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Monday, March-13-23

Committee of Adjustment  
101 Centrepointe Drive, 4th Floor,  
Ottawa ON K2G 5K7

Committee of Adjustment  
Received | Reçu le  
**2023-03-22**  
City of Ottawa | Ville d'Ottawa  
Comité de dérogation

Dear Committee of Adjustment;

I am writing to apply for a minor variance at 387 St Denis Street, Plan 636, Lot 12, to allow the enclosure of a front porch that is not setback 4.5 meters from the front property line.

387 St Denis was built as a stacked duplex in 1956 but operated as a single family home until I purchased it in December of 2021. St Denis is a quiet residential street of modest post WW-II family homes, duplexes, and low rise apartment buildings in the old city of Vanier. The area has developed over many years, many of the older homes have been renovated and had additions since they were first built and Vanier is seeing significant upgrading and modern in-fill. The streetscape is thus quite mixed.

The area has also seen planning and zoning changes following amalgamation with the City of Ottawa in 2001. Originally developed under Plan 245 of the Town of Eastview, 1955, in 2021 it was under Plan 636. The property is now part of the Inner Urban Transect Policy Area, Neighbourhood Designation and planned for mid- to high-density development, and 387 is zoned R4UA (formerly R4E). It is close to schools, parks, shopping and Montfort Hospital. This is the perfect neighbourhood for young families and I intend to rent the two three bedroom units at rates affordable for median income families. In fact there are two young families interested.

However, I found the building, which was last upgraded in 1969, had many problems for modern renters: there was no sound or fire separation between the units, there was on average one outlet in each room, the bathrooms and kitchens were severely dated (and impossible to get clean), there was water infiltration in a few places, and the building was cold and draughty.

Since the middle of last year I have been working to upgrade the building. Dugas Electric has upgraded all the electricity under ESA permit 0017679531, insulation has been added to the attic and the basement walls, the leaks have been repaired, new windows have been ordered and new kitchens and bathrooms are being installed. I insulated and dry-walled the existing enclosed entry way to the lower unit providing it with a small front hall and would like to enclose the roofed porch above this entry way to do the same for the upper unit. This is useful for tenants, especially young families, who always need storage, and also good for energy efficiency.

**Figure 1: The average set back on St. Denis is the same as for the front porch of 387: all of the multi-residential buildings, which have more than one entry, are less than 3m from the front lot line.**



However, the front porch is only 2.68 meters from the front lot line at its closest point and the zoning bylaw section 141(1)(d) requires that it be 4.5 meters from the front lot line, a difference of 1.82 meters, or the average of the abutting lots' corresponding front yard setbacks 144(1)(a) which is about 3m (Figure 1 and Appendix 1). I am thus seeking relief from the building



setback), to permit the building of three walls on the existing poured concrete foundation to provide a 2.134 x 2.7431 meter (7 x 9 foot or 63sq ft) entry.

St. Denis has a mixture of old and new, single family homes and multi-residential units (duplexes, triplexes and four plexes). Most of the properties on St Denis have their main entry on the front of the building (only 375 has it on the side), there are lawns across part of the front of the lot, and parking and driveways across 1/3 to 1/2 of the lot. This is true of 387 St Denis as well and will not change with the proposed porch enclosure.

387 (Figure 2) has a yellow brick facing



on the front, with white trims and white aluminum siding on the sides and rear. The proposed porch will be finished with metal siding and white trims to complement the existing building.

As the enclosed porch will be the same size as the existing porch the proportions of the building seen from the street, will not be affected. As the existing flat roof on the porch was leaking and



**Figure 3: Distance between the porch and the maple tree in front of 387**

of 387 (Figure 3) and will not be affected by the construction of an enclosed porch.

some of the beams were rotting, this will be replaced by a gable roof, which will be lower than the building roof line. There are many buildings of a similar age in the area with gabled roofs over the front entry.

The enclosed porch will not be out of character for the street, including the distance from the lot line and the immediate neighbours have all expressed support for the proposed change. Consultations are ongoing at the time of this application.

The construction will be completely within the footprint of the existing building and built on an existing foundation. There will be no impact on soft landscaping or the maple tree planted on the city construction right of way along St Denis Street.

The maple tree is over 15 feet from the front porch as shown in an aerial view

I hope that you will consider this application for relief from the building set back favourably. In summary, for the four tests for a minor variance:

1. The variance is minor: the front porch of the building is only 5.85 square meters and will be 1.82 meters closer to the property line than the 4.5 meter set back at its closest point. In addition the foundation already contains an enclosed entry way to the lower unit: the new enclosure is on top of this foundation and the same distance from the property line .
2. The variance is desirable for the appropriate development or use of the property: the variance will allow an energy efficiency enhancing front entry way and improve the functionality of the building by providing storage for tenants
3. The general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law is maintained: the zoning bylaw setback was developed to ensure a consistent look for the area, but as the properties were developed prior to this bylaw most are not setback 4.5 meters (figure 1 and appendix 1), so the look will be consistent with other properties in the area.

4. The general intent and purpose of the Official Plan is maintained: the Official Plan calls for more multi-residential buildings in this area and this change will enhance the use of the building as a duplex and complete its transition from a single family home to a modern stacked duplex.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela Branch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pamela Branch

Att. Photos of buildings on St. Denis, Consultations to date, Survey Plan, Site Plan, Elevation drawings, completed authorization by owner, application for a minor variance

APPENDIX 1: Photos



387 is the sixth building from the left. The green line runs along the front porch and shows that other buildings in the block are as close or closer to the property line than the proposed porch enclosure.

The following pages show the fronts of these properties.



399 and 400 St Denis Street



395 St Denis Street (foundation with entry to lower level about 3m from lot line), owner has expressed support for porch enclosure





391 St Denis Street (single family home, no foundation under front steps) owner has expressed support for porch enclosure



387 St Denis Street ☆ (duplex white foundation encloses entry to lower level, 2.68m to lot line)





383 St Denis Street (single family home no foundation under front steps) owner has expressed support for porch enclosure



379 St Denis Street (foundation enclosing entry to lower level about 3m from lot line)





375 St Denis Street (multi-residential, foundation about 2.7 m from lot line)



371 St Denis Street (multi-residential, foundation is about 2.4 m from lot line)



365 St Denis Street (foundation encloses entry to lower unit, 2.19 m from lot line)

