

Community Association Response

2022 October 11

RE: LOC2022-0160

To: Chris Wolf, file manager

Cc: Ward 9 Office

The Renfrew Community Association would like to take this opportunity to provide you with feedback regarding LOC2022-0160.

Our feedback is centred on three main points:

1. A poor level of communication and engagement from the applicant
2. The difficulty of providing feedback on a substantial zoning change such as this, lacking a concurrent DP application
3. The absence of mention of affordable housing units to be included on the site

Communication and engagement

Unfortunately, the applicant for this land use change has provided limited opportunities for feedback and engagement to-date, having not utilised the tools available in the applicant outreach toolkit that the City of Calgary provides. The parameters and results of the "Community Outreach Engagement Session" that they did conduct were not shared with the Renfrew Community Association and no discussions were initiated in this regard.

Additionally, the communications to-date have been primarily single direction, with feedback from the community association and community members seemingly not being considered in the application put before us. A significant land use change such as this would benefit from an open, clear, and collaborative engagement process, which we feel has not been the case. This sense of lack of engagement has been echoed by many community members who have provided comments to the community association.

Lack of a concurrent DP

While we acknowledge that a concurrent DP application is not required, it would be *highly* beneficial to both the community association and broader community members as it would provide a greater level of certainty around the proposed use of the land. While not feasible on all applications, a significant upzoning, such as what is being requested here, would be easier to evaluate, comment, and visualise. The community association notes that this is definitely more work on the applicants' part, but, in our opinion, could greatly improve the engagement opportunities and final product. The use of a concurrent application is one of numerous tools in an applicant's toolbox. We acknowledge that some initial drawings have been circulated, though not directly to the community association, however we cannot comment specifically on those plans given that they have not been formally submitted. A concurrent application would better enable community members and the community association to provide more fulsome feedback on the application.

Lack of affordable housing

The community association is disappointed to have heard that the plan of including affordable housing on the site has been removed. In a period where housing affordability is becoming increasingly important in Calgary and across the country, the community association would like to see these opportunities built into new developments. This extends beyond the mention of 'apartments' in the applicant's submission, which do not explicitly meet the definition of affordable housing, as defined by the City of Calgary. Many community

members have also echoed that this is a priority for them, and would like to see it included in an application for this site. It also aligns with the apparent broader direction of the United Church of Canada (see the Globe and Mail, May 2, 2022 - <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-united-church-to-transform-its-properties/>).

Conclusion

To conclude, the community association does not feel confident supporting this land use change application for the reasons outlined above. We would encourage and support a more fulsome engagement process from the applicant and a concurrent DP application, which would ultimately result in a better end result, ideally with community support. This parcel has the potential to be a community hub and an area of localised growth and activity; the community association supports this concept. However, this requires a collaborative partnership between the applicant and the community - something that hasn't been realised to date. The community association does not support the 'maximise everything' approach that has been suggested by the application and encourages a collaborative and balanced approach to development, particularly on projects where there are substantial changes in land use and built-form. We are not against development in the community and would welcome and appreciate the opportunity to engage with the developer, landowner, and community on the levers available to make development thrive in the community within the context of an LOC and DP application process, including integration with surrounding community, parking requirements, lot coverage, setbacks, landscaping.

Regards,

The Renfrew Community Association Planning Committee
On behalf of the
Renfrew Community Association