

Rosaline J. Hill Architect Inc.

Architect • Development Consultant
414 Churchill Ave. N, Ottawa, ON, K1Z 5C6
613-853-2822 www.rjhill.ca

designing urban alternatives

October 16th, 2018

City of Ottawa
Planning Department
110 Laurier Avenue West,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P, 1J1

Attention: Steve Gauthier

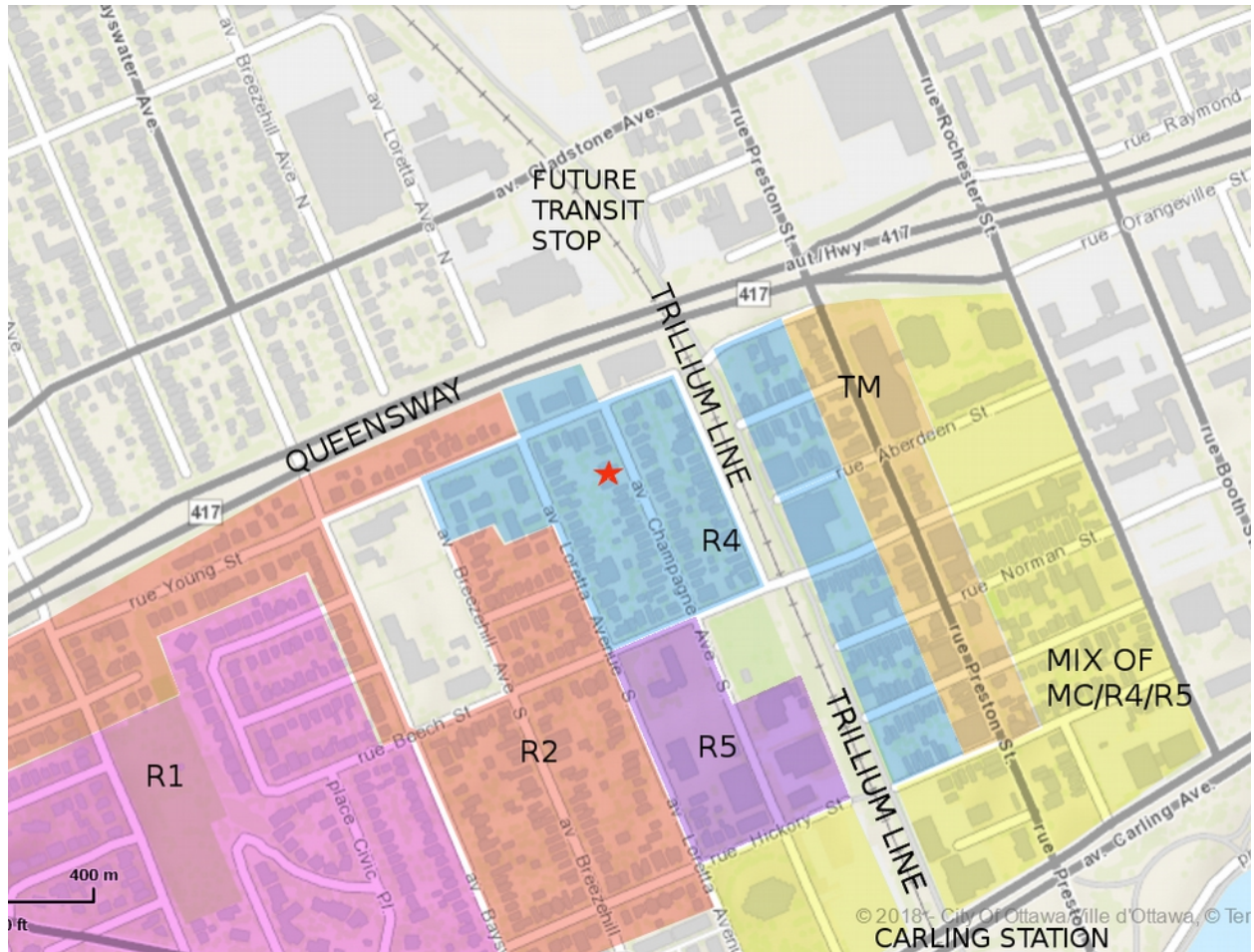
Re: 16 & 20 Champagne Avenue South Proposed Development

I am writing on behalf of my clients, the owners of the property located at 16 & 20 Champagne Ave. S in West Centretown. My clients wish to demolish the existing two houses and detached garages and build a 3.5 storey apartment building with 15 to 18 rental units and no parking. The lot is on a steep slope, so the proposed apartment would have a basement 'walk-out' toward the street side. In other words, the main entrance on the front of the building is at the basement level. At the back of the building the ground floor is at grade. The rear yard would be entirely landscaped with private and shared amenity space. Bikes, laundry and garbage would be located within the walk-out basement level.



