Date

Jim Watson, Mayor

City of Ottawa

110 Laurier Ave W

Ottawa (ON) K1P 1J1

**Re: Citizen Article – “Developers to get ambassadors within planning department”**

Dear Mr. Mayor,

I am writing to you to let you know that I was outraged when I read the Citizen article on June 1, 2015, entitled “Developers to get ambassadors within planning department”. Community associations and residents across this City volunteer thousands of hours a year reviewing and commenting on development files, all with the slim hopes of ensuring quality design and compatibility with their neighbourhood. Rarely do these efforts pay-off.

The entire development review process is already designed to aid the developers at the expense of the community. Residents are kept in the dark about planning proposals until the last minute and then our views are largely ignored. This culture needs to change.

Developers have vested and limited interests in the development of our communities, yet they already enjoy the full attention of the City’s planning staff. Beyond that they have the funds necessary to engage lawyers, planners, architects, engineers and others to promote and justify their applications.

The balance is already too heavily weighted in favour of development when there is conflict with the community. To pay city employees, at our expense, to provide developers with even more assistance on their applications only adds insult to injury.

The planning department should be working for the residents of this City, not for the developers. We should be seen as their clients, not the developers. Community concerns and considerations should be given more weight than the financial interests of the few.

I encourage you to cancel this ill-advised initiative and instead provide our beleaguered community associations and residents with ambassadors in the City’s planning department.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name

Cc: Jan Harder, Councillor – Ward 3 & Chair, Planning Committee

Mathieu Fleury, Councillor – Ward 12