

Community Association Response

April 25, 2024

RE. Comments re. LOC2023 – 0244: 405, 407, 411, 415 19th Street NW

The West Hillhurst Planning Committee (WHPC) respectfully submits the following comments concerning the above referenced Land Use Change to the Housing Grade-Oriented (H-GO) designation:

- The WHPC supports the City's strategy to provide more housing options within the City and is interested in seeing affordable housing and missing middle housing opportunities within the West Hillhurst area, including 19th Street. However, the WHPC has concerns relating to the lack of a final Riley LAP. The WHPC is of the position that the best development outcomes come from a broadly participated planning process such as the Riley Communities LAP. We are not calling for a halt to (re)development, only a temporary halt to land use amendments until the current LAP process is completed. Landowners do not have a right to land use amendment, only a right to a reasonable use of their property, which they have under the current land use zoning.
- In order for stakeholders to be in the best possible position to evaluate the merits of this application, the WHPC encourages the applicant to submit a development permit application so the land use redesignation and DP can be evaluated on a concurrent basis.
- The unit density per hectare is calculated at 180, which far exceeds the scale of the low residential housing. This density scale is equivalent to a multi storey apartment building. The developer shall provide a design that adheres to the Land use Bylaw 1P2007 section 529 where it indicates maximum number density of parcels for R-CG is 75 units per hectare. The H-GO Land use Bylaw 1P2007 section 1386(a) states "grade-oriented development in a range of housing.....at a scale that is consistent with low density residential districts (as described in part 5).
- The WHPC acknowledges that community concerns regarding increased traffic, density, height, shadow effects, waste and safety are typically within the scope of the development permit applications. However, the unique characteristics of this land use amendment and significant community concern, necessitates that these items be evaluated as part of this land use amendment. Should this land use amendment be accepted, the scope of the development would only be restricted by existing zoning by-laws which in this case would be insufficient and too broad to adequately address the numerous community's concerns that exist with these aspects of the development.
- This parcel is not within the distances noted in article 1386 of the Land Use Bylaw, which is a clear indication that H-GO is not justified at this location. The parcel is over 200m from Kensington and is not within 400m of a BRT station. The Bylaw does not stipulate that the proposed parcels be approximately 200m from a Mainstreet (as identified by CivicWorks (see page 3)), it is to be within 200m. The WHPC has repeatedly explained the incorrect classification of BRT service within this neighborhood. The reality is 19th Street at this location is not proximate to frequent transit service and is not within 400m of a BRT service. It is extremely frustrating to have to repeat this comment every time a new up-zone application comes to the planning committee. CivicWorks should be aware of this mistake by now, as should the City, and proximity to a non-existent BRT station should not be used as justification for H-GO at this location. For clarity, the WHPC will repeat its comments concerning BRT and primary transit routes:
 - Route 305 is incorrectly classified as "BRT" service - its name a relic from 2018 when it was replaced by the MAX Orange Route on 16th Ave. Currently Route 305 only runs 3 buses during the AM & PM rush hours periods respectively, on a 30 minute frequency. This is more properly classified as "express bus" service.

- o Given this limited frequency, neither the Route 305 or any other routes serving West Hillhurst meet the City's own definition of "Primary Transit". In the 2020 Calgary Transportation Plan, this is defined as i) <10min frequency ii) 15 hrs a day and ii) 7 days a week.
- The WHPC is concerned with the planned covered carport with supposed space for 18 motor vehicles. First, the length of the combined parcels, along with the waste facilities, does not seem adequate for the number of vehicles. Second, there are crime concerns over covered parking at the lane and the WHPC points the City to its own Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) program. Unsecured parking in a rear alley raises significant concerns around safety. The lack of space for secured parking suggests that this development is simply too large for the parcel. Thirdly, the rear alley has a number of power poles which will impact access to these parking stalls.
- The WHPC is concerned that the indicated waste and recycling receptacles is inadequate for the number of dwellings. In accordance with Land use Bylaw 1P2007 section 546.3, the Development Authority must approve the Waste, Recycling and Organics Plan. Land use Bylaw section 504 also requires recycling facilities for townhouse or row house units. The WHPC expects the development plans will include a design approved by the authority plan which also shows the basis of collection volume.
- The increase to vehicular traffic generated by the proposed development would pose a substantial increase in hazards to pedestrians and cyclists. This is in direct violation of multiple city policies that place pedestrians and cyclists at the top of the mobility hierarchy.
- The WHPC acknowledges increasing concerns with issues arising from Airbnb rentals within the community. Although the regulation of such activities is outside the scope of this application, the committee would like to see increased emphasis on properties suitable for long-term rather than short-term occupation.
- There is increased concern regarding this buildform within the community as the existing row house located at 701 19 Street NW is repeatedly in violation of noise, nuisance and litter complaints.
- The WHPC expects the development to be built with high quality materials such as brick or stone. Recent row housing infills in the West Hillhurst neighborhood have been constructed with low-quality materials and have clear signs of premature degradation.
- The WHPC expects assurances from the builder that the tree bylaw and sidewalk remediation will be followed. Although conceptual, the current rendering shows 14 trees. This development requires one tree and three shrubs per 110 m2 parcel, so in total, 18 trees and 54 shrubs. The tree schedule shall indicate trees appropriate for the space to ensure proper growing conditions and avoid damage to the dwellings from root spread.
- The amenity space, although conceptual, does not appear to be adequate. The WHPC suggests that similar to Land Use Bylaw section 615 (b), that the minimum amenity space per dwelling of 7.5 m2 unit be provided in the form of common space, balconies and/or patios.
- At present, the conceptual plan The WHCP expects an adequate area be designated or available to contain snow volume within the property as designated in Street Bylaw section 64. The conceptual drawings do not appear to have this space.
- The community has spent four years working on 19St. Streetscape through three rounds of consultations. All engagements point to wider sidewalks and a pleasant pedestrian experience. We argue against reduced setbacks or any design that would limit sidewalk expansion. We also argue a pleasant pedestrian experience involves maintaining the current established trees on site.

- The WHPC is concerned with the impact this type of redesignation will have on the ongoing work and focus on mobility and streetscaping on 19th Street. The roadway is narrow at this location and developments with small setbacks prevent the area from realizing plans for wider sidewalks and cycling lanes.
- While CivicWorks comments on examples of nearby multi-unit developments to support the “future development vision to complement the scale of surrounding area development”, the WHPC reminds the city that the four parcels making up this proposed development are sandwiched between two single family homes on either end of the block. The WHPC questions whether this will complement the scale of the surrounding homes.
- Rear alleys in West Hillhurst are heavily impacted by the significant increase in the number of garbage, recycling and compost bins from new density focused developments. While the WHPC notes the use of commercial garbage and recycling in the proposed plans, the available spaces allocated for this purpose appears insufficient, given that there will be 36 units within this development and parking for 18 vehicles on the alley. As noted above, the presence of power poles in the narrow alley suggests that commercial garbage collection must be well planned and located.
- Information regarding the environmental impact, or sustainability, of continued densification is required prior to approval. Increasing on-street parking congestion, reducing (or eliminating) private amenity space, failing to protect the existing tree canopy and other natural assets, increasing impervious surfaces with negative impacts to runoff and water quality, and general over-development is of particular concern to the WHPC. The focus on density fails to consider the climate emergency facing the City of Calgary.

To summarize, the WHPC does not support the subject Land Use Redesignation, as proposed.

Regards,

West Hillhurst Planning Committee