Proposed apartment building, front elevation

This street is in transition as new developments replace old and often very poorly maintained single family housing stock. It is a neighbourhood characterized by diversity in architectural styles, materials and forms. This subject property is half a block from the Queensway and a few blocks to the lively stores and restaurants of Little Italy. The area has been zoned R4 for many years but the immediate block has remained largely single family homes, semi's and towns.



Champagne Ave looking north west (new semi's and towns)

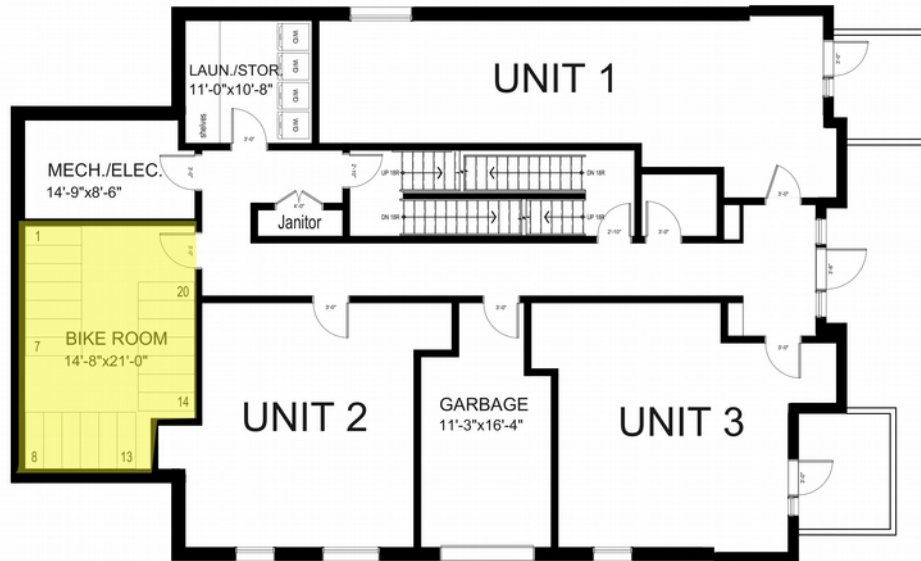


Champagne Avenue looking south (cranes and new towers)

In the larger neighbourhood surrounding this site there is even more change ongoing in R4, R5, TM and MC zoning. New towers and large condo and student rental housing developments have changed the skyline. The commercial activity on Preston is booming. The central location, ethnic flavour and existing LRT & bike paths (along transit corridor) have made this growing community very desirable. Many of the new and larger developments have triggered unrest among existing neighbours who resent the changes, and particularly the increased street parking (sometimes a result of construction phasing) and pot smoking. Many neighbours say that they would prefer new development that is street oriented and attracts a mixed clientele including families.

