

# Beaverbrook

A National award winning “Garden City”  
naturalness - peacefulness – endlessness





## How high rise buildings impact adjoining properties



The proposal violates the City's Official Plan rule on infill - "*Recognize the importance of new development relating to existing community character so that it enhances and builds upon desirable established patterns and built form*". The proposed 16 storey building is across the street from one and two storey buildings which will be affected in the same way that the 16 storey building below impacts the quality of life, property value and saleability of its neighbours.

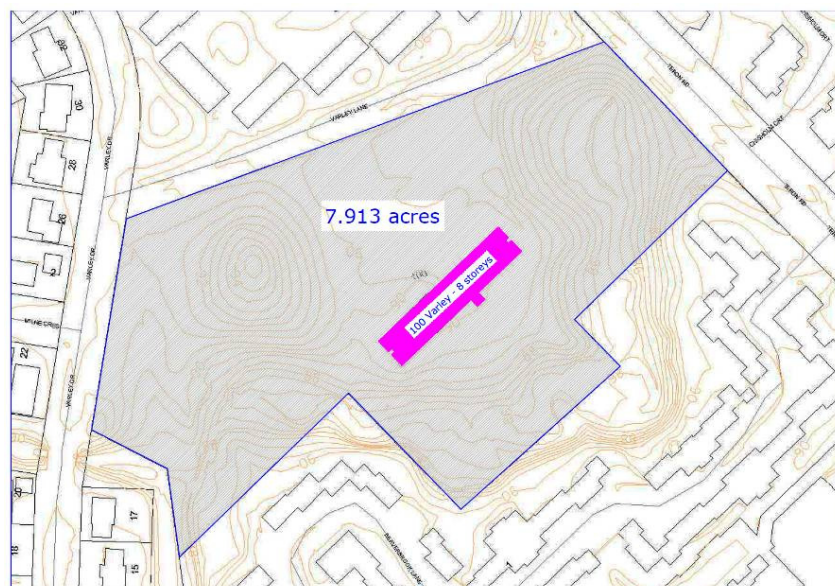




This shows the current standard and character of an apartment building in Beaverbrook



The Varley apartment was built in Beaverbrook and maintains the “Garden City” quality of life and property values by setting it in 8 acres of land. The Floor Space Index of building to land ratio is 0.26. The proposed building is 7 times more at 1.85. The proposal violates the City’s zoning rules of respecting neighbouring building height, massing and scale, rear and side yard setbacks and landscaped open space.







The current  
low rise  
community  
building at the  
entrance of the  
Beaverbrook  
Parkway

with the  
apartment  
building  
behind, well  
set back from  
the Parkway



This violates  
the City's  
rules on  
respecting  
height,  
massing,  
scale, setbacks  
and  
landscaped  
open space



The President of the Kanata Beaverbrook Association has asked me to provide an initial presentation to explain the “Garden City” standards and character of Beaverbrook which attracted and created the Silicon Valley of the North, and the importance of maintaining these standards to continue to attract high tech industries to Ottawa.

A picture is worth a thousand words. This paper is designed to help the residents of Beaverbrook decide whether the proposed high rise building conforms to the scale and character of Beaverbrook and for the City of Ottawa to decide whether it follows the City’s Official Plan and zoning rules for infill projects.

At the November 24, 2011 Kanata North ward council meeting, Marc Magierowicz, the City planner in charge of this file, made it clear that representations to the City’s planning committee, and later to the OMB, are restricted to dealing with “planning issues”. Marianne Wilkinson stated that public opinion is also taken into consideration, but less so. It will be important for the KBCA to obtain professional legal and planning advisors as expert witnesses.

All presenters should do both. First, identify the violation(s) of planning rules and then give personal comments how these violations affect the quality of life and value of property.

