

Community Association Response

LOC2021-0076

April 27, 2022

Dear Jillian Geen

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this LOC. The Renfrew Planning Committee does not support the proposed zoning change from R-C2 to R-CG.

Building scale should be consistent with the space available, and the information provided today does not provide sufficient information to ensure building massing, landscaping, and design (e.g. physical space for things like garages and blue/black/green bins) can be sufficiently contained on this mid-block property on a street (north side of 13 Avenue NE) that has not seen such a zoning change before.

The Planning Committee's perspective today remains similar to what was submitted in October 2021, in response to the developer applying for a land-use change for one of the properties included in this LOC. Our comments are largely repeated below:

1. All rezoning requests in our community should be evaluated to determine if they meet the intentions of the North Hill Communities Local Area Plan (NHCLAP), approved in September 2021. The NHCLAP addresses the importance of heritage communities and specifically discourages land use amendments until the heritage guidelines are confirmed. We want our heritage community to retain its characteristics and oppose all rezoning of single residential sites until the guidelines are clear and approved.
2. Concentrating density along major mobility corridors will focus demand and result in higher quality projects. Minimizing densification in our primarily R-C2 neighbourhood will not only respect their existing character but will improve the chances of reinvestment to update housing stock that respects the existing zoning. Random, unplanned increases in density will likely reduce interest in updating the housing as there is no certainty that existing zoning will be respected.
3. The single-family housing tradition defines the heritage and character of the area of Renfrew located west of 6th Street NE and north of 8th Avenue NE. This very small portion of our community defines its own character, supports its heritage roots and offers a diversity of housing. Without this core, the unique identity of this small enclave will be lost.
4. In this era of environmental concern we endeavour to maintain our permeable land and urban forest in Renfrew. In our experience, the proposed land use amendment will reduce both our urban forest and permeable land. Every effort should be made to maintain existing trees.
5. The R-CG zoning allows basement suites with no additional parking requirements. No credit is given for these units when calculating residential unit density. The pressure for on-street parking on 13th Avenue is heavy. Out-of-community parking on the streets adds additional parking pressure as commuters park here to take the transit bus downtown.

6. The south side of 13th Avenue is already zoned for multi-residential developments and there are several lots that have not yet been developed.
7. There are several similar lots where the zoning has been changed from R-C2 to R-CG with developments in this part of Renfrew on corner lots, none of which reflect the historical character of Renfrew. No effort has been made by developers to reflect our historical history in their designs. The developments could be located in any far-flung communities in Calgary and appear to be recycled designs from other developments that have been built in other communities.
8. City planning has allowed the development of projects on Edmonton Trail that significantly underutilized the allowable density. A project at 12 Avenue NE and Edmonton Trail NE is a single-level commercial project that could have been a mixed-use commercial/residential development that would have brought more density to the community. Planning should be encouraging/ensuring that mixed-use developments be built to increase the vitality and vibrancy of the main streets bordering the community, not approving random zoning increases in the heart of this part of the community.