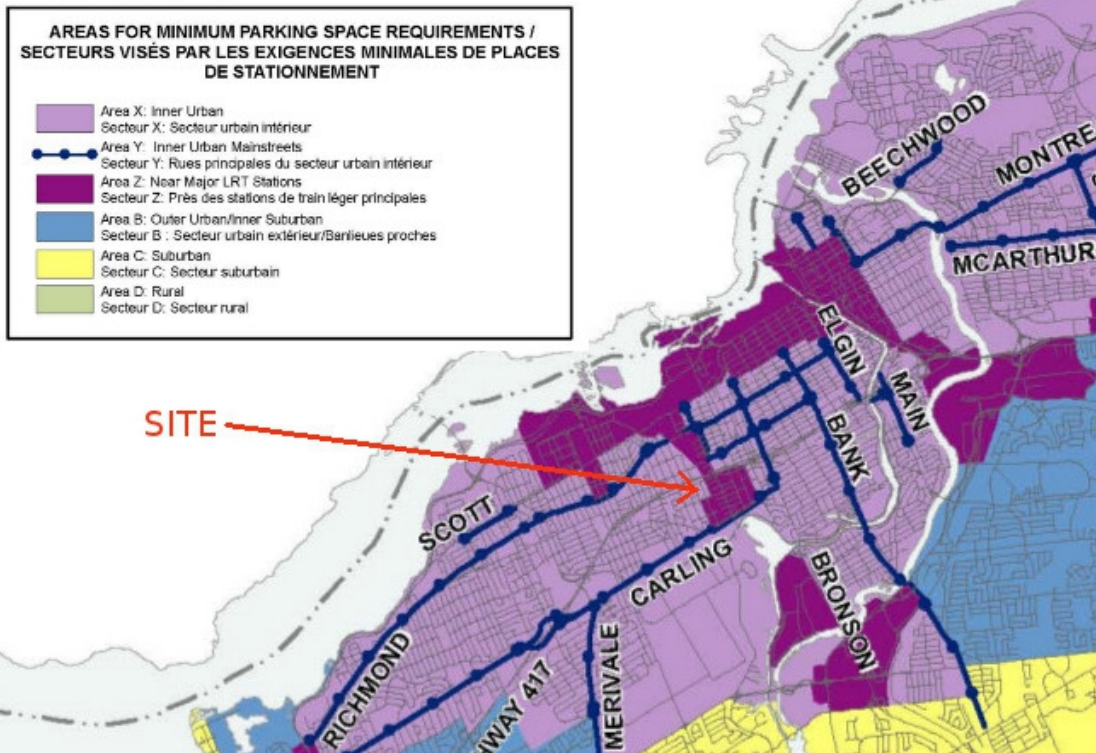
The location for this proposed 3.5 storey apartment is 500m (600m walking distance) from the existing Carling LRT station on the Trillium Line. A new LRT station is planned about 300m (+/-425m walking distance) away at Gladstone Avenue, as well as an 8 acre mixed-income 'village' including a french public school and a grocery store. The site is well located for cycling, close to the Gladstone Avenue "Suggested Connector Route" and with a paved "Multi-Use Pathway" extending to the north and south, accessible 170m from the site, and connecting cyclists to the rest of the City's extensive cycling network.

The proposed small apartment will provide ground-oriented rental housing units in a variety of unit sizes to meet the needs of a variety of household types. No parking will be provided, so the building will attract only car-less households. For this reason the proximity to LRT and bike routes is of primary importance, as is the practicality of the proposed bike room within the street level of the building.



Proposed Street Level (walk out basement) Plan with Bike Room

SCHEDULE 1A



Under current zoning our site is required to have 3.6 (pro-rated to 4) on-site parking spaces, but we propose to provide no on-site parking, in keeping with the Official Plan intent to encourage transit use in areas immediately around transit stations.

The site is within 'Area X: Inner Urban' and one block from 'Area Z: Near Major LRT Stations' on Schedule 1A in the City's zoning bylaw. Within 'Area Z' there are no parking requirements for residential uses, in order to encourage transit use. This schedule was intended to designate areas around transit or future transit stations that are a convenient walk to the station -- Area Z is exempt on site parking requirements. Although this city block was not included in Area Z, it is certainly walking distance to transit, bike paths and amenities, and meets the bylaw intent for Area Z. Ottawa's Official Plan states:

This Plan encourages areas around major transit stations to develop as compact, walkable, mixed-use developments with densities that support transit use in both directions in which the line runs throughout the day. (Ottawa Official Plan, Section 2.2.2 "Managing Growth Within the Urban Area")

The City maintains the following strategic objectives related to parking: to limit the supply of long-term parking in a manner that balances transit ridership objectives with the needs of automobile users; To support intensification and minimize the amount of land devoted to parking through measures such as parking structures and arrangements to share parking among land users; To continue to regulate both the minimum and maximum parking requirements for development within 600 metres of existing and proposed rapid transit stations... (Ottawa Official Plan, Policy 46(b-d): Parking)

Planning and development staff at the City of Ottawa have consistently recommended that this site be developed without on site parking, noting the proximity to transit, bike paths and amenities. The Parking Studies & Road Services staff of the Public Works & Environmental Services Department of the City of Ottawa has provided an analysis of the street parking saturation and found that it exceeds the levels above which on site parking is recommended. However this building is designed to attract car-less households who would not park on the street. The added burden to street parking resulting from this new development would be in the form of visitor parking demand only. And this need is addressed as described following.

