



Susan Young <susanonash@gmail.com>

31 Oct 2018,
18:52

to PHILIP, Susan, Chad, Trina, John

Dear Philip and Susan,

Thank you for meeting us at 71 Russell Ave. on Thursday, October 18th. Below our comments on your proposal. As your proposal is to be built in a mature, low-rise neighbourhood, we have structured our comments with respect to the principal applicable elements in the City of Ottawa's Design Guidelines for Low-rise Infill Housing, as we place considerable importance on new builds that are sympathetic to their existing surroundings.

Action Sandy Hill strongly encourages preservation of heritage buildings, whether designated or not. You are currently proposing to demolish a building that has a history, and whose form reflects the history of the neighbourhood. There are a number of examples of how homes such as the one at 71 Russell Ave. have been successfully renovated and then added to - for example, [The Portals](#) on the corner of Russell and Laurier Avenues. While The Portals is a 10-unit condominium development, it could easily have been equally attractive rental units. We encourage you to look at this as an alternative. In any case, you will need to be very careful when you excavate foundations as various properties in Sandy Hill have had to file civil suits over the last few years, as neighbouring properties have been damaged. The neighbours to the north also noted the proximity of their mature trees to the property line, and the need to protect those trees.

We also encourage you to appeal to a broad range of tenants who are looking to make Sandy Hill their home for its proximity to shops, services and downtown, for its built character (to which your building will contribute), and for its inviting, green street- and landscapes. You have begun to do this by providing them building services such as an interior elevator, storage space, and indoor garbage area, maintaining as many mature trees as possible on the east side of the property to make a unique greenspace, and by offering different-sized apartments. We note that your current proposed building conforms to the size, mass, and amenity space requirements as set out in Infill 2.

1. Streetscape - "Reflect the desirable aspects of the established streetscape character."

We note that the front of your building follows the same front line as its neighbours, and will be landscaped. We'd like to emphasize the importance of pedestrian-scale, lighting around the entryway only, that points downward in order to minimize light pollution and prevent spillage onto neighbouring properties.

2. Landscape

We encourage planting of two trees on the front portion of the lot that will eventually contribute to the canopy of Russell Ave., and the use of permeable pavers (turf blocks) for the parking spaces, to maintain absorption of rain and snow melt. For other plantings in the front, you'll want to ensure they are hardy and salt-tolerant. As many mature trees at the back of the lot that can be maintained should be, as this will reduce the need for air conditioning in your building, and operating costs. We look forward to seeing the landscaping plan.

3. Built form - "Infill development should be a desirable addition to an existing neighbourhood. ... recognizing the established scale and pattern of the context and the grain of the neighbourhood."

The Design Guidelines suggest:

"Design infill to be rich in detail and to enhance public streets and spaces, while also responding to the established patterns of the street and neighbourhood. To appropriately transition into an established neighbourhood, consider elements from the neighbourhood such as: ♣ Materials, patterns and colours used in wall treatments ♣ Cornice lines, form of the roofline and chimney details ♣ Size, shape, placement and number of doors and windows ♣ The pattern and location of projections, recesses, front porches, stoops, and balconies".

We showed you a number of examples directly from nearby Russell Ave. properties so you could modify the design of your very institutional building to better integrate into the existing built character. For example, you could make the front facade of the building pick up some of the brick design above and below the windows, or embedded in the walls. Your building needs some articulation and window treatment to better fit in with its neighbours on the street, as it will be the biggest building there.

We have also attached some photos of buildings in Sandy Hill and Centretown that provide examples for your design. You'll see how their brick facade is slightly differently lined, the cornices are interesting, and the windows have lintels. Again, we'd like to reiterate how some character and style will contribute to long-term tenants, and lower operating costs.

Finally, if you pursue demolition, we suggest you integrate some of the interior and exterior elements/materials from the original house, such as window lintels, brick, stone, wooden facade along the front peak of the house, any wood flooring, bannisters, fireplace mantelpiece. This would prevent these valuable materials from going to landfill, and add character to your building, and a unique selling point to attract tenants.

4. Between those of us who attended the meeting last week, these particular requests were made:

- Northern neighbours requested the rear staircase (primarily for emergency exit use) to be screened so as not to overlook their backyard, and also requested

consideration to move the staircase to the south side of the building - only if no additional windows would be built on the north side.

- Request was made for the streetscape character analysis document.

We'd be grateful if you could send the requested documents to all on the cc line.

We look forward to seeing the next iteration of your design drawings.

Thanks again,
Susan

Susan Young <susanonash@gmail.com>

12 Dec 2018,
18:15

to Susan, PHILIP, , Zuzana, Brent, steve.gauthier

Hi again Susan and Philip,

A couple of additional comments have come up, please see below:

1. I'd like to reiterate that apart from the adjacent 2 low-rise apartment buildings, most houses are articulated with at a minimum front porches. The current design is not sympathetic to the streetscape, and our original comments have not been taken into consideration. To this end, I attach the drawings of a similar-sized low-rise apartment building that is being proposed for Nelson St. It does a good job of fitting in with the neighbourhood character and will I think be attractive for long-term tenants. Its only issue might be that it does not offer basement storage. It is a good model for 71 Russell.
2. ASH would also urge the City to have one of its qualified arborists make decisions on which trees should be removed from the backyard. The landscaping plans do not show all the existing trees, and refer to "reinstating urban forest", which is fine only if the maximum number of original trees are maintained. This should not be a decision made by the developer, as a number are more than 50cm in diameter. A reminder that the neighbours to the north raised concerns about trees on their property whose roots are on and over the property line. These roots will require protection during construction, and where they may be damaged, the developer will need to change tack or offer compensation.
3. One point on the planning rationale for 71 Russell, it is misleading in that the back of the building is more than 3 storeys.

We would be happy to meet again to review a revised design.

Thank you,
Susan Young