

Subject: Zoning By-law Amendment – 15 Larch Street

File Number: ACS2023-PRE-PS-0049

Report to Planning and Housing Committee on 3 May 2023

and Council 10 May 2023

**Submitted on April 21, 2023 by Derrick Moodie, Director, Planning Services,
Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development**

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Ward: Somerset (14)

Objet : Modification du Règlement de zonage – 15, rue Larch

Dossier : ACS2023-PRE-PS-0049

Rapport au Comité de la planification et du logement

le 3 mai 2023

et au Conseil le 10 mai 2023

**Soumis le 21 avril 2023 par Derrick Moodie, Directeur, Services de la planification,
Direction générale de la planification, des biens immobiliers et du développement
économique**

**Personne ressource : John Bernier, Urbaniste, Examen des demandes
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Quartier : Somerset (14)

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Planning and Housing Committee recommend Council approve an amendment to Zoning By-law 2008-250 for 15 Larch Street, as shown in Document 1, to permit a 26-unit, low-rise apartment building with site-specific exceptions, as detailed in Document 2.
2. That Planning and Housing Committee approve the Consultation Details Section of this report be included as part of the ‘brief explanation’ in the Summary of Written and Oral Public Submissions, to be prepared by the Office of the City Clerk and submitted to Council in the report titled, “Summary of Oral and Written Public Submissions for Items Subject to *the Planning Act* ‘Explanation Requirements’ at the City Council Meeting of May 10, 2022” subject to submissions received between the publication of this report and the time of Council’s decision.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

1. Que le Comité de la planification et du logement recommande au Conseil d’approuver une modification du *Règlement de zonage* n° 2008-250 pour la propriété située au 15, rue Larch, comme le montre le document 1, afin de permettre l’aménagement d’un immeuble d’habitation de faible hauteur comprenant 26 logements et des exceptions propres au site, comme l’explique en détail le document 2.
2. Que le Comité de la planification et du logement donne son approbation afin que la section du présent rapport consacrée aux détails de la consultation soit incluse en tant que « brève explication » dans le résumé des observations écrites et orales du public, qui sera rédigé par le Bureau du greffier municipal et soumis au Conseil dans le rapport intitulé « Résumé des observations orales et écrites du public sur les questions assujetties aux “exigences d’explication” aux termes de la *Loi sur l’aménagement du territoire*, à la réunion du Conseil municipal prévue le 10 mai 2023 », sous réserve des observations reçues entre le moment de la publication du présent rapport et la date à laquelle le Conseil rendra sa décision.

BACKGROUND

Learn more about [link to Development Application process - Zoning Amendment](#)

For all the supporting documents related to this application visit the [link to Development Application Search Tool](#).

Site location

15, 17, and 19 Larch Street (Municipally known as 15 Larch Street)

Owner

15-19 Larch St Inc.

Applicant

NOVATECH Engineers, Planners & Landscape Architects (c/o Jeffrey Kelly)

Architect

Hobin Architecture Inc.

Description of site and surroundings

The property is located on the north side of Larch Street. The approximately 900 square metre site is currently occupied by a two-storey residential building and a small-scale commercial shop.

The area surrounding the property is characterized by a broad mix of uses and building typologies. To the immediate east and south of the subject site along Larch Street is a mix of low-rise residential uses, garages, and surface parking spaces. Immediately west of the subject site are vacant lands planned for the Corso Italia O-Train station and the development of a high density, transit-oriented mixed-use community. To the immediate north of the subject site is an untravelled, rear lane that provides pedestrian access to the rear yards of the low-rise residential properties abutting this corridor.

Summary of proposed development

The proposal includes the demolition of the existing low-rise residential home and small commercial business (metal fabricator) and the construction of a 26-unit, four-storey apartment building consisting of a mix of one and two-bedroom units. The proposal features a side lane that provides access to an interior waste storage room, a covered and stacked bicycle lockup with 28 spaces located in the rear yard, and an at-grade communal amenity area in the rear yard. Each unit is proposed to have it access to its own private amenity area in the form of terraces or balconies. Presently there are several front yard parking spaces which will be replaced by soft landscaping, trees, terraces, and an accessible entrance to the building.