The existing two homes on the site have a combined driveway and curb cut width of 6.7m. Once this paving is removed and the curb-side is freed up for parking, the street parking capacity will increase by 1 car. This increase meets the visitor parking needs required under the bylaw for this size of development (0.6 spaces prorated to 1) and will meet the parking demand of delivery trucks, dinner guests, repair or support persons. Given that parking is a significant concern to neighbours, some of whom predate City initiative to shift our City toward transit dependency rather than automobile dependency, we are sensitive to concerns about parking and extended our parking research into neighbouring blocks. We discovered that there is a surplus of parking in this neighbourhood, in the form of paid underground parking.



Underground parking at Preston and Aberdeen

In order to ensure that new tenants in the proposed building do not own cars, City Staff have proposed, and our client has agreed, that a parking covenant be attached to the site plan approval as a condition for those purchasing, and to be on any rental lease; that the owner doesn't guarantee or provide any vehicular parking on the street, and that no such parking is available for future tenants.

Front Yard Setback

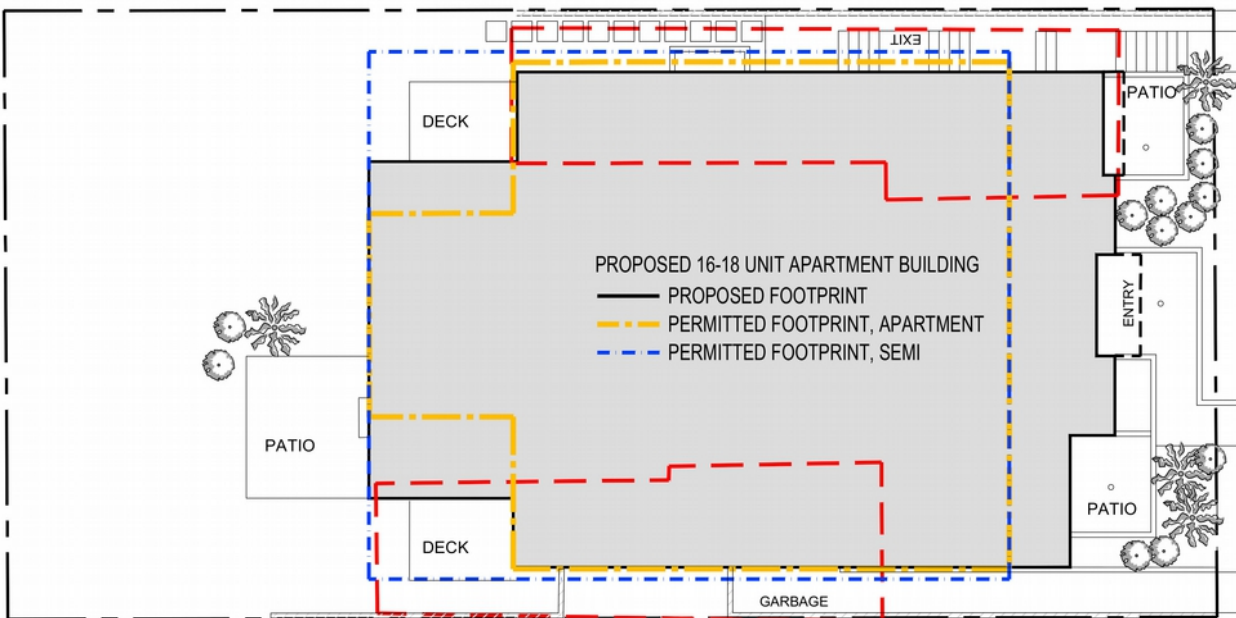
The proposed front yard setback is in line with the existing pattern of front yard setbacks. The zoning requires that the front yard be the average of immediate neighbours. The zoning bylaw intent is that infill developments match existing setback patterns. However the neighbour immediately to the north of this site is set back an uncharacteristic amount, such that the average setback is not characteristic of the otherwise consistent neighbourhood pattern. Therefore we are requesting a variance to be permitted to follow the established setback pattern with a setback of 2.9m. The existing pattern of setbacks is at about 2.8m, see diagram following.



