



November 26, 2021

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Planner II

Planning Services

Planning, Infrastructure & Economic Development Department

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sent by email: president@kanatabeaverbrook.ca

Dear Ms. Stern

RE: Rezoning File: D02-02-21-0121
100 Weeping Willow Lane

The Kanata Beaverbrook Community Association has critical concerns with the development application that need be addressed.

Local Context

The subject property is located in the former City of Kanata. Beaverbrook is part of several master-planned neighbourhoods that make up the community of Kanata. Bill Teron's vision for Beaverbrook was to support a wide variety of housing choices across all incomes and for households of individuals to large families and from young families to retired seniors.

The property was planned and developed to support up to two apartment buildings as a rental option featuring one- and two-bedroom units within a neighbourhood that is primarily rental and non-rental family units of 3 bedrooms or more.

The property is large, 3.22 hectares (8 acres). The location and orientation of the existing eight-storey building were specifically selected to maximize the privacy of adjacent residences and minimize the visual impact in what is otherwise a low-rise (2-storey) community.

The property also contains a flood plain and creek bed protected and managed by the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority. This is marked on the City of Ottawa geoOttawa maps (below). The solid blue line is the creek and the blue striped area around the creek is the flood plain. The available area for an additional building is confined to the current surface parking area and the area to the left (between the parking area and Varley Drive) and bounded by the protected creek (which is part of the gully).



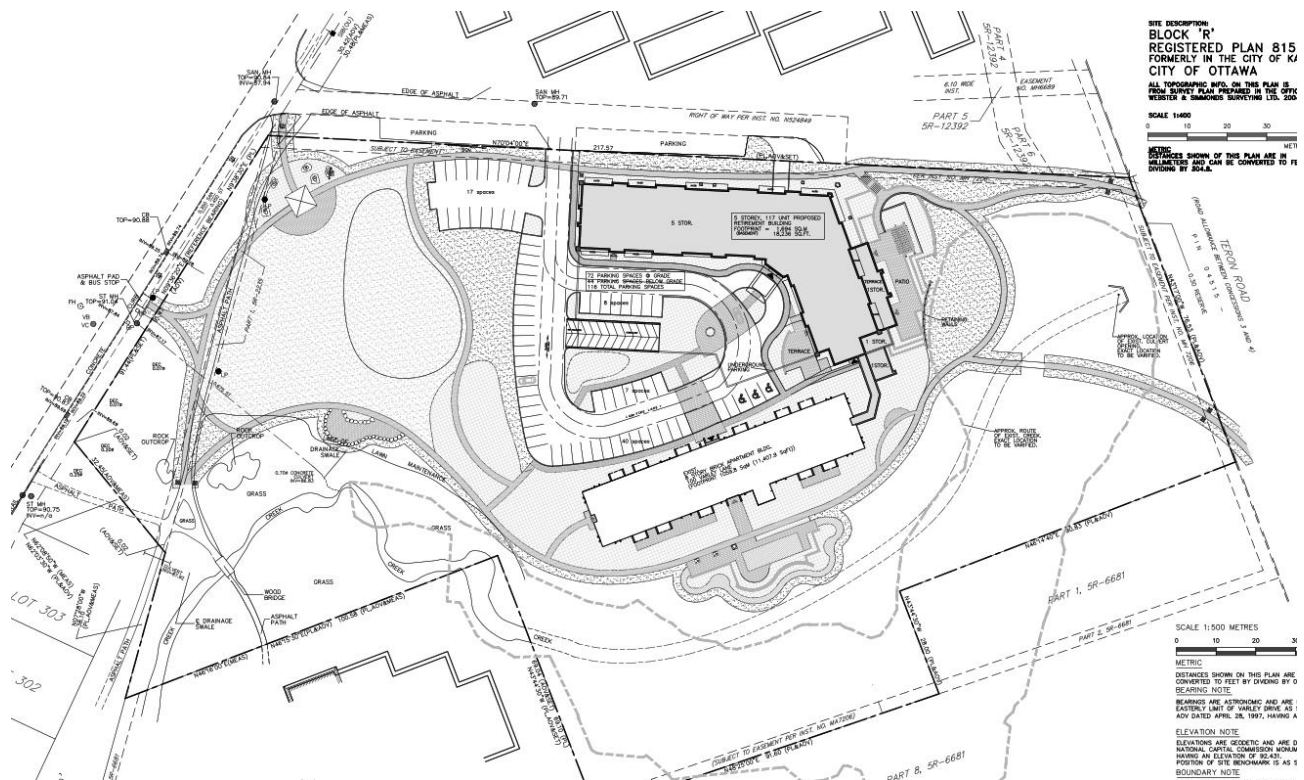
The current building blends into the community, with large trees screening it from most angles. The following perspectives are from Teron Road and Varley Drive. Effectively the building is only directly viewable from the section of Varley Dr. adjacent to the property, and only if you turn your head deliberately to look. Many who visit Beaverbrook for the first time do not realize that an eight-storey apartment building exists at that location.



