

Community Association Response

CLIFF BUNGALOW-MISSION COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Planning and Development Committee
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City of Calgary
Planning and Development
Third floor, Municipal Building
800 Macleod Trail SE
Calgary, Alberta

Re: DP2023-03797 (615 17 Avenue SW - Multiple Addresses)
Decision: **Opposition**¹

The Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association (“CBMCA”) is submitting additional formal comments below with regards to the DP2023-03797. This follows additional communication from the Applicant, composed of a written response and some emails.

The CBMCA offers the comments below

- (1) **Alignment of building design with the Cliff Bungalow ARP should be improved.** The CBMCA continues to have serious concerns with the proposed design as it relates to building’s façade along 5A Street SW. The Applicant and CBMCA have engaged further on this topic; however, no discernable changes to the Applicant’s design have emerged.

At a minimum, the CBMCA believes the Applicant should consider making some changes to better adhere the proposed design to the Cliff Bungalow ARP. **Specifically, if the Applicant was able to increase the proportion of brick along the 5A Street SW façade of their design, the building would become substantially more aligned with the Cliff Bungalow ARP and thus better aligned with the character of this historic community.**

¹ The CBMCA will ultimately issue one of four types of decision: 1 Opposed, 2 Concerned, 3 No Objection/Comment & 4 Support.

1. **Letters of Opposition** indicate that the Application has serious discrepancies with respect to our ARP’s and/or Bylaw 1P2007. When a letter of opposition is issued we will consider filing an appeal with SDAB if remedial actions are not forthcoming in an amended Application.
2. **Letters of Concern** indicate that either we have insufficient information on which to base a decision or that the Application has some discrepancies with respect to our ARP’s and/or Bylaw 1P2007. When a letter of concern is issued we may consider filing an appeal with SDAB if further clarifications and/or amended plans are not provided.
3. **Letters of No Objection/Comment** are provided for reference. They do not indicate approval or opposition. We would not normally consider filing an appeal with SDAB after providing a letter of No Objection/Comment, unless affected residents requested our support or the DP is issued with relaxations to the relevant bylaws.
4. **Letters of Support** indicate that we consider the Application to be in general accordance with our ARP’s. To obtain a letter of support the applicant is strongly encouraged to work the CBMCA and affected residents through a charrette or similar community engagement design-based workshop. We would not consider filing an appeal with SDAB after providing a letter of support.

- (2) **Incomplete engagement with respect to public amenity.** The CBMCA believes the community has not been fully engaged with regards to the Applicant’s detailed plans for the on-site community amenity. Only high-level discussions have been taken place between the CBMCA and Applicant. **With the Applicant now having an articulated vision of their proposal for the developer funded community amenity, the CBMCA would appreciate an engagement session where the Applicant’s proposal is detailed and discussed. Given the proximity of the plaza to the Beltline, the Beltline Neighborhood Association (“BNA”) should also be invited to this engagement session.**
- (3) **Request for investigation by City of Calgary into the merits for additional pedestrian and vehicular safety infrastructure.** The CBMCA continues to see a potential need for incremental pedestrian and vehicular safety infrastructure along Cliff Street SW and 5A Street SW in conjunction with two recent developments (including this one) that will increase the neighborhood’s population in excess of 20%. It’s unclear why the Applicant commented on this topic as it is within the City of Calgary’s purview to ensure adequate safety for its citizens on public roads and sidewalks. **As such, the CBMCA desires engagement from the Roads department on this topic. Any agreed upon traffic or pedestrian infrastructure improvements should be wholly funded by the City of Calgary.**

The CBMCA has expanded on its comments regarding (1) better aligning the proposed design to the Cliff Bungalow ARP (2) incomplete public engagement as it relates to the developer funded community amenity.

The street facing façade along 5A Street SW should better adhere to the Cliff Bungalow ARP

The proposed development is located on a corner lot, with pedestrian and street exposure to both 5A Street SW and 17 Avenue SW. The primary commercial entrances are located on 17 Avenue SW, while the all of the residential entrances are located along 5A Street SW.