GeoOttawa Map showing front yard setback pattern and proposed building footprint

Interior Side Yard Setbacks

The bylaw clauses that regulate interior side yard setbacks are complicated and wordy. Please refer to the diagram below to see the permitted interior side yard setback (yellow and blue). Apartment buildings in this zone are required a 1.5m side yard setback for the bulk of the wall, increasing to a 6m setback at a distance 21m from the front lot line. This stepping in at the rear end of the building is intended to reduce the perceived rear yard massing and protect the privacy of neighbours. This stepping in is not required

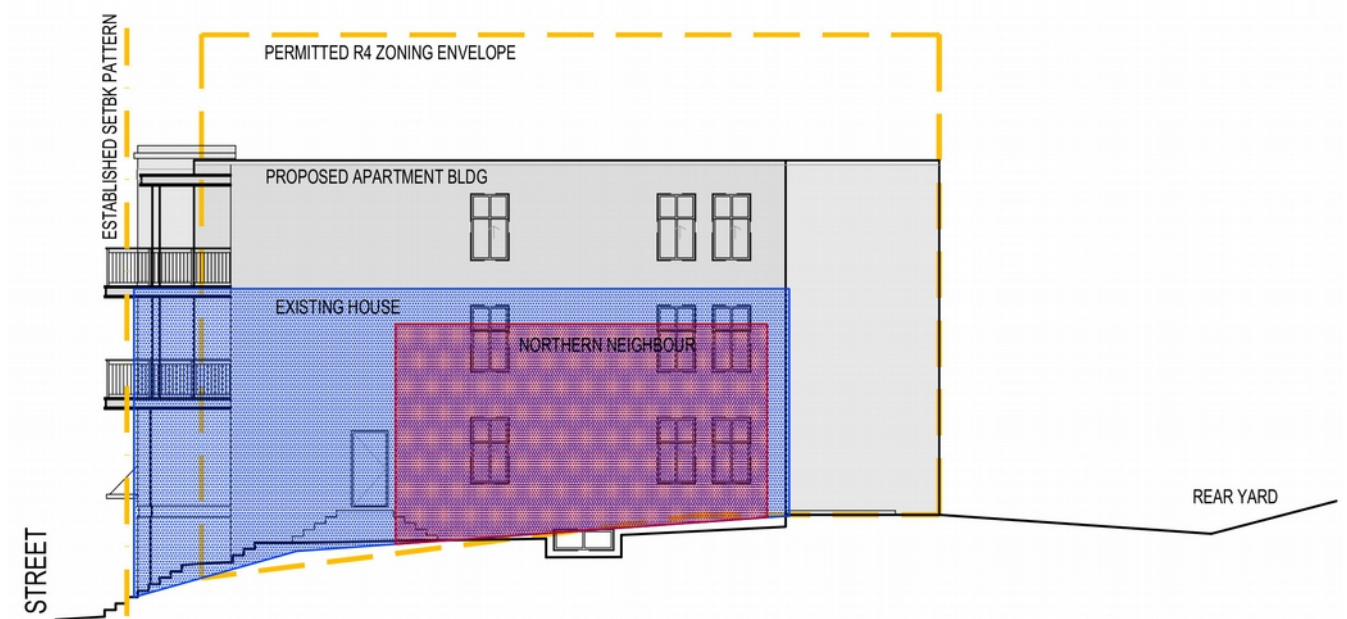


Proposed Site Plan, showing setbacks

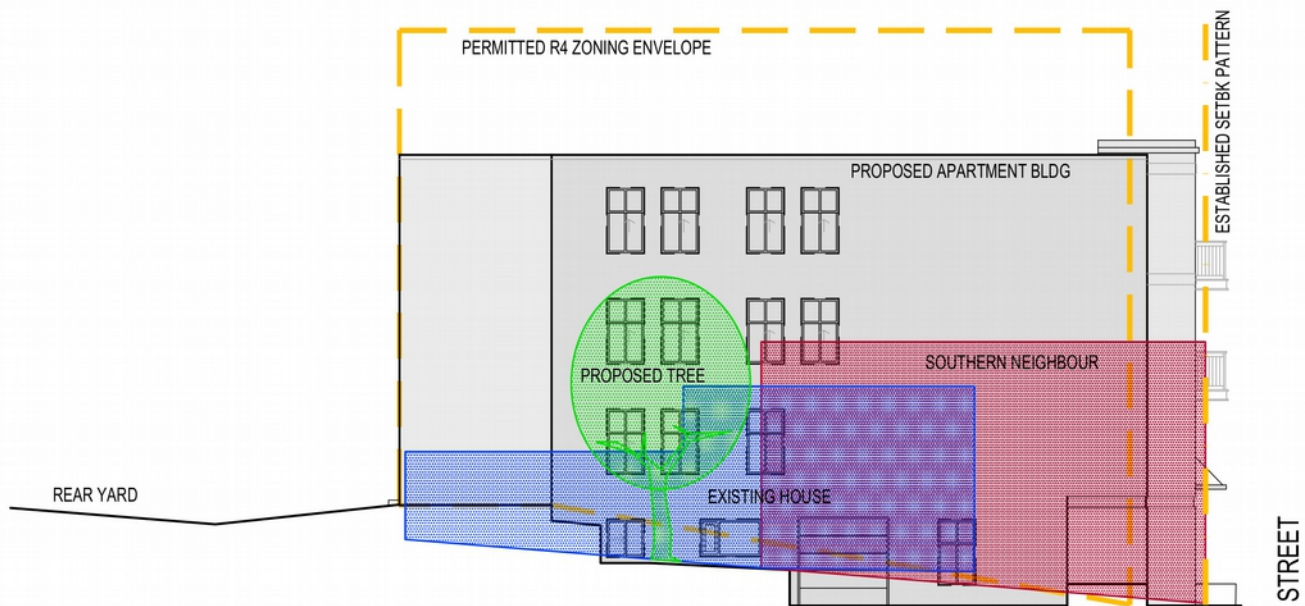
for singles, semi's, towns & triplexes of the same size and of the proposed height. There is no indication within the zoning bylaw to suggest why this stepping in is of importance for an apartment building but not for a house or triplex – all of which could look identical in their side and rear elevations. This singling out of