Taggart application (rezoning application 2014)

At the time of the rezoning application, Taggart, the property owner, contacted the KBCA and Bill Teron (the original developer and architect of Beaverbrook). Meetings were held to discuss the application, including a number of residents who were adjacent to the property.

Several alternatives were explored for the location, size and orientation of a senior's residence. This application leveraged the size of the property and sought compatibility with the principle of minimizing the impact of a multi-storey building in a low-rise neighbourhood. This was achieved with a five-storey building opposite the existing eight-storey build - on the north side of the property, plus a connecting building between the new and existing building for shared services (dining hall, recreation, physician offices, etc.). The KBCA and Bill Teron supported this application. The site plan is as shown below:



The application was approved by the City for a 5 storey building with a maximum height of 30m and 87 units.

Heritage Context

In the time frame of the 2013 Official Plan review, the KBCA entered into discussions with the City of Ottawa Planning department's Heritage Planning group.

The KBCA developed a tour of Beaverbrook to introduce the Heritage Planning team to what is now considered an example of "mid-century modern" community and building architecture. The timing of this coincided with the Heritage team having just completed a heritage study (and approval) of Briarcliffe as a [Heritage Conservation District](#), which is also an example of "mid-century modern".

The result was that Beaverbrook was added to a list of communities in the City of Ottawa’s Heritage Services Section workplan in 2015 for a Heritage Conservation District Study. This was rescheduled several times, with the most recent start date in 2020. This is still active in the workplan (as confirmed by our Ward Councillor in 2019).

While not finalized, the direction of discussions was to define a Heritage Status related to the community design vs any specific building or buildings. This centered on the principle that “nature dominates”. That buildings are not the star attraction. Buildings should blend into the environment, built with natural materials and colours. This includes setbacks appropriate to the size of the building so that larger buildings do not visually dominate the community, of which the existing eight-storey apartment building on the 100 Weeping Willow Lane property is a benchmark.

The existing eight-storey building on the property is the local and heritage context which applies under Official Plan section **4.11 Urban Design and Compatibility**

The 2021 application by Homestead Land Holdings

The application asks for a 2m increase in height and an additional 56 units above the currently approved 87 units from the 2014 rezoning by Taggart for a total of 143.

Many in the community object to any development on the property (many are not aware of the 2014 re-zoning) or the additional units and height with respect to the 2014 re-zoning.

However, the major issue is the “importation” of a “look at me” building in a 2021 multi-storey architectural style that may not be out of place in Westborough, including an “on curb” location and orientation of the proposed building, but which is incompatible with the local and heritage context in Beaverbrook.

The following page includes two views of the property, from effectively the same location (on google street views, the other the devapp illustration), both of which include the existing eight-storey building visually illustrate the incompatibility.

The existing eight-storey building is virtually invisible, where the Developers application is front and center, dominating the community with a 2020+ look in a 20th Century “mid-century modern” setting.



Location and Orientation

The Planning Rationale documents that several different locations and orientations of the building were considered. For undisclosed reasons, the one that has the most impact on the community (and the most incompatible) was selected. Despite offering alternative locations and orientations (discussed later in this document), the Developer, FoTenn and the Architect have been silent on why other locations/orientations are not viable alternatives.



Given that the developer plans to remove the berm/hill fronting the property on Varley Drive for surface parking and for part of the underground garage, there does not appear to be any reason that the building could not be relocated and reoriented.

The Developers application location/orientation, plus three alternatives are shown on the next page, of which Alternative 3 would be the most desirable in terms of impact on surrounding home (large set back, least overlook) and the most compatible with the local and heritage context. These alternatives were shown at an online meeting on Nov 17 meeting with FoTenn, the Developer (Homestead), the KBCA and local residents adjacent to the property, but were not commented on by FoTenn or Homestead.

The KBCA will assert at Planning Committee that the rezoning only be approved with the building envelope to also include the location and orientation of the building, in addition to the building height, depth and length, to be compatible with the local and heritage context.

Developers Proposal



Alternative 1



Alternative 2



Alternative 3



Finish and Materials

It is also requested that the finish and materials used on the exterior of the building be compatible with the existing building, which is part of the local and heritage context.

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