration, more articulation with materials or **ideally a mural** on East wall of the main building above the historic church. This wall is very visible from the east side, main street and currently presents as blank, increasing the feel of massing over the church despite the sculptural piece added on the lower portion.

Additional suggestions for improvement:

- Improvements to the pedestrian interface of the at-grade units by including large, useable sized patios oriented to the main street with adequate landscaping to promote eyes on the street.
- Ensure substantial pedestrian-scale lighting along the street interface, not just interior to the courtyards. Consider CTPED principles for lighting around the building including laneway.
- High quality materials with low maintenance, longevity should be used.
- Consider the longevity of the courtyard spaces– will plants grow and be able to sustain long term? Will playground be used?
- If rollout bins are being used in waste and recycling can exterior screening or storage be aesthetically implemented?

Community updates requested:

- Could more information about the church restoration be provided to the community? Could we see more detailed plans for the plaza east of the church? This will be an essential public space.
- Ideally the City's EAGCS, Community and applicant can collaborate on traffic calming and mobility improvements attached to this development including Gladstone Road bumpouts proposed. Offsite traffic improvements that offset the impacts of adding more vehicles to this location are appropriate.
- Calgary Parking Authority must ensure no on-street parking permits are given to residents of this building as per ARP "*Dwellings in new multifamily developments are not to receive parking passes regardless of their off-street parking provisions*" (Section 3.4.3).
- How will the project contribute to the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Amenity Fund (HSCAF) or other urban design improvement?
- The developer needs to communicate directly with neighbours on 5th Ave about moving the power poles – this will significantly impact neighbours. Burying the lines is the desired outcome or having the applicant adjust their development to accommodate this factor on their site.
- How will pedestrians move safely in the laneway? Will there be sidewalks in the rear of the building as well? How will the pedestrian environment (separated from vehicles) be considered for at grade units in the lane?
- Drawings indicate the paving of the laneway will only be 15 m to the north past the T intersection. The entire lane to the west of the building should be paved.

Please let us know should you need any clarification on our comments.

Sincerely,

Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee
Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association

cc: Elicia Cantafio, Chair, Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee, HSCA
Ben van den Berg, Lorna Cordeiro, HSPC Executive Members
Ali McMillan, Community Planning & Engagement Coordinator, HSCA
Dale Calkins, Senior Policy & Planning Advisor, Ward 7 Councillor's Office
City of Calgary Circulation Control

Appendix I: Addendum Comments

May 31, 2021

RE: Updated Comments on Amended Plans

Dear Mr. Evan Goldstrom,

The Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee and community members would like to offer our thanks to you and the Applicant's group for your time and providing updates on **DP2020-6663** at the May 12, 2021, virtual community association meeting. We have summarized the HSPC and neighbours' comments below:

General

- There appears to be very few modifications from the original design and as such, does not address the DTR and Planning Committee suggestions regarding step downs and setbacks, softening the interface, 2-3 storey townhome design at the laneway, set back from Gladstone Road, etc.
    - The modification of a setback on the 6th floor does not keep with the suggestions from the City DTR and HSPC's letter. This is insufficient in terms of developing a building that is keeping in line with the village-feel and human-scale of the community.
    - The setback has to occur at 12m; the plans show it occurring at 15m.
    - The interface between the building and low lying residential needs to be softened as per the City's DTR and the HSPC's suggestions. As suggested, townhouses or live/work can be accommodated as is precedent at the Kensington building on 10th Street and 2nd Avenue.
- The original ARP and the prior application and ARP amendment only included a maximum height of 16 metres (or 4-5 storeys) and a FAR of 2.5
    - While the current application proposes a blended height and FAR, it is important to understand that the ARP went through a careful 3-year review from 2006-2009 which weighed the potential impacts of Transit Oriented Development.
    - Significant community consultations resulted in the current ARP maximums to ensure sensitive transition from the community Main Streets to the lower density residences to the west. This context has not been demonstrated with the current proposed development.

Hillhurst Baptist Church Building

- The current state of the former LifeSport/Hillhurst Baptist Church has been neglected as the building has been deteriorating for some time, even before Land Use interests began in 2018.
    - Some of the Character Defining Elements that have were defined in the Statement of Significance on the Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources have been in disrepair and particularly where the eaves and landscaping have impacted the exterior cladding.
    - We have reached out to City of Calgary Heritage Planning for more information and learned the Land Use Application is tied to a designation agreement being executed.