Summary of requested Zoning By-law amendment

To facilitate this development, a site-specific amendment is requested, including: an increase in the maximum permitted number of dwelling units from 12 to 26; a decrease in the front yard setback from 4.5 to 3 metres; a decrease in the western side yard setback from 1.5 to 1.2 metres; a decrease in the rear yard setback from 8.26 to 8.1 metres; a decrease in minimum required rear yard area from 25 to 23 per cent of the lot area; an increase in maximum permitted building height from 11 to 11.4 metres; and a reduction in visitor parking from one to zero spaces.

DISCUSSION

Official Plan (2022)

The Official Plan designates the subject property as a Hub within the Downtown Core Transect, Evolving Neighbourhood. These designations are meant to support the majority of the City's employment growth and residential intensification. Specifically, the Hub is a designation that is established based on an area's proximity to transit corridors and are areas that are planned for a mix of uses and higher densities to support the transit system (6.1.1, Policy 2). Transit is further supported by restrictions on surface parking within this designation and through policies that allow relief from parking-related zoning requirements where necessary (6.1.1, Policy 3).

West Downtown Core Secondary Plan

The Subject Property is in an area subject to the West Downtown Core Secondary Plan, formerly known as the Corso Italia Station District Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan was adopted by City Council in 2021 and incorporated into the Official Plan in 2022. The subject property is designated "Mixed-Use Neighbourhood" on Schedule L of the Secondary Plan and falls within the Preston Side Streets district on Schedule O. This area is to be primarily residential in character and is meant to evolve and intensify over time, supporting new, low-rise development that complements that existing context (Section 4.1). This Plan also includes a variety of public realm objectives which support street-level improvements that enhance the pedestrian experience (Section 5.2, Policy 34).

Zoning By-law (2008-250) – Residential Fourth Density

The site is zoned R4-UB under Section 161 and 162 of the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2008-250). This designation was specifically created following the City's R4 Zoning Review as a means of tackling issues of affordability and sustainability by increasing low-rise infill housing throughout the city. The resulting zoning changes encourage a broader range of housing in higher densities and in a manner that is compatible with the existing community in terms of built form, scale, and design.

Planning rationale

In alignment with the Secondary Plan's objectives, the proposed development compliments the mixed-use neighbourhood by emphasizing walkability, accessibility, and sustainable transportation while preserving the unique character of Little Italy.

The Secondary Plan's mixed-use neighbourhood designation offers a diverse range of land uses, including residential, commercial, and retail, to establish a pedestrian-friendly and easily accessible urban setting. The proposal advances this vision by sensitively integrating higher densities into the existing context. The proposed elimination of parking in combination with the substantial number of bicycle lockups, aligns with the Secondary Plan's objectives of encouraging sustainable transportation and minimizing car dependency. The site is also within 300 metres walking distance of the Corso Italia O-Train Station.

The proposed apartment building maintains compatibility with the existing built form of the Preston Side Streets by adopting a design that is in harmony with the neighborhood's character. This is achieved by incorporating design elements that echo the rhythm of nearby low-rise housing and using traditional brick materials, allowing the development to blend seamlessly with the existing built environment and embody the area's distinct context. See Rendering in Document 4.

Recommended Zoning Details

To achieve the proposed development, site-specific Zoning By-law amendments are necessary, as outlined in Document 2.

The decrease in front yard setback from 4.5 to 3 metres is consistent with the existing setbacks along the street and also helps create a more urban, pedestrian-friendly streetscape by better framing the street. The front yard also includes many of the public realm improvements such as soft landscaping, plantings, pedestrian connections and terraces that are envisioned in the Secondary Plan (Section 4.2) and contribute to a more lively environment at the street.

