
384 FRANK STREET - Planning Rationale for Proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment
for Ottawa Carleton Construction, 337 Sunnyside, Ottawa Ontario

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	Page 3
2.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS	Page 3
3.0 PROPERTY ANALYSIS	Page 6
4.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	Page 7
5.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS	Page 8
6.0 CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATION	Page 11

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

UnPoised Architecture has been retained by Ottawa Carleton Construction to study the desired land use at 384 Frank Street and prepare a Planning Rationale for a Zoning By-Law Amendment (ZBA) application in order to change the current zone from Minor Institutional to Traditional Mainstreet and to permit the construction of a 9-storey mixed use building on the property.

2.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The property at 384 Frank Street, currently designated in the city's 2008-250 Consolidated By-law as a Minor Institutional (I1A) with a Mature Neighbourhood Overlay and a maximum building height of 15m, is surrounded by a variety of neighbouring zones. It is located one property east of Bank Street which is zoned as Traditional Mainstreet, next to residential zones located to the east and south and a General Mixed Use zone to the immediate north.



zoning diagram - context

The built area surrounding 384 Frank Street consists of predominately 2 and 3 storey structures, pockets of undeveloped surface parking areas and notably two nearby 9-storey structures at Bank and Gladstone (The Central Building) and mid-block on Frank Street between Bank and O'Connor Streets (The Edwardian Building). Also of note, is what is known as the Fauna building which is a 2 ½ storey building facing Bank Street, backing onto the Frank street property, and which has been evaluated as a Category 2 heritage value building (*ref: Cultural Heritage Impact Statement*).

Within 100m one can access a variety of shops, personal services establishments, restaurants and other residential accommodations.



bird's eye view – from south-west

The topography of the area is flat with wide sidewalks along Bank Street and average width sidewalks along Frank Street that one would find along secondary streets in Centretown. Utility poles with overhead services line the south side of Frank Street and there is an intent to bury the overhead services where it comes in front of the Frank Street property. One can find periodic trees along some portions of the south side of the street where a front yard setback has been provided.



looking east from the Fauna Building at the corner of Bank Street



looking west on Frank Street toward Bank Street

3.0 PROPERTY ANALYSIS

The property is 206.6 sq.m in area, 20.5m deep and 10m wide along Frank Street. Within the property is a 3m easement providing access to the rear sides of the neighbouring properties. Located on the site is an existing 2 storey residential building currently unoccupied and defined in the Cultural Heritage Impact Report as *'a minor examples of residential development...likely built in the post-war period...remodelled c1970...and noted as vernacular and its architectural integrity as poor'*.



Pictv

view of existing 2 storey building on site

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The proposed development is to demolish the existing 2 storey building and construct a new 9 storey residential building with commercial space on the ground floor in keeping with the land use stipulated in a Traditional Mainstreet Zone. Residential units are to be 2 bedroom units, approximately 750 sq.m each with 2 units per floor. Massing and exterior materials are articulated to align with the height and material use of the 2 and 3 storey adjacent buildings, while the tower above is intended to be contemporary in nature both in terms of massing and material use.



proposed building – Frank Street elevation

The west wall of the tower is a highly visible element on display from Bank Street above the Fauna building and in discussions with the local councillor and representatives of the Bank Street Business Improvement Area association, the design of the façade is intended to enhance and contribute to the architectural integrity of the street. Consequently, two governing aspects are guiding the expression of this wall. The first is a functional response to the Ontario Building Code which is to provide niches in the wall for windows that are not permitted to be on the west façade and the second governing aspect is an artistic intervention either from the design architect (such as coloured bands of a unique materials and light refractions), an intervention for development in partnership with a local artist, or a mix of the two.



Concept for west wall of tower – overlooking Fauna Building and Bank Street

5.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

By extension of the Ontario's 2014 Provincial Policy Statement and the City of Ottawa's Official Plan Amendment No.150, this analysis considers the objectives and policies of the Centretown Secondary Plan and the strategies in the Centretown Community Design Plan.

5.1. Centretown Secondary Plan

Relevant and dominating policy statements pertaining to this development are Sections 3.4.1, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.7, and 3.8.1.

5.1.1(a). *Policy Statement, Section 3.4.1 | Maintain and respect character of Centretown's neighbourhoods: ensures the scale, massing and design of new developments respect the character of the established areas with heritage buildings.*

5.1.1(b). **Application to Proposal:** The proposal to identify a lower 3 storey mass at the street is respectful to the scale of the street and neighbouring buildings as well as the adjacent heritage building. The west façade of the tower acts as a contrasting background above heritage building (Fauna Building) along Bank Street.