  - We would like to reiterate Recommendation #4 in our first letter, which describes the process on the prior Land Use Designation (LOC2018-0114) to ensure that restoration and historic resource designation must occur for the application to receive full Council approval.
  - More detail is needed to articulate the Heritage Values ascribed to the site: Style, Landmark and Symbolic.
- We welcome the proposed daycare use of the building as childcare services are in great demand in the community and constitutes a community-serving use for the building.
  - While the "Child Care Service" use is not a mandated use for the future of the building, we can suggest that the DC includes the "Child Care Service" definition is moved from the list of "discretionary uses" to "permitted uses" in the proposed M-U1 District for the Land Use Amendment application.

Heritage Considerations

- The community has a unique vision for the site through the preservation, restoration, and designation of the historic Church building. However, we are challenged with developing the site responsibly while respecting the DTR feedback and ARP policy.
- We strongly agree with the neighbours that the preservation of the Church has to be balanced against the living heritage on 11th Street, and the preservation of the Church building should not be leveraged against the heritage of the low-lying residential community.
- The current Church building represents one of the last wooden churches in Calgary and thus, occupies a significant chapter of the history of our city. At the same time, we have not heard significant public engagement that supports the justification of increasing the height and massing of the proposed building so that the air rights from redeveloping the Church are shifted to the west, where there are currently heritage residences that have been meticulously maintained and loved by the current residents.

Community Context

- The plan update included initial plan renderings from the adjacent owner of the remnant parcels to the west of the proposed development site. The landowner has had redevelopment plans in the works for many years, which has yet to be realized.
  - We are uncomfortable about basing the proposed plans on a future unapproved 5-storey building (which may or may not ever be built) to the west. The City Planning Department has indicated that their decision is based on current context, and not future context. Additionally, the future building would need to apply for future Land Use & ARP amendments and design approval which it does not yet have.
  - There currently exists a one-storey bungalow on the adjacent lot. Excellent precedents have already been set within the community: the St. John's building as mentioned and the relationship of the Victoria on Fifth/ Kensington on the Park buildings on the north side of 5th Avenue and 10th Street, just north of this development. These buildings have included careful step backs and step downs where they abut bungalows, despite the higher zoning allowances on 5th Avenue
- As discussed at the recent meeting, the rendering is not in keeping with the reality of the surrounding community

- The photo shows an image of how the proposed building would blend into the community; however, the extra space does not exist due to the presence of surrounding buildings. The concept for activating the laneway would be very challenging under the current circumstances.

Laneway

- The laneway modifications needed to support the building have not been planned for. The widening is not possible on the west end as there is an adjacent landowner that has plans for the pie shaped lot.
- The proposal indicates that the lane will only be paved 15m to the north past the "T" in the alley. The entire lane – to the west of the building – should be paved, otherwise it would transition to gravel before connecting with 5th Avenue.
- The drawings do not show how the lane will transition to the 2.9m width between the utility pole and the Thompson Barn on the west side.
- The DTR note, "*Amend the plans to provide additional setback to facilitate a functional width of 7.2m such that two vehicles can pass each other within the lane*" has not been completed. Instead, the plans show a 6.1m wide lane.
- The plans do not indicate how drainage in the lane will be handled (such as underground storm sewers, or only relying on the surface grade) and now to prevent flooding of garages as well as prevent spring runoff from flooding the underground parking garage.
- The drawings show that the utilities will be buried. However, no feasibility work was done to see if there are water or storm drainage lines. Also, the developer was unable to answer how buried utilities would be run to the homes along the lane, which currently get them from above ground poles. There is no room to move them onto west side of west laneway, or to the north side of the north laneway. The applicant has been informed at least a few times about this potential challenge. With a mature Development Plan application, we are highlighting the requisite to address this issue before plan approval.

Traffic Management

- We are supportive of the conversations from the Ward 7 office in support of curb extensions, in conjunction with the construction that is currently happening on the Theodore development on the south side of Gladstone Road.
- We appreciate that the applicant has proposed fewer vehicle parking stalls (from a 1:1 ratio to 0.75 stalls to units/home) to keep the amount of additional vehicular traffic to a minimum (as allowed in the Land Use Bylaw) and successfully realize Transit Oriented Development.

We realize that this was a very lengthy letter, but we still feel that our four points of recommendations in the original letter still applies to our current comments on the amended plans. Thank you for your time engaging with the community.

Hillhurst Sunnyside Planning Committee
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