The decrease in the western side yard setback from 1.5 to 1.2 metres is appropriate given that west of the site are future development lands. The various Secondary Plan schedules for the Corso Italia Station District plans for a future laneway abutting this lot line allowing for the opportunity for ample separation between the proposed and future buildings.

The amendment includes a request to reduce the rear yard setback requirement from 8.26 metres to 8.1 metres. The setback measurement is taken from the furthest lot line, which, in this case, includes a small section extending about 1.9 metres into the rear lane at the northwestern corner. As a result, the majority of the building is situated 6.28 metres away from the laneway. However, the 3.7-metre-wide rear lane provides additional separation from the northern neighbours.

Regarding the reduction in rear yard space from 25 per cent to 23 per cent, the intention for this provision created through the R4 Zoning Review was to ensure that there is adequate space for trees and private amenity. The Site Plan in Document 3 shows that the proposed area can fulfill these necessary functions through a design that features a significant amount of ground-level communal amenity space, including two tree plantings and two planting beds filled with various soft vegetation.

The proposed building is 11.4 metres in height, whereas the Zoning By-law requires a maximum height of 11 metres. The increase is largely consistent with the Residential Fourth Density Zoning and remains within the maximum of 4-storeys outlined in Schedule M of the Secondary Plan. For reference, a typical four-storey residential building is 12 metres tall, and staff consider this amendment to have no adverse impacts

The proposal requests an increase in the number of dwelling units from 12 to 26 is appropriate given that the property in question is a double-wide lot, capable of supporting two, 12-unit apartment buildings. The zoning by-law allows a 12-unit apartment on a lot 450 square metres in size, therefore, the 26-unit apartment on the 900 square metres is consistent with the intent. Additionally, the proposed single-building design is a more efficient use of land without compromising the areas established character.

The reduction in visitor parking from one space to zero is consistent with the Official Plan and Secondary Plan policies for this area. Additionally, on street parking is currently permitted along the north side of Larch Street, and with the removal of the front yard parking, the site frontage will be reinstated with full curb sidewalk allowing for approximately three additional on-street parking spaces.

Overall, these amendments would allow for more efficient use of the site and promote sustainable growth and development, which are key policy directions of the Official Plan and Secondary Plan.

Provincial Policy Statement

Staff have reviewed this proposal and have determined that it is consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications as a result of this proposal.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

The Councillor is aware of the application related to this report.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

N/A

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendation.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no servicing constraints identified for the proposed rezoning at this time. Servicing capacity requirements to be confirmed at time of site plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report. Any Ontario Building Code requirements for accessibility will be imposed at the building permit stage.

APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS

This application (Development Application Number: D02-02-22-0017) was not processed by the "On Time Decision Date" established for the processing of Zoning

By-law amendments due to the complexity of the proposal and issues needing to be resolved.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Location and Zoning Key Map

Document 2 Details of Recommended Zoning

Document 3 Site Plan

Document 4 Rendering

Document 5 Consultation Details

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Planning, Real Estate, and Economic Development staff are supportive of the proposed amendments. The proposal aligns with the mixed-use neighbourhood designation and relevant policies of the Corso Italia Station District area of the Secondary Plan. It provides additional housing options and promotes residential density in close proximity to commercial and retail spaces. The design of the building is compatible with the character of Little Italy, and the requested site-specific amendments, such as the decrease in setbacks, allow for a more efficient use of the site and promote infill development and residential intensification.

DISPOSITION

Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to notify the owner; applicant; Ottawa Scene Canada Signs, 13-1920 Merivale Road, Ottawa, ON K2G 1E8; Krista O'Brien, Program Manager, Tax Billing & Control, Finance Services Department (Mail Code: 26-76) of City Council's decision.

