



19 February 2019

Kimberley Baldwin, Planner  
City of Ottawa  
110 Laurier Ave W  
Ottawa (ON)

**Re: Site Plan Control Application No. D07-12-16-0095**

Dear Ms. Baldwin,

Action Sandy Hill (ASH) is a not-for-profit, volunteer-led, community association which represents and promotes the interests of Sandy Hill and its residents.

ASH has reviewed the Site Plan Control Application, file No. D07-12-16-0095, in respect of 404 Daly Avenue and has a number of concerns. We do not oppose the construction of a new low-rise apartment building at this site but offer the following comments on the proposed building.

**Design:** This site is located within the Sandy Hill Cultural Heritage Character Area and is surrounded by buildings that are identified in its accompanying Guidelines as Category 2 and 3 heritage buildings. Such buildings are, "considered contributing buildings in the heritage character area. These historic buildings contribute to the overall sense of place in Sandy Hill and define its character."

The Sandy Hill Cultural Heritage Character Area Guidelines clearly state that,

***5.4 Guidelines for Infill***

*The guidelines in this section are intended to guide the design of new buildings in the cultural heritage character area.*

*These guidelines should be read in conjunction with applicable municipal planning policy and by-laws, including the Zoning By-law and the Official Plan.*

- 1. New buildings should be of their own time and not attempt to replicate a historic style, but should be sympathetic to the character of the neighbourhood.*
- 2. Any new residential development in the cultural heritage character area should be in keeping with the traditional scale of residential buildings in the heritage*

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*character area. New construction should be sympathetic to the immediate neighbours in terms of setback, footprint, and massing.*

- 3. The existing lot pattern contributes to the character of the neighbourhood. Lot sizes north of Laurier Avenue are typically larger than those south of Laurier Avenue. Where lots are proposed to be severed, this character should be considered.*
- 4. Cladding materials should reflect the character of the neighbourhood. Some appropriate materials include stucco, brick, natural stone, wood siding or fibre cement board.*

The proposed building does not meet the above requirements. Its faux mansard roof, numerous angled bays, and overall design is a mere pastiche of historic styles. Its scale and monolithic mass is in stark contrast to the highly articulated neighbouring buildings. Even the existing lot pattern is being ignored as this site previously featured two semi-detached houses, converted to apartments, and therefore appeared as two buildings which contributed more rhythm to the streetscape.

The Official Plan, Section 4.6 also includes policies for development review in areas where heritage resources are located. In particular, Policy 9 states that,

*When reviewing applications for ... site plan control approval ... affecting lands/properties adjacent to or across the street from a designated heritage resource, adjacent to or across the street from the boundary of a heritage conservation district, or within heritage conservation district, the City will ensure that the proposal is compatible by:*

- a. Respecting the massing, profile and character adjacent to or across the street from heritage buildings;*

It is truly disappointing to see yet another proposed ugly cube, this on a street that is one of the most beautiful and historic in Sandy Hill. A building like this completely debases its neighbours and the street's rich architectural character. There is no indication whatsoever that the building has been designed to fit its surroundings: it would be equally at home in a Kanata business park. Given that the Official Plan and the Sandy Hill Cultural Heritage Character Area Guidelines require infill buildings to respect and contribute to neighbourhood character, we contend that this building needs to be completely redesigned.

**Setbacks:** We strongly oppose any reductions in required setbacks. Setback requirements are established in the zoning bylaw to ensure appropriate separation from neighbours and preservation of some green space. The proposed reductions to required setbacks are inconsistent with the area; and, combined with an underground parking garage will significantly reduce the permeability of the site. Given the prevalence of sensitive clay soils in Sandy Hill, anything that could lead to dewatering is a concern.

**Parking:** We oppose the proposal to provide 6 parking spaces when only 2 are required. This significant increase in parking is contrary to the City's stated intention to reduce car use and increase transit ridership. Furthermore, this is only possible by putting the parking underground which poses additional risks.

**Vibrations, Soils:** The excavation of an underground parking garage will cause vibrations that could have negative impact on the rubblestone foundations of adjacent properties. Coupled with the already stated concerns about the mass of the building leading to dewatering of the sensitive clay soil, we have serious concerns regarding the potential for undue adverse impacts on the neighbours. We are painfully aware of the catastrophic results for homeowners on St. Andrew Street (Water Street Condo Development) and of course the recent “sink holes” during construction of the LRT. The City has already compensated homeowners in Sandy Hill for damage caused by dewatering.

The geotechnical study prepared for the proponent and currently available on the City’s DevApps website was clearly written for the previous iteration of this building, it talks about a 3-storey apartment building with surface parking. Given that the proposal is now for a much larger 4-storey apartment building with underground parking, we assert that this study must be redone before proceeding further.

**Livability:** Generally, we would welcome a proposal that does not include apartments crammed full of bedrooms. However, the proposed floor plans for this building illustrate that instead 15 very compact apartments have been crammed into this building. The individual rooms within each apartment are barely larger than the minimum sizes dictated by the building code. In addition, the apartments have limited closet space and no dedicated storage space. Coupled with the lack of any private balconies or terraces, and it’s clear that this building is not being designed for long-term livability but for the transient population to which TCUnited generally caters. We would encourage the developer to reconsider this, and to aim to make the building more attractive to potential long-term tenants. Furthermore, it is not clear where the necessary mechanical equipment will be located; for such a large building it will certainly be noisy and ugly; and, therefore, should not be an afterthought.

**Conclusion:** As identified, there are many reasons why ASH opposes this application, chief among them being that the proposed building is out-of-scale and out-of-character architecturally with the neighbourhood, threatens the integrity and livability of neighbouring properties, and continues the trend of building cube-like student residences at the expense of all other demographics.

Please ensure that ASH is kept abreast of the process of this application.

Best regards,



Chad Rollins  
Co-chair, Planning and Heritage Committee  
Action Sandy Hill

Cc: Mathieu Fleury, Councillor – Ward 12