

**Planning Committee
Meeting of June 24, 2014 Agenda 77
Preston-Carling District Secondary Plan
ACS2014-PAI-PGM-0153
Kitchissippi (15), Somerset (14) Capital (17)**

Documented version of the oral submission to Planning Committee by the Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA).

Presented by: Karen Wright, President of the Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (also known as CHNA). Karen is accompanied by the leaders from the CHNA Planning and Development Committee and Traffic Committee (Kathy Kennedy, George Laing and Peter Eady).

COMMENTS:

The CHNA has actively participated in the extensive process leading us to this moment. Our positions and comments to previous CDP drafts are a matter of public record and can be found on our website. Our comments today will be grouped under three topics:

- **Planning & Development**
- **Public Realm**
- **Traffic**

Planning & Development Comments:

1. LACK OF CLARITY:

- **To *improve certainty*, the City must reject CDP guidelines that offer no specific height restrictions but only provide restrictions on the number of storeys. We offer 2 examples to illustrate why *clarity* in this area is *required*.**
 - **E.g.** The city endorsed Strategic Directions report recommends building heights for the tallest structures to be “in the order of **40 storeys**” with the ***additional condition*** that “the maximum upset height limit shall not exceed **145 metres**”. In contrast, **this** Secondary Plan would allow buildings of **55 storeys** with **NO** height restrictions. At 55 storeys we can easily expect to see building heights at between **165 m** and **220m** (using 3 and 4 meters per floor). That is **14% to 52% higher** than the 145 metre restriction recommended in the Strategic Directions report. For comparison, a well known 55 storey building is the Bank of America building in New York and at 291 metres tall, it is only 9 metres shy of Canada’s tallest building, First Canadian Place! To give you another comparison, Place Bell across the street

from City Hall is only 27 storeys and 94 metres tall; that is **less than half** of what is being advocated for “**Little Italy**”.

- **E.g. The Carling Side of the triangle lot between Carling, Sherwood and Bayswater.** This land is currently zoned 25 metres and the secondary plan would allow 9 stories to be built on this lot with an undefined height. Not providing a cap in metres as well as number of storeys would easily encourage a building height of 36 metres (using 4m per floor). This is an unacceptable situation when you realize that this land abuts low rise residential homes and faces existing low **rise** bungalows across the street resulting in inappropriate transition.
- **We request clarity by adding maximum height restrictions related to the current zoning. Today, any developer worth their salt will be able to use this ambiguity to “upsized” or “upzone” and gain approval to build an oversized development.**

2. HEIGHT TRANSITIONS:

- **A serious concern is the height transitions between the new developments as they meet the existing mature neighbourhood.** Again, we will provide an example as to why this is an issue.
 - **E.g..** A height increase has been proposed for the corner of **Loretta and Hickory** to 9 storeys, and in the most recent version of the CDP a **2 storey podium has increased to a 4 storey podium**. This property directly faces existing 2 storey homes.
 - **CHNA supports Councilor Hobbs’ motion to cap the size of this location to 6 storeys with the added proviso that any podiums return to the 2 storey podiums seen in the last draft that better blend with nearby 2 storey homes.**

3. HIGH RISE SEPARATION:

- CHNA notes that the 20-metre minimum **separation between high-rise** towers which was in the draft Secondary Plan has been rewritten in this recent version with what appears to be a **loop hole** that makes the 20 meter limit uncertain.
- **CHNA requests that this be clarified to avoid improper planning.**

Public Realm Comments

1. EV TREMBLAY PARK

- **CHNA would like to go on record saying that we are extremely pleased that EV Tremblay Park is a stated priority for expansion and revitalization.**
- Despite its modest size, it is one of the most, if not **the most** well used City park in Ottawa and it is well situated near the proposed new developments as well as the very heart of the current neighbourhood.

2. FUNDING THE PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

- **Our resident's request that City not rely exclusively on section 37 and cash in lieu funds for improvements to the area.**
- Present residents have a right to have these enhancements today and should not have to first bear the negative impacts of intense development to receive them, in some sort of **"perverse incentive"** plan.

3. QUEEN JULIANA PARK

- The city acknowledges in the Secondary Plan that *"As the Preston-Carling District intensifies, there will be an increased demand on the provision of open spaces, including parks and urban spaces."*
- **We support Councillor Hobbs' motions to "preserve greenspace" in Queen Juliana Park and we further urge the city to work with the federal government to find creative ways to preserve the park in its entirety.**

4. TREES

- **CHNA requests that the city support the recommendations of PPG (Planning Partnership Group) consultants for the Public Realm, that the city modify their list of approved Tree species so we can maintain a healthy urban canopy**

Traffic Comments

1. TRAFFIC CALMING

- Our neighbourhood is envisioned as the western gateway to downtown. We are, effectively, the western side of the downtown core. As such, due to the lack of effective north south arterials in Ottawa, our neighbourhood is under pressure from commuter traffic seeking north-south routes. Despite this reality, we do not have the protections put into place in areas such as Centretown, the Glebe and the other mature urban core neighbourhoods. Measures such as restricted street entries, more one ways, traffic calming speed bumps etc.
- **We ask that traffic calming measures be made a priority.**

- We support Councillor Hobbs motion for a long overdue area wide traffic study.
- We also support Councillor Hobbs recommendation that “Bayswater Avenue and Beech Street remain local roads and that stronger language is required to reinforce this.

2. VEHICULAR BRIDGE AT HICKORY

- CHNA vehemently opposes allowing a vehicular bridge over the O-train at Hickory. While the bridge currently proposed is a pedestrian and cycling bridge, we are very concerned that the Public Realm Study recommends that “**nothing be done to physically preclude**” a future road over the O-Train Corridor linking Hickory to Pamilla. *The CHNA sees no need today or in the future for “ease of access” for cars from Preston to the residential area except to ease the traffic congestion on Preston and to move it into the residential community. This is unacceptable. **If so much traffic will be generated that the City will need to create new roads to accommodate it, the rationale for intensifying this district near a transit node is called into question.***

In Closing:

- City staff has acknowledged that development has outstripped planning for years in this area.
- We believe we our neighbourhood has already accommodated unrestricted intensification and is being targeted for over intensification.
- Our estimates are that we are already well above the City of Ottawa’s stated goals for urban intensification.
- We need your help to ensure that sensible restrictions are put in place to guide future development

The citizens of the Preston-Carling District deserve concrete actions from the City that show that it is serious about mitigating the negative effects of intensification on our downtown neighbourhoods. We need the city to put effective measures in place **now** to achieve **smart, healthy and liveable intensification.**