**Carling Zoning Information Session**

Representatives of CHNA’s Planning and Development Committee recently attended an information session on zoning along the section of Carling Avenue adjacent to the Civic Hospital neighbourhood. The session was held at the Hintonburg Community Centre on January 15th, 2014, with Katie Bonnar from Councillor Leiper’s Office and City of Ottawa planner Tim Moerman in attendance.

As Mr. Moerman explained, in 2014 the City completed zoning reviews on numerous locations, including arterial main streets such as Carling Avenue to align the Zoning By-law with Ottawa’s official plan, which was approved by City Council in November 2013. The zoning review does not include districts such as Preston-Carling, which is covered by a specific Secondary Plan.

The intent of the zoning provisions for arterial main streets such as Carling is to ‘humanize” the streets into more urban environments with “active, pedestrian- and transit-supportive street frontages”. The zoning along Carling Avenue generally allows for maximum building heights of up to 30 metres. However, as Moerman explained, the building lots adjacent to the Civic Hospital neighbourhood tend to be shallow, and with the by-law requirement for building step-downs into the residential community, the zoning along Carling from Bayswater to Island Park is primarily 11 or 20 metres (three or six storeys). (View the Zoning Maps here - <http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/carling_am_map5_en.pdf>

<http://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents.ottawa.ca/files/documents/zoning_carling4_en_0.pdf>

Other provisions of the Zoning by-law stipulate that buildings must have active street frontages, including real, functional doors intended to work as primary entrances facing the street. A minimum of 50 per cent of the ground floor facade must be composed of windows. Minimum front yard setbacks are set at 0 metres, unchanged from the current arterial main street zoning. The AM10 Active Frontage zoning imposes a maximum setback of 4.5 metres (for a residential building) or three metres (for a commercial or mixed-use building.) This is done to ensure that the building interfaces well with the street and generally creates more of an urban main street environment like those seen on older urban streets like Bank and Wellington West. Residents appreciated the intent to humanize Carling and were supportive of the requirement for active entrances and windows. However, there was some concern that, without greater setbacks, there will be no space for landscaping along Carling, which could also contribute to humanizing the street.

Residents discussed the idea of pushing for off-peak curb-lane parking on Carling Avenue (similar to the parking rules on streets such as Bronson Avenue) which would provide a buffer between cars and pedestrians, calm traffic and help alleviate the parking pressures currently experienced in the neighbourhood. CHNA’s Planning and Development Committee will be exploring this initiative. Stay tuned for further developments.

Send your comments or questions to Kathy Kennedy, Chair of CHNA’s Planning & Development Committee at plandev@chnaottawa.ca