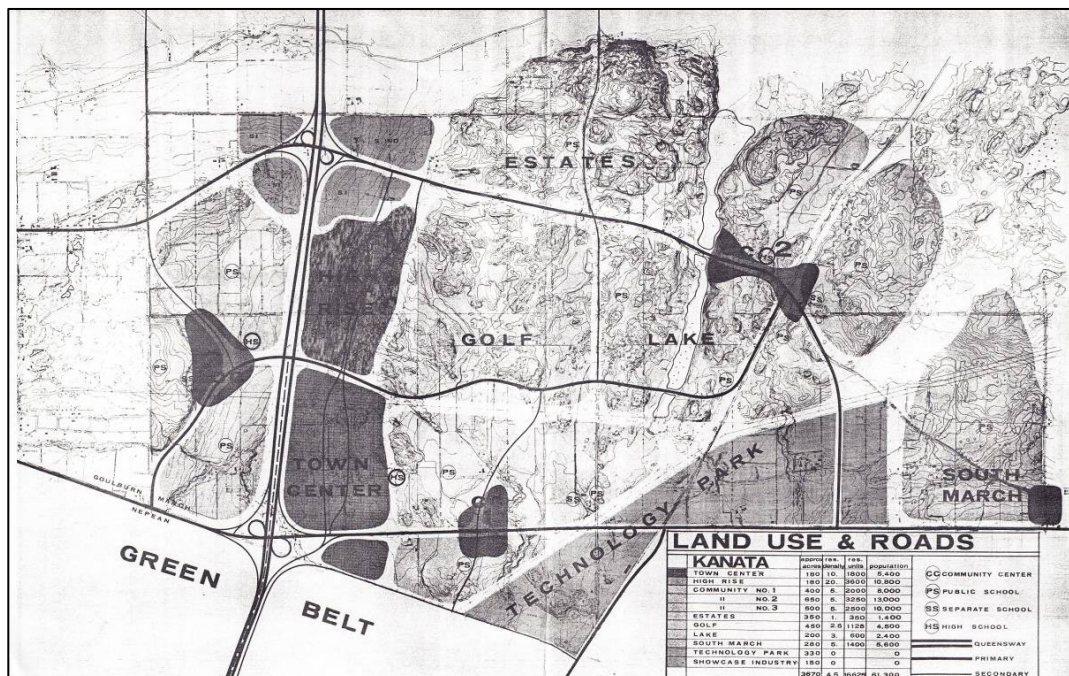


The key planning rules being violated are:

- *When reviewing infill development within the General Urban Area, it must recognize the importance of new development relating to existing community character so that it enhances and builds upon desirable established patterns and built form.*
- *Compatible development must enhance and coexist with existing development without undue adverse impacts. It is development that 'fits well' and 'works well' with its surroundings.*
- *New developments must reflect a thorough and sensitive understanding of place, context and setting.*
- *Interior portions of stable, low-rise residential neighbourhoods will continue to be characterized by low-rise buildings. New development, including redevelopment, proposed within the interior of established neighbourhoods will be designed to complement the area's pattern of built form and open spaces.*
- *In considering a Zoning By-law Amendment of additional height, the City will seek to protect and enhance existing patterns of development, built form and open spaces.*
- *The City will specifically assess Zoning By-law Amendment applications in terms of building height, massing and scale, rear and side yard setbacks and landscaped open space permitted by the zoning of adjacent residential properties as well as the prevailing patterns established in the immediate area.*

The community's has reason to be concerned about the proposed building's height, reduced setback. Current zoning permits 11 meters, which is 3 storeys, and the applicant wants 49 meters/16 storeys.

Both the original 50 year town plan and the current zoning of Kanata designate specific areas to provide a proper place for each use and density, for industrial, commercial, educational and for both low density and high density residential buildings. Each area was carefully placed to avoid conflicts between differing use, scale and density, as per the original plan enclosed.



The designated high density commercial and residential area is situated between Campeau Drive and the Queensway, next to transportation, shopping, offices and a large “central park”. 2 five story buildings exist, plus four nine-storey apartment buildings are currently being built there. Major areas of both public and private land are available to builders for high rise buildings.

Kanata provides a very large area for high density building in the town center sufficient to house 10,000 residents, as shown on the overall town plan of Kanata.

Beaverbrook was designed as a low density, family oriented, residential neighborhood to attract high tech and knowledge-based industries and its potential executives and staff. This power of attraction continues to be required to attract more high tech industries.

High tech workers, whether managers, executives or staff, are creative and professional people. They are intense workers who need to look forward to going home after work for rest and quiet enjoyment with their family, to attend to their children’s future, and for their physical recreational needs, like walking and cross country skiing.

Humphrey Carver, the highly respected Canadian landscape architect and town planner who was on the panel that selected Kanata as the only new town to win a national award in Canada, commented that it was the magical quality of the natural landscape environment that captivated his attention and admiration.

Beaverbrook’s magical garden city environment and it’s liveability and diversity were successful in attracting the global high tech community and high tech people to come to Kanata. Beaverbrook has a 50 year history of its residents protecting and preserving this magical environment.

The developer of 2 Parkway is asking the community for an extreme change in zoning density which is in violation of the City’s rules for infill developments. The proposed building does not *"reflect a thorough and sensitive understanding of place, context and setting"* and will negatively affect the quality of life and property values in the existing quiet residential community.

The contrasting photos demonstrate how the proposed super high rise building is totally out of character, density and scale with the community and violates the City’s criteria. The land for the proposed high rise building is simply not large enough to provide any meaningful set back or green space. The proposed building has a FSI density of 1.85 which is 700% more than the FSI of the Varley apartments of 0.26.