apartment buildings to step in also does not seem to relate specifically to any elements of the Official Plan. It seems that this stepping in would be important in larger and taller apartment buildings.

Our requested setbacks for this proposed three storey building are shown in black with a grey tone. We propose to reduce the required stepping in at 21m to 4.5m on the north and 3.5m on the south. This reduction will have minimal effect on sunshadows, see diagram attached, and will have no significant visual impact from neighbouring rear yards.

No side windows are proposed in the stepped back side walls, in order to avoid overlook into existing rear yards. One of our side neighbours (southern) is set forward and would be exposed to side windows at the mid point of the proposed side elevation. My client will offer to plant a tree, as shown on our site plan and on the diagram below.

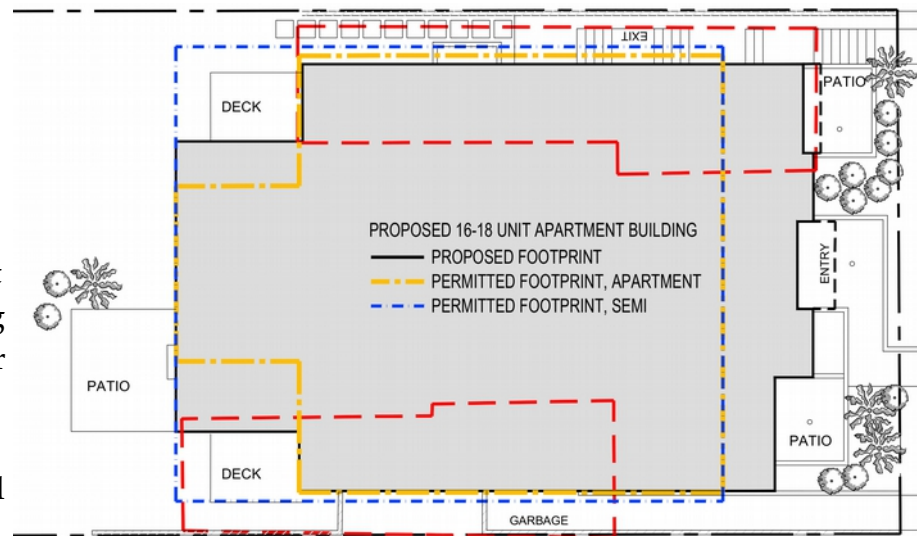


Northern Elevation, showing existing house in blue, immediate neighbour in red, and zoning envelope vs established street setback pattern in yellow.



