



December 5th, 2022

File no D02-02-21-0134, D07-12-21-0173 – 535 Chapel St

Please see below comments from the Action Sandy Hill Planning and Heritage Committee, in consultation with nearby residents:

Small lot is already overbuilt yet developer is seeking approval for further intensification to create tiny units

This application is requesting substantial zoning bylaw amendments, including:

- according to geoOttawa, the existing lot is 232.21 m², which is half of the minimum required lot area of 450 m² for a 9–12-unit building. This is far too great a deviation from the zoning bylaw (see [current bylaw](#));
- reduced lot width of 7.98 m, whereas 15 m is required, or just over half (53.2 percent) of the required lot width under the zoning bylaw; as well as,
- a reduced rear yard setback of 6.8 m, whereas 9.3 m is required, or three-quarters of the zoning requirements for rear-yard setback.

The project changes create far too great a deviation from the zoning bylaw to be acceptable.

Given the extent to which the proposal does not conform to the zoning bylaw as amended and approved by the City in 2020, it is reasonable to extrapolate that the City never intended there to be consideration, let alone approval, of a nine-unit building for this small site. This should not be seen as a standard application. Approval of this application will set a dangerous precedent for future developments not only in this neighbourhood but in others as well.

The developer (Smart Living Properties) is proposing to create seven small bachelor units (average size 245 ft² each) which would generally be of interest only to a single demographic and transient market. This would further increase the amount of short-term accommodation in an area already saturated with temporary accommodation, including, its neighbour 525 Chapel, its back neighbours (240 and 240A Blackburn and across from them at 225 and 227 Blackburn), plus other nearby properties. There are already a large number of bachelor apartments surrounding this property. Neighbours

call 311 regularly to report loud parties which continue after 11 pm. Additional bachelor apartments could add to this problem.

The proposed application runs contrary to the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan and the recently approved City of Ottawa Official Plan (OP) which states that Ottawa's growth needs to "accommodate a more diverse population and an aging demographic ...by creating an affordable supply of options across the city for different household types and income groups." (p2) The building does not contribute to the OP's goal of "stronger, more inclusive and more vibrant neighbourhoods and villages." (p10)

This building as proposed, will not be accessible, which is also contrary to the OP.

Proposal for garbage storage structure and backyard amenity space will increase vermin, removes distinctive tree, and increase run-off

Residents of Sandy Hill have noticed rats at the property and adjacent properties, including the parking lot of the strip mall that abuts 535 Chapel and 240A Blackburn to the south. Neighbours have complained to 311 regularly about strewn garbage in the back yard and rats. The approval of separate garbage storage structures, where garbage can be tossed between pick-ups, contribute to this unwelcome situation. The construction of a garbage storage structure will:

- exacerbate problems with rodents;
- extend any problems onto nearby properties for neighbours to cope with;
- be inconvenient for occupants and residents and/or foster inattention to garbage clean-up, especially if located at the back of the property; and
- reduce the green space for absorbing rainwater due to the size of the structure plus the associated walkway and pad.

Instead, as a general best practice for rental accommodation, provision should be made for indoor garbage storage until pick-up day. At 535 Chapel, garbage could be stored in a central indoor location or within each unit, and collected by a private contractor.

Besides the garbage storage structure and bicycle parking, only grass is envisaged in the small backyard. This means that:

- a distinctive tree (over 30 cm diameter at breast height (dbh)), which ought to have some protection under the current *Tree Protection By-law*, and four other trees and shrubs would be removed from the backyard. The loss of these trees and installation of grass would dramatically reduce the ability of the landscape to absorb and regulate rainfall;
- since this lot abuts a paved parking lot for the commercial strip, paying greater attention to absorption of rainwater becomes a critical issue. Already storm sewers in Sandy Hill are at capacity as indicated by a storm in September 2021 which caused rainwater to back up over sidewalks. This storm was not severe compared to storms now being seen elsewhere due to climate change and which residents of Ottawa may experience in the future; and

- tenants wanting to use the backyard would have no privacy from the commercial strip if there are no trees and shrubs, especially if the chain-link fence is retained.

In December 2021, several neighbours to 535 Chapel sent letters opposing the proposed development to the City planner, Mr. Renaud. Some copies are attached. The proposal does not exemplify smart living for people in Ottawa. It would set a bad precedent for the neighbourhood and should not be approved.

There is an opportunity for the developer to be a leader in creating spaces that would attract more diverse, longer-term tenants, who would appreciate well-designed, and maintained spaces, and would in turn, treat them and the surrounding environment with respect, and enjoy and contribute to the community.



Glenn Grignon
Action Sandy Hill
Planning & Heritage Committee

Cc: Counsellor Stephanie Plante, stephanie.plante@ottawa.ca
Sam Dent, sam.dent@ottawa.ca