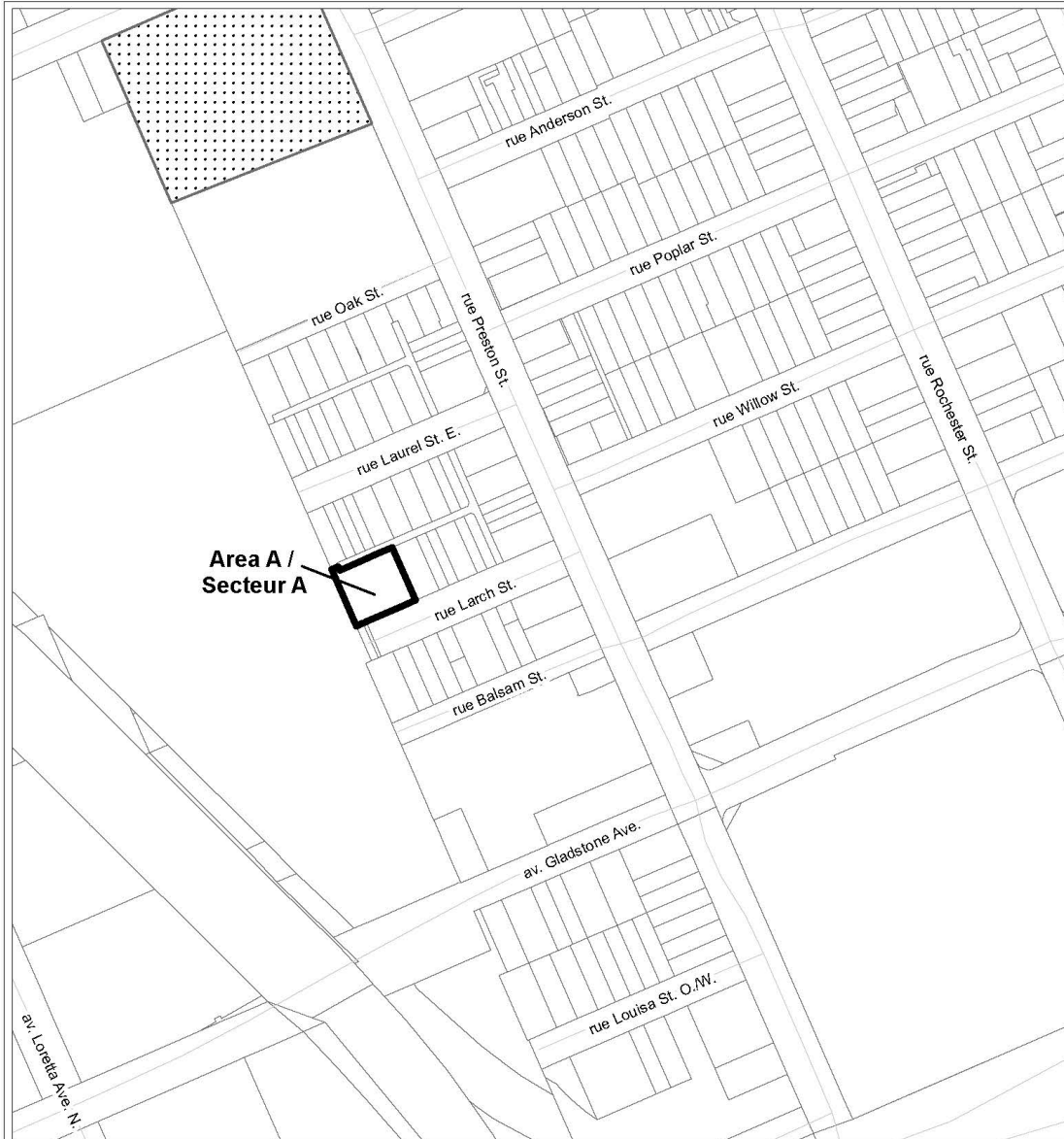
Zoning and Interpretations Unit, Policy Planning Branch, Economic Development and Long Range Planning Services to prepare the implementing by-law and forward to Legal Services.