The proposal creates a major change of density, scale and character at the most sensitive location of Beaverbrook, which is the Parkway that provides the sense of arrival to the garden city community. This arrival image is needed to remind each worker in the adjacent high tech area of the wonderful home and community life that is waiting for them, to provide them and their families a more efficient and balanced quality of life, as Jacques Greber’s advice that people should live where they work.

If a sense of arrival was not an essential element in the design of this garden city community, why would I have dedicated revenue-producing land to create this expectation.

The existing standards and character of Beaverbrook should not be compromised when there is a proper place provided and available for high density development. Spot zoning with a huge increase in density violates the City's planning criteria for infill zoning which: *"must reflect a thorough and sensitive understanding of place, context and setting."*

The approval of even a medium height apartment building without equivalent green spaces as the existing would permanently hurt the character of Beaverbrook as being a garden city community and as being an attractive choice for high tech industries and their workers to come to Kanata and Ottawa.

Beaverbrook has had two previous out of character interventions on Teron Road which are the 12 storey apartment building near Campeau Drive and the 16 townhouses on the other corner of the Parkway. Both of these projects were built by builders who had no history and no long term interest in Kanata. As the first image of this community, these buildings confuse people as they arrive at the award-winning Beaverbrook community. Beaverbrook residents do not relate to these two buildings as belonging.

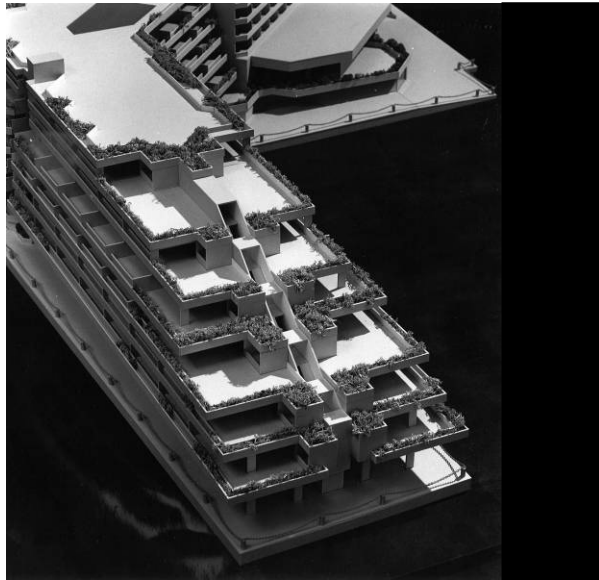
As a further example of the consequences of similar drastic changes to a community environment, this photo shows an example of an infill high rise that is out of scale and character with its neighbours. I refer to it as the "elephant in the back yard".



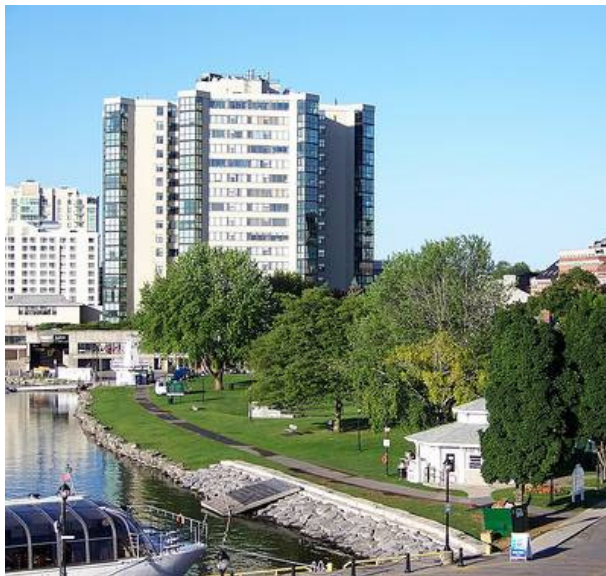


The same happened in Kingston where we designed low rise, terraced buildings to establish the character as the signature vision of Kingston, in an attempt to achieve the most attractive city to live in and/or to visit. Just before we began building, I became the head of CMHC. Other people in Kingston took over and built an 18 storey apartment building instead.

That one high rise building negatively changed the character, the spirit and the future of the City of Kingston.



Low rise proposal for Kingston waterfront versus the high rise building that was built.



This high rise proposal at 2 Parkway within Beaverbrook has the same affect. It is in severe conflict and violation of most of the City's planning criteria for zoning changes.

If this proposal succeeds, random spot zoning threatens every neighborhood and household in the City and creates a precedence for more spot zoning changes.

This problem is a systemic public policy problem of the city encouraging and approving random spot zoning for high rise building in low density areas, in defiance to its own planning criteria.

If this proposal succeeds, I have no doubt that both the high tech industries, whose employees reside in Beaverbrook, and residents of Beaverbrook will join together to provide both the executive and financial means to vigorously oppose this extreme intervention, and to ask other community associations to join in to stop random spot zoning for high rise building in quiet low rise communities in Ottawa.

William Teron  
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