



Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association
1081 Carling Subcommittee

MEDIA RELEASE

Councillor Leiper says he'll likely vote for high-rises at 1081 Carling Avenue Aug. 16, despite opposition from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association and residents

High-rises will have "serious effects" on research at the Central Experimental Farm, say Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada officials

OTTAWA, JULY 24, 2023 — Councillor Jeff Leiper says he will likely vote in favour of a controversial proposal for two high-rise towers at 1081 Carling Avenue (corner of Parkdale Avenue) when the rezoning application goes to the City of Ottawa's Planning and Housing Committee Aug. 16. In an [open letter on his website](#), Leiper says he doesn't like the development but plans to vote for it, reflecting City planning staff's expected support.

The proposal is opposed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (responsible for the Central Experimental Farm [CEF]), the Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA) and residents of the area. There are two major issues: effects on the CEF and inadequate transition in height to the adjacent community.

The current development proposal for 1081 Carling will have a serious impact on important research lands, officials at the CEF confirm (see below). Shadow studies of the two high-rise towers (27 and 16 storeys) show the number of additional minutes per year the fields would have reduced sunlight. Lowering the height of the towers would considerably mitigate the negative shadow impact on crop growth patterns and research at the Farm.

The CEF's research is supported by the community and by Ottawa Centre MP Yasir Naqvi who has previously stated he is "committed to protecting the Farm from further development." Naqvi is championing Bill C-23, now being considered by Parliament, which will "improve our ability to protect the Experimental Farm" by creating legal guidelines to protect historic sites.

Greenspace Alliance also express serious concern with the impact that the 1081 Carling high-rises will have on the CEF, with the Chair, Paul Johanis, stating, "Just as we advocated with respect to the Ottawa Hospital, we would expect that major developments adjacent to the Central Experimental Farm, such as the proposed Taggart towers, respect the greenspace, heritage and research integrity of the Farm."

The design and transition in the current proposal are controversial. The City's **Urban Design Review Panel** [criticized the proposal on Sept 9, 2022](#), suggesting that the site is suitable for one lower tower, rather than two. The Panel was also concerned with the buildings transition to the well-established neighbourhood to the north. As well, it made additional recommendations about the shape and placement of the towers.

CHNA strongly opposes the Taggart 1081 Carling proposal. Following responses from the CHNA and residents, Taggart has revised its proposal twice since it first applied for rezoning of the site in October

2021. However, CHNA maintains that the third version of the proposal **still does not have adequate transition to the adjacent low-rise houses, as required by the new Official Plan**. While the new Official Plan provides guidance that a 45-degree transition (angular plane) is good transition, CHNA recognizes that this is not a hard and fast rule. However, in the case of the 1081 Carling proposal, the angle is nearly 70 degrees for one tower.

“The CHNA supports the need for intensification and smart density, but it must be done responsibly. The City’s decision on 1081 Carling Avenue could set a trend for unacceptable transition, height and density for future developments in established neighbourhoods,” said Karen Wright, President of CHNA. “Councillors in other wards should understand that this decision could affect future rezoning requests to add high-rises in their communities. Additionally, this and future developments adjacent to the CEF will have a devastating effect on the Farm’s research and purpose.”

In communication with residents, Leiper points to a recent Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) decision overturning the City’s rejection of a proposal for Blair and Montreal Roads as showing that a variety of approaches can satisfy the need for transition, including an angular plane analysis and ensuring adequate setbacks. However, the Montreal Road proposal uses approaches to achieve adequate transition to the residential community that are not present to the same extent in the 1081 Carling proposal. For instance, in the Montreal Road proposal, the parcel of land is larger, and the setback of the tower is greater than that of the setback in the 1081 Carling proposal. The 1081 Carling proposal has not incorporated enough adjustments to account for the nearly 70-degree angular plane (east tower) to meet the requirement for adequate transition to the adjacent community. CHNA maintains that the OLT decision for the Montreal Road proposal shows that each proposal coming before Ottawa’s Planning Committee must be examined on a case-by-case basis with respect to appropriate transition.

Throughout the process for the rezoning of 1081 Carling, CHNA has been concerned that the input of residents has not been reflected in the analysis, and it calls on the City to better respect the voices of Ottawa’s citizens.

“This is one of the few times that Jeff Leiper has supported a development in any ward that is so opposed by the community,” said Kristi Ross, the lawyer who represents CHNA on this file.

The major issues with Taggart’s third proposal for the site are the following:

Height and lack of transition: Taggart is planning to build two residential towers of 16 and 27 storeys next to homes of two and three storeys. The current zoning is for nine storeys at the front of the site and three storeys at the back. The proposal does not respect the intention or the guidelines in the City’s new Official Plan, which requires adequate transition to the adjoining neighbourhood (see Backgrounder). The developer’s attempts to provide transition in this proposal fall well short of what citizens should be able to expect.

Shadows affecting research at the Central Experimental Farm: Officials at the CEF have written to the City’s Planners (letter shared with CHNA), as follows: “The proposed development presents serious concerns related to the shadowing impact to our land created by the height of the towers. The shadowing is a significant risk for AAFC [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada] as it impacts our research fields and jeopardizes our agricultural science integrity.” AAFC has analyzed the shadows that the towers would cast and says that the variable sunlight will make some research lands “unusable for most field experiments.” However, additional studies showed that lowering the height of towers to 16 storeys each or 9 storeys each would dramatically reduce shadows.

