



Manor Park
Community
Association

Association
Communautaire
de Manor Park

MEMORANDUM

TO : Tim Moerman
Zoning and Interpretations Team Manager
Manager: R4 Zoning Review
Ottawa City Hall
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1
tim.moerman@ottawa.ca
R4Zoning@ottawa.ca

FROM : Elizabeth McAllister
President, Manor Park Community Association (MPCA)
president@manorparkcommunity.ca

Charl-Thom H. Bayer
Chair: Development and Planning Committee (MPCA)
tommybayer@yahoo.co.uk

DATE : 29 January 2020

SUBJECT : Comments on R4 Zoning Review

1. Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to register our comments and concerns regarding certain aspects of the amended regulations for the proposed R4 Zoning Review.

2. Background

The Manor Park Community Association (MPCA) welcomes the effort to update and simplify the zoning regulations in order to stay current with the actual housing needs of the residents of Ottawa and appreciate the opportunity to make a contribution to this discussion. The MPCA is cognizant of the fact that housing affordability has decreased and that densification of the urban space is required. As the mission of the MPCA is to create a healthy, inclusive and safe environment in which to work and live by giving voice to all community members we take seriously our obligations to work cooperatively with other civic and public organizations to ensure responsible community planning and development. As such the MPCA has made significant effort to review and comment on the

proposed amendments for the R4 Review. We have organized our comments along the subject areas as detailed in the report “Discussion Paper #3: Draft Recommendations November 2019”.

3. Specific Comments on R4 Review

While the amendments on their own are generally (with some exceptions) to be welcomed, the MPCA is concerned that there is a lack of an overall series of initiatives that collectively can significantly deliver on the issues that have been raised as the *raison d’être* for the R4 Review and the New Official Plan on Housing.

- a) The MPCA does not see compelling evidence that the recommendations proposed will lead to any significant improvement in the production of more affordable housing. In the *New Official Plan – Discussion Paper: Affordable Housing: Appendix A* published in March 2019, the average rent for a two-bedroom unit (2018) in the Ottawa/Gatineau area is given as \$1297 per month. In the *Discussion Paper #3: Draft Recommendations November 2019*, the estimated rental for the “typical” new proposed units after the revised zoning regulations are implemented is estimated to be about \$1782 (\$1677 + \$105). Thus, the expected rental for a “typical” new unit will be \$485 higher than the average rental in the Ottawa/Gatineau area.
- b) The MPCA is concerned that the expected size (66m²) for a “typical two-bedroom apartment” is very small and not conducive to a healthy living environment. The zoning regulation should therefore include specific provisions to ensure that adequate provision is made for family apartments as well, which would include apartments larger than the “typical” apartment provided for above.
- c) In conjunction with the reductions in outdoor greenspace for some low-rise apartments in the proposed regulations, and in the absence of other measures to guarantee access to outdoor landscaping the MPCA feels that additional zoning regulations should be included to ensure adequate outdoor/green space for residents. As such the MPCA recommends that consideration be given to providing revised minimum requirements for greenspace as well as protecting existing green space so that the quality of life for residents is not further compromised.
- d) In the absence of other supporting measures to ensure developers deliver affordable housing, it is unclear how the zoning amendments will be able to achieve one of the stated goals of the review, namely to increase the number of affordable apartments available for rental.

4. Specific Comments on Proposed Amendments

Our comments are organized along the subject areas as detailed in the report “Discussion Paper #3: Draft Recommendations November 2019”.

- a) Remove 30% landscaping requirement for small low-rise apartment dwellings (less than 12 units) on small lots (<450m²).
The MPCA does not support this recommendation and would like to see some provision for a minimum amount of quality greenspace. It is not clear how the prohibition on parking and the revised landscaping and amenity rules will adequately compensate for the removal of this clause.

b) Establish 3 Urban R4 Sub-Zones with unit density tied to lot sizes.

The MPCA supports the recommendation to reduce the 14 R4 zones to 3 R4 Zones as proposed based on lot sizes for the construction of low-rise apartments.

c) Landscaping and Amenity Area Requirements

The MPCA supports the revised requirements for landscaping of amenity areas and green spaces, but it should include a revised minimum requirement for greenspace. However, we are concerned about the efficacy of managing that the landscaping through the site development process alone with no fixed parameters to adhere to in the regulations.

d) Building and Site Design

The MPCA supports the recommendations to improve the street facing façade of the low-rise apartments.

e) Parking

The MPCA supports the recommendations to scrap surface parking for lots less than 15m wide and less than 450m², and welcome the requirements for natural barriers to protect the street facing open space from parking.

5. General Comment

The R4 zoning review, and the general emphasis on intensification (densification), requires that the proposed zoning amendments and intensification efforts be accompanied by appropriate measures to improve access to transport, greenspaces, schools, recreation and retail (food). It is not immediately evident how the zoning process is linked to other initiatives to ensure that the proposed intensification from the zoning amendments does not degrade the quality of life of residents. While we understand that zoning is only one operational tool in managing the intensification process, we consider it appropriate that appropriate information is provided about accompanying measures for the zoning amendment.

6. Conclusion

The Manor Park Community Association does not see sufficient evidence that the proposed R4 Zoning amendments will increase the supply of affordable housing in the city close to transport hubs. The MPCA is also concerned that the green spaces are not sufficiently protected/provided for in the proposed amendments, and finally that the small size of the typical apartments, especially in conjunction with the reduced greenspace protections, could significantly degrade the quality of the life for residents with the associated long-term impacts. However, the MPCA does support some of the amendments to increase densities near transport hubs and close to the city center, improve building façades, reduce parking in favour of green space and to protect green spaces from parking. We would like to see the R4 Zoning recommendations in the context of an overarching strategy based measurable goals to improve the quality of life for Ottawa residents.

The MPCA wish to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the R4 Zoning Review and fulfill our obligation to work cooperatively with other civic and public organizations to ensure responsible community planning and development.