Image 1. Applicant’s updated rendering of project’s street-facing, west façade

While the 17 Avenue SW façade is aesthetically pleasing and adheres to the Cliff Bungalow ARP, the CBMCA remains highly concerned with the pedestrian façade along 5A Street SW. The CBMCA's concerns remains unchanged in the Applicant's latest set of renderings. The CBMCA believes the 5A Street SW façade is monotonous with the same design and materials repeating for the almost the entirety of the development along 5A Street SW with no variation in pattern, setback or color.

The CBMCA concedes that some of it's concerns with regards to architectural design are subjective to some extent. Ultimately, this is the Applicant's project and it is their capital at risk. The Applicant is directing ~90% of project-spend towards the multi-family component of their mixed-use building (on 5A Street SW), with ~10% directed at the commercial component along 17th Avenue SW. As such, the Applicant should be hyper-incentivized to ensure the street-facing façade along 5A Street SW is aesthetically pleasing and they seem adamant that it is. The CBMCA and Applicant are thus at an impasse with regards to design aesthetics.

At a minimum, the CBMCA believes the Applicant should seriously consider making some design changes to better adhere to the Cliff Bungalow ARP, a statutory document approved by City Council. Specifically, while the CBMCA is comfortable with the two predominant materials proposed by the Applicant – brick and metal - it is not comfortable with the proportion between the two. Brick – a preferred material outlined within the Cliff Bungalow ARP - only makes up around 15%-20% of west facing façade. The other materials proposed by the Applicant are not highlighted with the Cliff Bungalow ARP, but compose 80% of the materiality along this façade. *The Cliff Bungalow would appreciate if the Applicant could consider increasing the proportion of brick used along the 5A Street façade.*

The CBMCA would note that surrounding buildings on 5A Street have a much higher proportion of brick. The façade of Western Canada High School is 100% brick, the façade of the Carolina Apartments is 80% brick, and the façade of the Tweed Condominium Building is 60%-70% brick. Each of these is considerably more than the 15%-20% proposed for the Applicant's building façade along 5A Street SW. The CBMCA believes that if the Applicant was able to adjust their 5A Street SW façade to increase the proportion of brick, the building would become substantially more aligned with the Cliff Bungalow ARP and better align with the character of this historic community.

The CMBCA provided examples of contemporary buildings with 4-6 stories of wrapped brick in its previous formal comments. For convenience, these examples are pictured below. The CBMCA would ask the Applicant to focus on the brick podium rather than the glass tower.



Image 2. Mixed use project in Hamilton area



Image 3 and Image 4. Mixed use project in Toronto area

The Applicant could consider doing something similar with the initial six-storeys of brick along the 5A Street façade as outlined in pink in the rendering below.



Image 5. Applicant rendering of proposed development

Incomplete engagement with respect to community amenity

The CBMCA is of the view that the on-site public amenity is primarily for the benefit of the community, which can loosely be defined as residents of Cliff Bungalow-Mission, residents of neighboring communities (Beltline) and Calgarians at large.

At this time, only high-level discussions with regards to the public plaza has taken place. With regards to these discussions, the CBMCA believes its vision for the public plaza may have been wholly misunderstood. As the most glaring example, the CBMCA expressed in its formal written comments that “The CBMCA believes the primary focus of the public plaza should be on space-making” The Applicant responded that “The community associate expressed concerns about the plaza being a space-making place.” While the CBMCA isn’t sure what drove the Applicant to entirely misinterpret the CBMCA’s position on this matter, it is somewhat concerning.

Beyond discussing generalities of the objective of the community amenity, there has been little if any discussion of what specifically the Applicant is proposing. The renderings below have been shared with the CBMCA in a written submission by the Applicant, but no further details were provided. The CBMCA is encouraged that the proposed sculpture seems to also provide public seating, aligning the CBMCA’s desire for public seating to be a primary focus within the place-making space.



Image 6 and 7. Applicant renderings of the proposed public amenity

The CBMCA looks forward to engaging with the Applicant on their detailed proposal for the plaza and would be open to hosting a joint engagement session with the BNA. The ward councillor should be invited to such a session to understand varying perspectives on the proposal.

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