5.1.2(a). *Policy Statement, Section 3.4.3.: | Accommodate a diverse population: ensure new housing provides a range of dwelling types and sizes*

5.1.2(b). Application to Proposal: While this proposal does not have a great diversity in dwelling types and sizes within the building, it's plan for 2 bedroom units on floors 2 to 9 responds to the deficiency in these size of units in the area which are typically 1 bedroom and bachelor units.

5.1.3(a). *Policy Statement, Section 3.4.4. | Reinforce and promote commercial activity: enhance the presence of small businesses within mixed use areas.*

5.1.3(b). Application to Proposal: The proposal includes a small 250 sq.ft commercial space suited for a small business and positioned one building in from Bank Street.

5.1.4 (a): *Policy Statement, Section 3.4.7 | Promote design excellence: ensures high quality improvements to the public realm and community engagement that lead to public input on design decisions.*

5.1.4 (b): Application to Proposal: This proposal is integrating unique design elements to the west façade overlooking Bank Street towards enhancement of the public realm. A public consultation has already been conducted with positive input and design is intended to develop accordingly.

5.1.5 (a): *Policy Statement, Section 3.8.1. | Affordable and Assisted Housing: the city shall include the provision for affordable housing.*

5.1.5 (b): Application to Proposal: This proposal provides one and possibly two (pending further design development) 250 sq.ft affordable housing units on the ground floor.

5.2. Centretown Community Design Plan

Relevant strategies and policies pertaining to this type of property are: Section 6.1, 6.2.2, 6.3.2, 6.4.2., 6.5.1

5.2.1(a). *Strategic Statement, Section 6.1 | Land Use: supports strategic land use designations including high, medium and low profile residential buildings.*

5.2.1(b). Application to Proposal: The proposed location for this property for apartment units with a ground floor commercial space is aligned with the Residential Mixed Use locations recommended in this section. Proposal fully complies.

5.2.2(a). *Strategic Statement, Section 6.2.2. | Overall Height Approach: provides guidance on where high, medium and low rises are located in respect to the visual integrity of the city's most symbolic structures,*

5.2.2(b). Application to Proposal: The proposal for a 9-storey building in this location is aligned with the recommended height of buildings in this location. Proposal fully complies.

5.2.3(a). Strategic Statement, Section 6.3.2 | Creating a Positive Ground Floor Experience: *recommends methods for creating a positive and safe experience between building, street and sidewalk including setback, animated facades and landscaping*

5.2.3(b). Application to Proposal: While the proposal does not provide the recommended distance for setback, it does offer a small setback, glazed entrances for apartments and commercial space, and a small overhang over the ground floor façade giving the street a pedestrian scale.

5.2.4 (a): Strategic Statement, Section 6.4.2 | Mid-Rise Built Form: *provides guidelines for mid-rise infill buildings including alignment with adjacent buildings, avoiding or articulating blank walls and respecting Heritage Conservation District Guidelines*

5.2.4 (b): Application to Proposal: The built form of the proposal aligns itself with the built edge of the heritage building (Fauna Building) to the west and is proud of the built edge of the residential building to the east. It's massing and use of materials at level 3 visually links the two buildings and is sensitive to the heritage character of the street. There are no blank walls fronting the street and consequently the proposal meets the objectives of this statement.

5.2.5 (a): Strategic Statement, Section 6.5.1 | Design Led Heritage Approach: *ensures new development complements and does not distract from or diminish the cultural heritage value of any heritage properties including respectful of key heritage elements such as step-backs, cornice lines, proportion and rhythms*

5.2.5 (b): Application to Proposal: The proposal takes its cue from the Category 2 heritage building, The Fauna Building and its lower brick massing at floor levels 2 and 3 respond to the cornice line of the heritage building as well as the use of the red brick. Window fenestration at these levels are articulated in a manner that is contemporary but speaks to the scale and proportions of the large heritage windows along Bank Street.

6.0 CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATION

There are two aspects of importance related to this ZBA application: the Centretown Secondary Plan and Community Design Plan as well as the sensitivity to the heritage character of the area.

In terms of the two plans, the proposed development can be said to be fully in compliance with the objectives and strategies outlined in the documents not only in terms of land use, building height and relationship to the street but also in its sensitivity to bring improvement to the public realm through the intended articulation of the wall overlooking Bank Street. In terms of sensitivity to the heritage character, the proposed massing, material use and detailing at the second and third stories achieves just what the guidelines recommend for interventions into a heritage context.

Given this, and in the wake of positive reactions from design presentations to the local councillor, to the Bank Street Business Improvement Area Association and to the community through a recent public presentation, I recommend this amendment proceed through to approval and am happy to provide any additional input as needed.

Yours very truly,



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