CHNA has also expressed concern about the effects of the proposed development on traffic in the area (see Backgrounder) and about the proposal's inadequate green space.

For more information and interview requests, contact:

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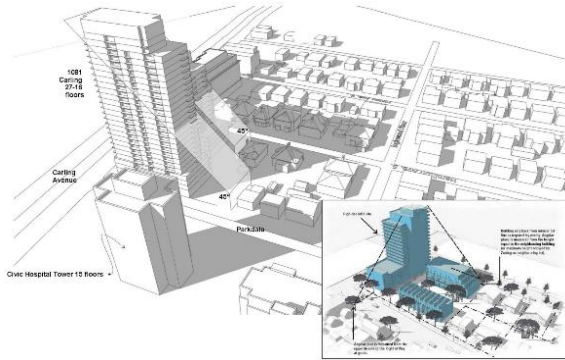
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BACKGROUNDER

History

Taggart Realty Management first filed a proposal to develop two high-rise residential buildings at 1081 Carling Avenue in October 2021. Following comments from CHNA and residents of the Civic Hospital neighbourhood, the City asked Taggart to make changes.



Proposed height and transition (diagram by CHNA)

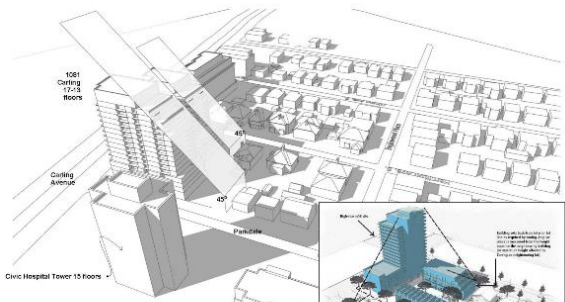
Taggart revised its proposal in October 2022 by moderately lowering the height of both towers, as well as the street-level podium. This second submission still did not meet the requirements of the new Official Plan for adequate transition to the neighbourhood. And it did not address problems with traffic and green space that the proposal would cause.

In the face of continuing concern, Taggart submitted a revised application (the third proposal) in March 2023. The third proposal changed the east tower (at Parkdale), moving a “stepback” at the 12th storey to the 9th storey. At the same time however, Taggart’s submission **increased** the height of this tower from 25

to 27 storeys.

Transition to the neighbourhood

The proposal has inadequate separation between the towers, even after lowering a step-back on one of the towers, and insufficient transition to the adjacent low-rise community. The new Official Plan requires “sensitive integration of low-rise, mid-rise and high-rise buildings.”



Revised height and transition respecting the 45-degree angular plane (diagram by CHNA)

Section 5.2.3 (2) of the new Official Plan states: “Along Mainstreets, permitted building heights are as follows, subject to appropriate height transitions, setbacks, and angular planes...” **Section 4.6.6. of the NOP** also mentions the “angular plane,” and Figure 15 explicitly shows a 45-degree angular plane.

Section 5.2.3(2)(c)(ii) of the NOP states: “In all cases: the height of such buildings may be limited further on lots too small to accommodate height transition.”

Councillor Leiper has stated that a 45-degree angular plane is not “hard and fast” and that step-backs in the proposal satisfy the need for transition. But CHNA maintains that the measures taken to date remain inadequate. While the proposal’s west tower exceeds a 45-degree plane by 3 storeys, the east tower exceeds such a plane by 10 storeys, so that the angular plane is nearly 70 degrees, while still not providing adequate height transitions.

Traffic impact

The development will add 340 resident vehicles as well as access for service vehicles on Hamilton Avenue South. The traffic impact of this development must be considered in the context of the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Strategy of the New Campus Development (Ottawa Hospital). This strategy is intended to reduce cut-through traffic in the neighbourhood, something the development in its current form will exacerbate.

Carling Avenue is planned to be a transit corridor in the future, but the traffic issues will be relevant for many years before transit eases congestion.

Specific concerns include:

- **U-turns:** The need for U-turns at Parkdale for residents approaching the building from Carling eastbound. Any development that would encourage this unsafe practice would be irresponsible.
- **Circuitous routes:** The proposal requires vehicles to follow circuitous routes through single-lane residential neighbourhood streets, which will add to existing cut-through traffic.
- **Truck route:** The proposal calls for loading zones on the north side of the towers, with truck access via a service lane on the north side of the barrier on Hamilton Avenue South. This requires trucks to use single-lane residential neighbourhood streets.



Vehicle routes to reach and leave from 1081 Carling Ave., as well as routes to navigate the surrounding neighbourhood (diagram by CHNA)

To address these concerns, CHNA has:

- Met twice with Taggart Realty Management, but the meetings were not constructive, and the developer's subsequent resubmissions failed to make the changes needed to align the proposal with the new Official Plan.
- Hired a lawyer, who has responded to each of Taggart's three proposals.
- Met with City planners and with the councillor for Kitchissippi Ward, Jeff Leiper, on several occasions to express their concerns.
- Conducted continuous communication and outreach to its residents, many of whom have sent detailed responses regarding Taggart's proposal directly to the City's planners.
- Added [extensive background information](#) on the issue to its website to inform residents.
- Launched an [online petition](#) to garner support from Ottawa citizens and demonstrate the community's concern to the City's planners and councillors.