Southern Elevation, showing existing house in blue, immediate neighbour in red, and zoning envelope vs established street setback pattern in yellow.

On both sides, the proposed main building wall setback will exceed the setbacks of the existing houses to be demolished. On the north side, the existing building is 0.5m from the lot line and the proposed building will be setback 1.5m and then 4.5m. On the south side the existing house is built right to the lot line and the proposed building would be setback 1.5m and then 3.5m. Stepping in a full 6m seems unnecessary in order to provide privacy and a sense of speciousness to the neighbours. The 6m stepping in of a side yard would be of importance if a very large apartment building were abutting lower scale development. The proposed development is to be 11m in building height, as permitted for semi's in this zone, rather than the 14.5m height that is permitted for apartments in this zone.



Site Plan, existing houses in red

We will be submitting an application to the Committee of Adjustments to request the following variances:

- 1) to reduce the minimum number of parking spaces required to 0; whereas the By-law requires a minimum of 4 parking spaces for this site and number of units.
[Part 4 – Minimum Parking Space Rates (Sec. 101)(3)(a) & Table 101 and Part 4 – Minimum Visitor Parking Space Rates (Sec. 102)(2) & Table 102]
- 2) to reduce the minimum front yard setback to 2.9m in order to be in line with the average existing front yard setback pattern along the street; whereas the By-law requires the front yard setback to be the average of the setbacks of the adjacent lots (in this case 6.4m), but need not exceed 6m.
[Low-Rise Residential Infill Development in the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay (Section 139)(3)(a)(i)]
- 3) to reduce the minimum side yard setbacks to 3.5m and 4.5m; whereas the By-law requires that the minimum side yard setback is 6m where the building wall is located more than 21m from a front lot line.
[R4 – Residential Fourth Density Zone (Sec. 161-162) Tables 162A & 162 B]

We hope to be heard by the Committee shortly after receiving and addressing Site Plan circulation comments.

We have met with community member on two occasions and shared healthy discussions. We have also meet with the City Councilor two times. The development proposal as you see it now, has been significantly revised from it's original form, in response to comments we received; footprint and built area was reduced, number of units reduced, 6 units were redesigned to optionally be used in pairs as 3 family sized units, storage was added to units to help attract more long term tenants, bike parking was increased, private outdoor space was increased. A more complete list of comments, responses and design revisions is attached.

We will be meeting once again with interested members of the community and the City Councilor once our Site Plan Application has been submitted and well in advance of the Committee of Adjustments hearing. We look forward to sharing the changes and improvements that have been drafted since our previous meetings, as well as receiving further input.

4 Tests: Is this application/proposal...

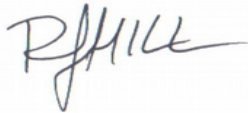
minor in nature?	Yes, this R4 zoning permits small apartment buildings of this kind. This building is shorter than the permitted building ht. The variances requested do not increase the impact of this building on it's surroundings but allow it to become a better fit.
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appropriate and desirable for this neighbourhood?	Yes, this neighbourhood is transforming quickly with high rises, towns and semi's. Small ground oriented, walk up apartments for cyclists and transit users will be a healthy contribution to this mix of new housing options. This development will bring a new fire hydrant to the street (paid for by the developer) which will significantly improve fire fighting capacity on the northern part of the block. (Existing underground water supply does not meet fire fighting needs.)
in keeping with purpose and intent of zoning bylaw?	Yes, this proposal meets bylaw intents for intensification, no parking near transit, green rear yards, setbacks to match neighbours and respects year yard spaciousness and privacy.
in keeping with purpose and intent of Official Plan?	Yes, this proposal adds diversity of housing units to a street in need of renewal. The 15-18 new housing units proposed are a variety of sizes, from bachelors to generous 3 bedroom units. The street facing architectural elements will add interest, and street facing balconies and patios will animate and populate the street.

As the Site Plan Application process will be ongoing at the time of our Committee of Adjustment hearing, we will request that, if the variances are granted, the following condition be applied to this file: *This application is granted subject to "the size and location of the proposed construction being in accordance with the drawings filed, as they relate to the variance(s) sought."* This will allow for any small revisions that may be necessary as a result of the ongoing Site Plan review process.

If you require any further information, please call me at 613-853-2822.

Regards,



Rosaline J. Hill
B.E.S., B.Arch., OAA, MRAIC