

Community Association Response

2023 December 28

Application: LOC2023-0366

Submitted by: Hounsfield Heights Briar Hill Community Association

Contact Information

Address: Box 65086 RPO North Hill, Calgary AB T2N 4T6

Email: Land.use@hh-bh.ca

Phone:

Overall, I am/we are:

Neither in support nor in opposition of this application

Areas of interest/concern:

Density, Building setbacks, Community character, Shadowing impacts

What are the strengths and challenges of the proposed:

Will the proposed change affect the use and enjoyment of your property? If so, how?

The City views applications in the context of how well it fits within the broader community and alignment to Calgary's Municipal Development Plan (MDP). Do you see the proposed changes as compatible to the community and MDP? If not, what changes would make this application align with The City's goals?

How will the proposed impact the immediate surroundings?

General comments or concerns:

The Hounsfield Heights – Briar Hill Community Association thanks the city for circulating Land Use Redesignation application LOC2023-0366. This is the first redesignation from R-C1 to R-C2 in the R-C1 central part of our community, anticipating the Riley Local Area Plan.

Our community acknowledges that some additional density is needed throughout the city, and we suggested, as part of the Riley plan, allowing 'hidden density' – semi-detached, duplex, or even triplex within the existing R-C1 footprint (45% lot coverage and 10 m tall) throughout the community. This subdivision fits with this hidden density concept, and thus we do not oppose this application. We note that until the new LAP passes, an ARP amendment is necessary. We look for to seeing the application and text for this amendment, which should be specific to this lot and situation.

A key aspect of this idea is that sub-divided dwellings must use good design to fit into the existing community character. Thus, we are asking the city to add a phrase to the LAP that says that subdivisions should be semi detached/duplex, rather than narrow single-family homes. A well done semi-detached has similar width proportions as the adjacent existing dwellings and can blend in well – you may not notice immediately that there are two dwellings instead of one. A semi-detached also does not 'waste' the space of the side set-backs down the middle of the original lot (since the two dwelling share a wall) and as a result the same footprint (45% lot coverage) will extend less far back on the lot and will shadow the adjacent homes less.

We had a meeting with the developer's representative on this topic, asking for them to consider semi-detached – they have not responded to our comments. These new lots are not as narrow as many in the community, and there is no lane from which to hide the extra garage space, but we are concerned that subsequent applicants will argue that this early subdivision is a precedent. We distributed flyers around this application, as is our usual practice, and we have also discussed these concepts at a recent community meeting and online. We have heard that many community members support this hidden density concept, and many community members near this property are disappointed to see subdivision to R-C2 in the single-family part of our community. We all would like to generally see more emphasis on density in sites that don't damage the character and environment of established communities. In our neighbourhood, density on North Hill Mall and Louise Riley should be strongly encouraged. Built forms that replace R-C1 should be grade-oriented to maintain space for mature trees and wildlife, maintain neighbourly interaction, and truly blend into the existing community.