

Parkdale Community Association Letter



PARKDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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March 10, 2017

Steve Jones, File Manager

The City of Calgary

Development and Building Approvals

By email: Steve.Jones2@calgary.ca

Dear Mr. Jones,

**Subject: Request for Comment on Application for Rezoning M-C1 to M-C2
LOC2016-0313. 3431 5th Ave NW, Parkdale 0.11 ha**

I am responding to the subject Request for Comment on behalf of Parkdale Community Association (PCA) Planning & Development (P&D) Committee and would like to record a number of concerns with this proposal. We reviewed the documents you forwarded to us, reviewed the proposal with regard to the City of Calgary Land Use Bylaw, the City of Calgary Land Use Re-designation guide (found on the City of Calgary web site <http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Residential-Building-and-Development/Land-use-redesignation.aspx?redirect=/pda/pd/pages/zoning.aspx>), and also the Enriching Parkdale: Parkdale Community Development and Design Study (04.24.2015) document.

We comment as follows:

A. City of Calgary Land Use Re-designation Guide:

The City of Calgary Land Use Re-designation guide requires the following considerations by the applicant prior to application:

- Consultation with neighbours, the community association and ward councillor.

We were not contacted by the applicant so the P&D Committee initiated contact with the applicant to ask for a meeting. Because of our request we met with the applicant's representative, Seika Architecture (Ajith Karunasena) for the first time at our monthly meeting on March 14th.

Mr. Karunasena indicated that by maximising the area available for development of the site he could develop 24 underground parking stalls on a single parking level. Using reverse logic he then back calculated the maximum number of units that could be built for this parking availability, according to the Land Use Bylaw. Thus he justified the construction of 21 units in order to "pay for the parking stalls". This is not a valid reason to increase the density and change the land use and have such a detrimental impact on the streetscape and the neighbourhood.

There has been no effort by the applicant to reach out to the neighbours for consultation. They only became aware about the proposed development when signage appeared on the site, which then led them to contact the PCA.

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B. Enriching Parkdale: Parkdale Community Development and Design Study (04.24.2015) Document



This document (attached) provides guidance to the P&D Committee and the PCA Board when making development decisions in Parkdale. It was prepared in 2015 in association with the Faculty of Environmental Design at the University of Calgary. It has been adopted by the PCA Board and acts as Parkdale's Area Redevelopment Plan, in the absence of an ARP being prepared by the City of Calgary.

Enriching Parkdale was developed in 2015 following months of discussion with the P&D Committee and the PCA Board. Three open houses were held to obtain community input. Enriching Parkdale was presented to a large group of City of Calgary planners, transportation engineers, municipal servicing engineers, open space experts and others who are responsible for approving development applications in the City. Those in attendance agreed it should be used to help guide future development in Parkdale. Although it does not have statutory standing, it received a very favourable response as a successful community-initiated planning document and we encourage all planners to use it as a reference guide. Enriching Parkdale also received a very positive response from Parkdale's City Councillor, Druh Farrell who suggested it be used as a guide by other communities to formulate their own document.

The most relevant section of Enriching Parkdale which applies to the subject re-designation application begins on page 45 and is entitled Infill Housing. It describes Parkdale's approach to densification. Recommendations 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 in Enriching Parkdale contain direction to the approving agencies which include requiring conformance to building massing standards to protect the existing character of the neighbourhood.

The multifamily (MC-1 and MC-2) zoned areas are not included per-se in this document as development (similar to the condominium pictured on page 46 and the complex on the SE corner of 3rd Ave and 34th St) in accordance with the current zoning was assumed.

C. P&D Review

The applicant proposes to change the zoning of the site so he can increase density from 16 allowed under the current M-C1 to 21 units by up-zoning to MC-2.

The applicant states he is restricting the building to 4 stories and capping the height at 14m, however should the rezoning be approved there is no way to prevent the applicant from maxing out the site to the 16m height and FAR allowed under MC-2.

The current MC-1 zoning is appropriate for the site. There are recent developments to the west (a 24 unit condominium complex) and to the east (multiplex developments on 50' frontages) that have enhanced the neighbourhood, increased density and act as a buffer between the existing MC-2 and CN-1 areas to the south and the RC-2 neighbourhood on the north side 5th Ave.

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A review of the Land Use Bylaw, 1P2007, shows:

- 586 (f): MC-1 is intended to be in close proximity or adjacent to low density residential development;

The site is adjacent to low density residential development and thus the current MC-1 which is intended to be in close proximity to low density residential zoning is appropriate and should be maintained.

- 595 (g) & (h): MC-2 is in close proximity to, or adjacent to, low density residential development; and is typically located at community nodes or transit and transportation corridors and nodes;

The site is not at a community node nor at a transit/transportation corridor/node and thus MC-2 is totally inappropriate for the site. The transit node is located at 29th St NW and Parkdale Blvd which is an 8 to 10 minute walk away.

P&D Committee members have met with the adjacent neighbours and others in the immediate surrounding areas who are concerned about the height and additional density of this proposed development. **The proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the surrounding single family, semi-detached and multi-plex developments. The neighbours are also concerned about their privacy being threatened by windows from the development looming above and providing full access views into their homes. In addition, they are concerned about living in darkness from shadowing imposed by this building height and mass and the proposed minimal setbacks. The neighbours will be sending letters to the file manager in opposition to this proposed land use amendment.**

This large building with reduced front setbacks, compared to the adjacent 4 –plexes and single family dwellings, will block their views to the nearby park and their access to sunlight. It will change the context of the neighbourhood and the entire streetscape with a negative impact on the block with the height and massing of the building. In addition, there will be significant overlooking into the balconies of the existing Riverton condominiums, impacting their privacy and enjoyment of their units. The Riverton incorporated a roof garden into its design and the proposed development's shadow would negatively impact this amenity space.

The P&D Committee is very concerned that ad hoc zoning changes in the neighborhood are unfair to adjacent tax- paying land owners who bought, developed and lived on the adjoining lands believing the current zoning was created after careful, thoughtful master planning by the City, and would not change.

Street parking is already an issue in this block; additional vehicles from the Riverton and other multifamily units, Foothills Medical Centre and the University of Calgary Foothill Campus day parkers completely fill the street parking already on a daily basis. There is a children's playground and ball diamond in close proximity to the proposed development plus there is daily school bus pick up by the playground. The additional vehicular traffic will pose significant safety issues. In addition, 5th Ave NW already experiences traffic congestion with a great deal of cut-through traffic which increases annually.

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D. Additional Comments

- Consultation with neighbours: this step needs to be fulfilled to meet the City's requirements and should proceed quickly. Currently the applicant has not provided any information to the neighbours. A community consultation e.g. a Town Hall event must occur. We feel that the proposal will have a significant effect on the nature of our community and it therefore requires input from residents of Parkdale.
- The current zoning of M-C1 must stand.
- We will appeal this application should it be approved.
- It is not clear what the contextual setback is on 5th Av. The applicant had not calculated the value but had applied a 3m value as a given. More clarity is required on this issue.

The PCA does not support this rezoning application.

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Deborah Curley at dcurley@shaw.ca and/or Bill Biccum Parkdale Community Association, Bill.Biccum@parkdalecommunity.com. Please notify the PCA of any developments on the decision regarding this application.

Sincerely,

Derek Brown
Deborah Curley
Planning & Development Committee
Parkdale Community Association

cc Alderman Druh Farrell ward07@calgary.ca
PCA office, Bill.Biccum@parkdalecommunity.com