

Community Association Response

2023 July 17



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July 2023

TO: The City of Calgary, Community Planning, Planning and Development

ATTENTION: Kieran Slattery, Planner, City of Calgary
Ashley Parks Planning Coordinator – South Community Planning, City of Calgary

RE: DP2022-02654

Thank you for the opportunity to review the updated submission and to respond and provide comments on the above note DP application.

The community still has numerous concerns about this application:

1 : Building Heights :

The ASP currently provides for a maximum height of buildings to be ten (10) storeys. Changes in height may be considered based on topographic conditions and where impacts and compatibility with surrounding built form can be addressed to the satisfaction of the Approving Authority (e.g. shadow impact, privacy concerns). The community is of the view that this should be interpreted to reduce the total height of any proposed building to take into account the height at grade.

No surrounding buildform other than this development has similar heights, with Agecare DP2023-03051 to the north being currently 8 storey buildings from grade, and Orion to the south being 5. This application appears to have 4 separate buildings each of which exceeds the prescribed 10 storey with no justification provided. Buildings A, B, and D are noted as 1 Storey Podium with Commercial at Grade (for a total of 11 Storeys). In elevation it suggests 11 Storey buildings with a full additional storey for mechanical, yielding up to a 12 storey building. The community does not support construction of any building along 85th street which exceeds 10 stories, as per the ASP. Similarly while some consideration for increased height along 17th Avenue may be warranted, having maximum height (or above) along 19th Avenue is not in character with the ASP or the community.

2 : Privacy

While shadowing studies provided show minimal impact to the existing residence to the west, no similar investigation of privacy impact to existing residence has been provided. Given the proposed heights and massing of buildings A and B along 85th Street, the community and existing residents have serious concerns about privacy within households, existing balconies, decks, and backyards. The applicant does not provide any indication how they will address this intrusion.

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3 : 19th Ave Activation / Liveable Street

In reviewing the revised DP, we see minimal changes to the design to address the activation of 19th ave. Other than the word MURAL on the side of building A, we note no changes.

Further in the DP application we note:

- Though it was requested, no views from 19th Ave north have been provided allowing reviewers to understand the plans that the applicant envisions to activate 19th Ave.
- Landscaping along 19th Ave is minimal, and noted on the plans, would not been provided within the DP. During discussions with the applicant, we understood that several changes had been made to provide greater activation and do not see such measures undertaken. We had hoped similar treatment to that which was incorporated in the building to the south, by the same ownership group, would have been applied to this development as well. Utilizing a similar plaza, oriented either to the west or the south, would enhance the gateway to the liveable street, regional pathway and retail environment envisioned for the north side of 19th Ave.

Specifically Building A appears to have no access to the retail ground floor from either the south or the west. Further, Building A is set too close to the street to allow usable pedestrian access from the south.

4 : Accessibility

The ASP envisioned a pedestrian realm given the great increase in density in this area. Residents from the south and east (and even the west) would be encouraged to use non-motorized transportation to access the shops and amenities in the commercial developments. This development does little or nothing to encourage that. As noted, usable, accessible and convenient street access to buildings A and D must be enforced.

5 : Internal Commercial Street

In reviewing this key component of the development, we are still confused as the usage. Again, in discussion with the applicant our understanding was that this street would be focused on the pedestrian realm, with minimal parking and minimal traffic. During the discussions it was mentioned that this street would possibly be designated as emergency access only, or one way south bound traffic. We would only support this access on these conditions.

In review we note no such designations. In combination with the emergency access only onto 85th street from the north access road, we feel that any such representation of the roadway being focused on pedestrian realm without actual constraints is not realistic. Further clarification would be appreciated.

6 : The Bernoulli Effect

Given the West – East pedestrian corridor, between the 4 buildings what mechanisms have been put in place to mitigate the Bernoulli effect and ensure the space is usable for pedestrians? We also recently learned that even though prevailing north winds are minimal, other developments in the area were concerned with the Bernoulli effect on north – south passageways. We note no mitigation mechanisms along the internal commercial road to ensure pedestrians would truly be able to use this realm have been incorporated.

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7 : Minimal Green

With minimal setbacks, building massing, and the added internal commercial street. This development creates a concrete environment out of place with the community, providing no contextual integration. Even the pedestrian corridor between the buildings is primarily concrete to allow for emergency vehicles between buildings A and B, as well as buildings C and D. From provided views it looks unappealing and uninviting with nothing to invite residents into this space.

Given the city's Urban Forest, and Green buildings initiatives, this development would seem deficient and is bringing a older mode downtown urban concrete landscape into an suburban environment. Incorporation of trees and planters along the internal commercial street, and pedestrian corridor would make these spaces inviting, and environmental engaging to the residents.

With the density of the three residential buildings, community gardens within the site would contribute to a sense of inclusion into the community and contribute to a healthy lifestyle by

- providing fresh, safe, affordable herbs, fruits and vegetables.
- helping to relieve stress and increase sense of wellness.
- getting people active, which improves overall physical health.
- providing social opportunities that build a sense of community and belonging.

By slightly decreasing either building massing, or commercial development on the corners of the buildings, community gardens or green spaces could easily be incorporated.

8 : Neighbour resident opposition

As noted in emails, and discussions, the Montreux residents directly impacted by this development to the west are firmly opposed to this application. Ongoing concerns include a lack infrastructure, traffic and road safety and the impact of the heights and density of this development.

For the above reasons we are unable to support this application, and trust we have planning support to firmly reject this re-application.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincere regards,

Springbank Hill Community Association

Per: _____

Alex Casuga, Co-Chair Planning Committee

CC: Executive, SBHCA

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