**Zoning By-law**

**R4 (Residential Fourth Density) Zoning Review**

*Comments from the Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA)*

 The Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association (CHNA) believes that the City of Ottawa should use all of the mechanisms at its disposal to regulate oversized dwelling units (ODUs) and preserve the character of established streets and communities. The R-4 zones within our community are already feeling the impact of the city’s intensification policy as they are in close proximity to the Preston-Carling intensification node.

 CHNA supports intensification. However, we are concerned that the eastern district of our neighbourhood is being over-intensified to a point where the community infrastructure (stores, roads, etc) will not be able to adequately support the needs of new residents. In addition, in light of the recent announcement of the relocation of the Civic Hospital to the former Sir John Carling Building site, we continue to advocate for a more thorough examination of development plans and traffic studies for the area.

CHNA has the following comments:

* Review R3 & R4 zones together (a holistic approach) to ensure that any new regulations in R4 do not have unintended consequences in R3 zones. And any changes must be treated as a “pilot”. This will provide an opportunity for communities and the city to identify (and eventually prohibit) unintended consequences.
* All zoning changes the city undertakes must be approached in a manner that envisions a city being built for the 21st century. The city has taken a new approach to parking regulations to help developers provide more affordable housing. The city must now start looking at a green approach to development, and must incorporate protection and enhancement of the city’s Urban Forest. All residents, no matter their housing choices, deserve to live in buildings or neighbourhoods that have a green component. The positive impact on health of green space and the urban canopy is well documented. Therefore, ideas such as maxing out the building envelopes do not contribute to the vision of the liveable, healthy City we are building.
* CHNA supports limiting the bedroom count in dwelling units and would like the opportunity to be consulted on some potential formulae; the document states: “Although comparatively rare, some households are large enough to need more than four bedrooms”. CHNA would like to know how rare? Are we designing regulations around “rare” situations, which can be exploited at the expense of established neighbourhoods? Perhaps there is another way to approach “rare”, that does not involve sweeping zoning changes.
* CHNA supports clarifying the difference between ODUs and rooming houses.
* We do not support raising the 4-unit limit in R4 A-L nor do we support allowing apartment dwellings on smaller lots. The 4-unit limit encourages larger, yet affordable dwellings more suitable for families, while (for example) a 12-unit smaller dwelling or small apartment building duplicates the types of dwellings currently offered by condominiums. A healthy, vibrant neighbourhood requires a wide range of residents including families. The Junior R4s are important pieces in the zoning map of the city; they help ensure the stability of established, mixed neighbourhoods and availability of affordable housing choices for families. In the established inner-urban neighbourhoods, we are seeing intensification that focuses on offering smaller accommodations, suitable for single occupants or couples, reducing the healthy diversity of our neighbourhoods by reducing the housing options for families to also live in the urban core. The Junior R4 zones should not be over-densified; they need to be able to “breathe” and must not be overdeveloped with too much housing that is undersized.
* We are also concerned about the negative potential from lot consolidation.  R4 dwellings are to be compatible with their neighbourhood and unchecked lot consolidations could create oversized blocks of intensified dwellings that do not offer a gradual and appropriate increase in density in established inner-urban neighbourhoods.
* We agree that the provisions detailing how garbage storage is to be handled is critical for good integration of more dense housing options.
* Noise pollution, from both heating and air conditioning systems, must be regulated.
* We recommend that the use of solar panels, that may exceed building height restrictions as well as offer the potential for significant noise pollution (with rebound noise concerns being deflected to nearby residences), be regulated.
* We agree that Site Plan Control should be based on the scale of the building, and not merely the number of units.
* We agree that DCs need to be updated and look forward to commenting on proposals that the city develops.
* Finally, CHNA wholeheartedly agrees with the principle articulated in the document that “Intensification {should be} supported … provided it fits well with its context and enhances the desirable characteristics of … residential communities.” We ask you to ensure that any zoning changes will be grounded in this principle. All changes should be reviewed through the lens of whether they “enhance the desirable characteristics” of a neighbourhood.

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