

19 September 2013

NEW OFFICES FOR BELLS CORNERS PROPERTIES PLANNING RATIONALE

1931 – 1935 Robertson Road, Ottawa ON

Planning Rationale

An existing one-storey office building with 1,729 m² area in an AM H(22) zoning (Arterial Mainstreet, height limit: 22 m) shall be renovated and a new 3-storey office building with 4,204 m² area joined by a 106 m² enclosed walkway shall be added (included in new building total) at the rear. The existing building is part of a campus of office and retail buildings located on the property, all under one ownership. The new office building shall have a different address from the existing building for purposes of electrical connection and leasing.

The campus fronts Robertson Road just west of Stafford Road and is served by existing private-approach roads, one of which is signalized. Parking for the existing office building has a separate direct connection to Robertson Road. The landscaping for the existing office is well-developed and shall be upgraded to provide new trees to replace those likely to be lost to construction activity and including some ash trees likely to be lost to the emerald ash-borer.

The existing one-storey office building will be renovated to match the new 3-storey office building which will feature clear continuous glazing and metal panel cladding. The new 3-storey office building will be located to the north of (behind) and joined to the existing office building by a glazed walkway and wood trellis enclosing an interior patio between the buildings. New parking will be extended from the existing parking at the western side of the campus, and at the north of the new building. Further north of the parking, a dry-bed stormwater retention pond shall be constructed with access provided beyond to the playing fields. The dry-bed retention pond shall be designed as a landscape feature.

This development addresses the Official Plan:

- The land area for this development is contained in an Enterprise land-use designation fronting an Arterial Mainstreet (ref. Schedule B, Official Plan); this development conforms to this use and provides a 'Prestigious use[s]... with a signature address...' in accordance with the Official Plan, 3.6.5 – Employment Area and Enterprise Area and further enhances the current land-use,
- Increased intensification of the land use is contained within the boundaries of the greenbelt and uses existing infrastructure more efficiently (ref. Official Plan, 2.2.2 – Managing Growth Within the Urban Area),

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- Increased intensification of employment along an Arterial Mainstreet (ref. Official Plan, 2.2.2 – Managing Growth Within the Urban Area, *Policies*: para. 20).

This development addresses the intent of the Zoning (AM H(22) – Arterial Mainstreet), namely: *'...promote intensification while ensuring that [development standards] are compatible with the surrounding uses.'*

- Office use is increased,
- Development standards are compatible with the surrounding uses:
 - Setbacks at the new and existing buildings exceed the zoning requirements, and shall be landscaped,
 - The existing landscaping fronting Robertson Road shall remain, with enhancements,
 - The Urban Design Guidelines for Arterial Mainstreets provides direction on development standards:
 - **Guideline 2:** Provide or restore a 2.0 metre wide unobstructed concrete sidewalk. Locate the sidewalk to match [the location of sidewalks at the adjacent properties]; in addition, provide ... a 1.0 to 3.0 metre landscape area in the right-of-way.
 - **Guideline 3:** Plant trees ... in the landscaped area to ensure healthy tree growth.
 - **Guideline 7:** Design new development to be compatible with the general physical character of adjacent neighbourhoods: the character of the new construction and upgrades to the existing building shall be complementary and of similar quality to the other office buildings on the campus.
 - **Guideline 13:** Ensure that buildings occupy the majority of the lot frontage: the existing building steps back relative to the closest portion at the street which reduces its apparent frontage. The renovations shall include an archway that continues from the closest portion of the building at the street, which increases its presence and shall be used to sign the building.
 - **Guideline 20:** Provide direct, safe, continuous and clearly defined pedestrian access from public sidewalks to building entrances.
 - **Guideline 21:** Provide unobstructed pedestrian walkways that are a minimum of 2.0 metres wide along any façade with a (customer) entrance, along any façade adjacent to parking areas, and between the primary entrance and the public sidewalk.

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- **Guideline 27:** Locate surface parking spaces at the side or rear of buildings.
- **Guideline 29:** Orient car parking spaces to minimize the number of traffic aisles that pedestrians must cross.
- **Guideline 31:** Use continuous landscaping to reinforce pedestrian walkways within parking areas. An important feature of this development is the pedestrian connection of the building through the parking area and stormwater retention pond to the playing fields at the north of the site.
- **Guideline 32:** Select trees, shrubs and other vegetation considering their tolerance to urban conditions, such as road salt or heat. Give preference to native species of the region of equal suitability.
- **Guideline 34:** Coordinate tree and street-light locations with above and below-grade utilities.
- **Guideline 35:** Provide a minimum 3.0 metre wide landscape area ... at the edges of sites adjacent to residential or institutional properties.
- **Guideline 43:** Design buildings to accommodate signs that respect building scale, architectural features, signage uniformity and established streetscape design objectives.
- **Guideline 51:** Design lighting so that there is no glare or light spilling onto surrounding uses.
- **Guideline 53:** Design secondary doors (such as emergency exit or service doors) to blend in with the building façade.



William Crompton
DAVID S McROBIE ARCHITECTS INC.