Legal Services, Innovative Client Services Department to forward the implementing by-law to City Council.

Planning Operations, Planning Services to undertake the statutory notification.

Document 1 – Zoning Key Map

For an interactive Zoning map of Ottawa visit geoOttawa



		LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION ZONING KEY PLAN / SCHÉMA DE ZONAGE	
D02-02-22-0017	23-0298-D	15 rue Larch Street	
I:\COV2023\ZKP\Larch_15		 Area A to be rezoned from R4UB to R4UB [XXXX] Le zonage du secteur A sera modifié de R4UB à R4UB [XXXX]	
©Parcel data is owned by Teranet Enterprises Inc. and its suppliers All rights reserved. May not be produced without permission THIS IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY		 Heritage (Section 60) Patrimoine (Article 60)	
©Les données de parcelles appartient à Teranet Entreprises Inc. et à ses fournisseurs. Tous droits réservés. Ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation. CECI N'EST PAS UN PLAN D'ARPENTAGE		Entire map area is affected by the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay (section 139) / Tout le secteur de la carte est touché par la Zone sous-jacente de quartiers établis (article 139)	
REVISION / RÉVISION - 2023 / 04 / 06			

Document 2 – Details of Recommended Zoning

The proposed change to the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law No. 2008-250 for 15 Larch Street:

1. Rezone the lands show as Area A in Document 1.
2. Add a new exception, XXXX, to Section 239, Urban Exceptions, with provisions similar in effect to the following:
 - a. In Column II, Applicable Zoning, add the text “R4-UB [XXXX]”;
 - b. In Column V, Provisions, add the following text:

The following provision apply to an Apartment Dwelling, Low-Rise:

- i. maximum building height: 11.6 metres
- ii. minimum front yard setback: 3 metres
- iii. minimum western side yard setback: 1.2 metres
- iv. minimum rear yard setback: 8.1 metres
- v. minimum rear yard area: 23 per cent
- vi. visitor parking required: 0 spaces
- vii. maximum number of dwelling units: 26”

Document 4 – Rendering



Document 5 – Consultation Details

Notification and Consultation Process

Notification and public consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Public Notification and Public Consultation Policy approved by City Council for Zoning By-law amendments. One public meeting facilitate by Councillor McKinney was also held on June 7, 2022 via Zoom.

Public Comments and Responses

Comments:

1. The potential conversion of other empty or underutilized lots on the street could overload the street.

From a servicing perspective, the Applicant has demonstrated that the development can be supported by existing and upgraded services proposed through this development.

2. Insufficient parking spaces provided for the 26 dwelling units and visitors.

The site is well supported by transit and is within walking distance to a an O-train station. The proposal also includes 28 stacked-bicycle parking spaces in the rear of the site with three short-term lockup spaces located in the front yard. Policies within this area are supportive of a reduction of parking in favour of more housing.

3. The proposed density exceeds zoning regulations, and the building design doesn't fit with the existing community. Issues with rear setbacks, rear balconies, and backyard sizes are noted.

As noted in the report, the lot is double the size of the average lot that is capable of supporting two, 12-unit apartment buildings. The reductions in setbacks have been evaluated based on the immediate context and the side yard setback reduction is on a side which presently does not have a neighbour. The front yard setback reduction improves the presence on the street and is consistent with adjacent building setbacks. Finally, the rear yard setback is still consistent with the adjacent properties and is separated further by the presence of a rear lane. Trees have been placed in the rear yard which over time will produce increased privacy.

4. Residents want continued access to the laneway/easement for backyard access and are concerned about ongoing encroachment.

No changes are proposed to the state of the laneway, and the proposed development does not include any encroachments into this laneway, nor is there an intended use for the lane for this development.

5. Concern with building design aligning with the neighbourhood.

The building is sensitive to the existing context by reflecting the rhythm found on the street through strategic use of colour, material, and massing. Specifically, the building is largely composed of traditional and durable materials commonly found in this area, such as red brick.