

December 6, 2021

Secretary-Treasurer
Chair and Members
c/o Coordinator
Committee of Adjustment
101 CentrepoinTE Drive, 4th Floor,
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(613) 580-2436



Re: Major variances at [1561 Minaki Avenue](#) and [845 Melfa Crescent](#) (Legal Description: Part of Lot 5, Registered Plan 455, File Nos.: D08-01-21/B-00295, D08-01-21/B-00296, D08-02-21/A-00272 & D08-02-21/A-00273)

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

Our association, the Carleton Heights and Area Residents Association (CHARA), supports intensification as a key tool for the City to respond to new challenges and opportunities. However, we supported motions that added to the City staff work plans and increased public consultation in the short term to safeguard the health and safety of our residents given the levels of intensification proposed under the New Official Plan.

The Carleton Heights and Area Residents Association (CHARA) is a volunteer-run community association. We work with our members to build and maintain a safe and healthy community. Our neighbourhoods are defined in the official city plan as the area bounded to the:

- North by the Experimental Farm at Baseline Road,
- East by the Rideau Canal and Rideau River,
- West by Fisher Avenue and
- South by the intersection of Prince of Wales Drive and Fisher Avenue.

The Carleton Heights and Area Local Context

Predominantly developed in the 1950s, our community has several pocket neighbourhoods with rural arterial roads, narrow streets (e.g., 20-28ft wide), no areas for permanent on-street parking and no sidewalks. Many bus routes that used to serve the community no longer run. Among the bus routes that remain, buses run less frequently and unreliably. Water, sewers, stormwater and collection systems are ageing, having remained largely the same from the original development. Large streams buried during development flow underneath residents' homes, and standing water is commonplace. Flooding occurs in our low-density zoned neighbourhoods, particularly during spring thaw or heavy rainfall events.

Uphold the governance of our Secondary Plan

Although the New Official Plan was amended and passed by City Council on October 27th, 2021, the revised version was adopted by Council on November 24th, 2021. However, the New Official Plan is

subject to Ministerial review in 2022, and the Zoning By-law review is expected to take up to 3 years to complete by 2024-25.

The proposals for developments at 1561 Minaki Avenue and 845 Melfa Crescent introduce major variances to the governing Carleton Heights and Area Secondary Plan. A new Secondary Plan for our area has been introduced in the New Official Plan, and it is being referenced in this application but is not yet approved. By approving the major variances of these developments, the Committee of Adjustment will be circumventing the public accountability required in the upcoming zoning consultations.

Carleton Heights & Area supported motions that amended the NOP implementation

Recent and relatively minimal infill revealed weaknesses of our limited services and outdated, poorly maintained community infrastructure in Carleton Heights.

- Transit service levels to our area have decreased significantly in our recent history and remaining higher frequency routes only function in conjunction with an operable Light Rail Transit (LRT) system.
- The decreased transit service levels in our area have significantly impacted all residents—particularly low-income and younger community members. Housing affordability, reduced reliance on private vehicles, 15-minute neighbourhoods that are walkable and accessible depend on reliable public transit that is predominantly unavailable.
- Recent infill has prioritized development over the health and safety of our residents and overburdened our community's ageing and fragile infrastructure.
- Haphazard development exacerbates existing deficiencies, undermines affordability and assumes that the best time to upgrade water, sewer, stormwater systems, roads and transit services is when they fail. Observed recent changes in precipitation trends and cycles coupled with climate model projections of future precipitation require more of our infrastructure and the City of Ottawa planners.

We do not support development with major variances that do not follow the governance and accountability protections of the NOP - that includes work plan amendments and public consultations to ensure the health and safety of our residents.

The City of Ottawa has not met its obligations for safe and sustainable intensification as outlined in the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and the Planning Act; City staff need to await Ministerial approval, uphold the NOP amendments, complete the work plans and conduct the public consultations required before its implementation.^{1 2}

CHARA has been very involved in the consultations for the New Official Plan, and we have raised many concerns (some available here [Correspondence – CHARA](#)). We will actively participate in the forthcoming consultations for the NOP implementation.

¹ Approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, Order in Council No. 229/2020 (2014). *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020*. [online] www.ontario.ca. Available at: <https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-provincial-policy-statement-2020-accessible-final-en-2020-02-14.pdf>.

² Ontario Legislature and Registrar of Regulations, (2021). *Planning Act*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13#BK27>. Consolidation period from June 3, 2021 to the e-Laws currency date. Last amendment: 2021, c.25, Sched. 24.

Avoid Major Variances Carleton Heights Secondary Plan

We implore you to uphold the governing 1994 Secondary Plan Schedule G and its description. We call for realistic development that understands the safety, security, privacy, and sustainability of our community. We ask the Committee to reject the developer plans to:

- Divide the small lot of [1561 Minaki Avenue](#) into two parcels and build two houses on the existing lot that do not conform to the current R1 GG Zoning By-law that includes
 - Three-storey houses of 9.2m (according to the Zoning By-law, it should not exceed 8m), and
 - Minimum lot width of 16.91m (according to the Zoning By-law, it should be a minimum of 18m).
 - **Part 1,**
 - Corner property facing Minaki Avenue has an amenity area facing the main entrance and front yard of the adjacent property at 1555 Minaki Avenue (Appendix A).
 - The corner property facing Minaki Avenue is described in text and drawings as fronting on Melfa Avenue.
 - The corner property facing Minaki Avenue has a front yard below the minimum setback of 6m for R1GG without a request for a variance.
 - The development also lacks the minimum rear yard setback with a side yard amenity substituted. No variance is requested for this change. Without any discussion, acknowledgement, or request for a variance, these changes are highly undesirable as they produce a situation where the amenity area of Part1 entirely faces the front yard of the adjoining property.
 - **Part 2,**
 - Minimum lot width of 15.51m (according to the Zoning By-law, it should be a minimum of 18m), and a frontage of only 14.6m,
 - Building height of 8.3m (according to the Zoning By-law, it should not exceed 8m),
 - Minimum rear yard setback of 4.79m (58cm less than the Zoning By-law requirement, minimum rear yard setback should be 5.37m, 25% of the lot depth), and
 - Parking permanently on the road where residents do not have a driveway.

The developer's requests are not minor, may be incomplete, and appear to be based on a patchwork selection of bylaws from both the old and New Official Plans. We suggest the Committee of Adjustment instruct the applicant and all City staff reviewing this proposal to follow Schedule G to uphold the transparency and accountability required of the NOP, not choose rules from both Official Plans. Therefore, we request that the Committee of Adjustment reject this application in its current form. Please follow the entire NOP implementation plan without pre-empting the accountability required for development in our area.

Sincerely,

Carleton Heights and Area Residents Association

APPENDIX A

Image of the properties shows lack of conformity of front yard setback of Part 1 to typical setbacks of adjacent properties on Minaki Avenue. The application has no request for such a variance. Is this an oversight?

Image 1: Application for development at [1561 Minaki Avenue](#) and [845 Melfa Crescent](#) shows lack of conformity of front yard setback

