

Community Association Response

September 10, 2023

I am writing on behalf of the Mount Royal Community Association Planning and Development Committee (PDC) regarding the above noted proposed land use amendment. The PDC typically does not respond to such a request until the actual Direct Control District has been included in the application. (This is the third instance where we have been asked to review a DP without the accompanying DC District.) However, the file manager has provided a detailed explanation of what will be covered in the proposed district in an email address to myself on August 29, 2023. Our comments are based on that email along with the applicant submission.

The site falls within the Lower Mount Royal ARP boundaries and is within a medium density residential area. The site also falls within the office conversion area of the plan. While the notion of an artist's studio, yoga classes, sales, workshops, and a backyard suite do not precisely fit the concept of an office conversion, there are some principles that may help rationalize what appears to be commercial creep from 17th Ave. Section 3.3 of the ARP discusses office conversions and outlines three objectives:

1. Predominantly a residential area
2. Extend the life of some older structures.
3. Provide some development flexibility.

The application appears to meet some of those objectives. The Plan goes on to suggest a Direct Control District (Section 3.3.3) "...significantly contribute to the quality of the residential environment...". The notion of an artist's studio and a suite could add to moderate activity on the street as compared to a full-fledged commercial enterprise. The other uses such as sales and yoga classes may move the range of uses into a more classic commercial enterprise which the Plan and the PDC do not support. It is suggested the uses be tied to the artists studio in terms of sales and workshops and hours be limited to reduce any negative impacts associated with extended operating times. The backyard suite is also a reasonable addition to the allowable uses. Lastly, the email also indicates signage would be limited to what is presently allowed in the residential district which is appropriate.

If the DC follows the guidelines outlined in the above mentioned email with the noted exceptions above, the PDC would support such a rezoning.

Yours truly
Roy Wright RPP, MCIP
Co-Chair PDC