

Date: April 10, 2025

File: 040523 – 740 Springland Drive

To: Committee of Adjustment, City of Ottawa

RE: MINOR VARIANCE APPLICATION – 740 SPRINGLAND DRIVE

Q9 Planning + Design Inc. have been retained by Greatwise Developments in order to submit a Minor Variance application in response to a Site Plan Revision moving forward for a proposed development at 740 Springland Drive.

The property is located in the Riverside Park community of Ottawa, approximately five kilometres south of the City's urban core. The property has an area of 56,800 m² (14.03 acres) and contains three six-storey apartment buildings, one ten-storey apartment building, and a centrally located community pool and small convenience store, for a total of five buildings.

In 2019, a Site Plan Control application was submitted and subsequently approved in 2020 for the addition of three residential apartment buildings within the overall subject site of 740 Springland Drive.

The three approved buildings consisted of 2 x 5-storey buildings and 1 x 4-storey building for a total of 235 units. These buildings have been labeled as A, B, and C.

The proposed revision is to add a single storey onto each of the proposed buildings. The permitted height limit is 18.0 metres. Buildings A and B are proposed to be 19.0 metres and Building C will remain compliant.

It is noted that the architectural plans identify a total building height for Buildings A and B set at 18.5 and 18.6 metres respectively but 0.4 metres has been added as a buffer for construction of the mid-rise buildings that require relief. No relief is required for Building C.

Proposed Minor Variance

- (a) To permit a maximum building height of 19.0 metres for Buildings A and B as per the drawings submitted, whereas the maximum building height is 18.0 metres in the Zoning By-law [**R5B [2459] H(18)**]

SITE & CONTEXT

Site

The site, located at 740 Springland Drive, has a diamond-like shape with a crescent curve along Springland Drive and a reverse “L” boundary along Norberry Crescent. It spans 13.8 acres (55,880 m²) and features street frontage along its entire perimeter with frontage on Springland Drive being 463.33 m, Norberry Cres (south) being 210.24 m, and Norberry Cres (north) being 257.95 m.

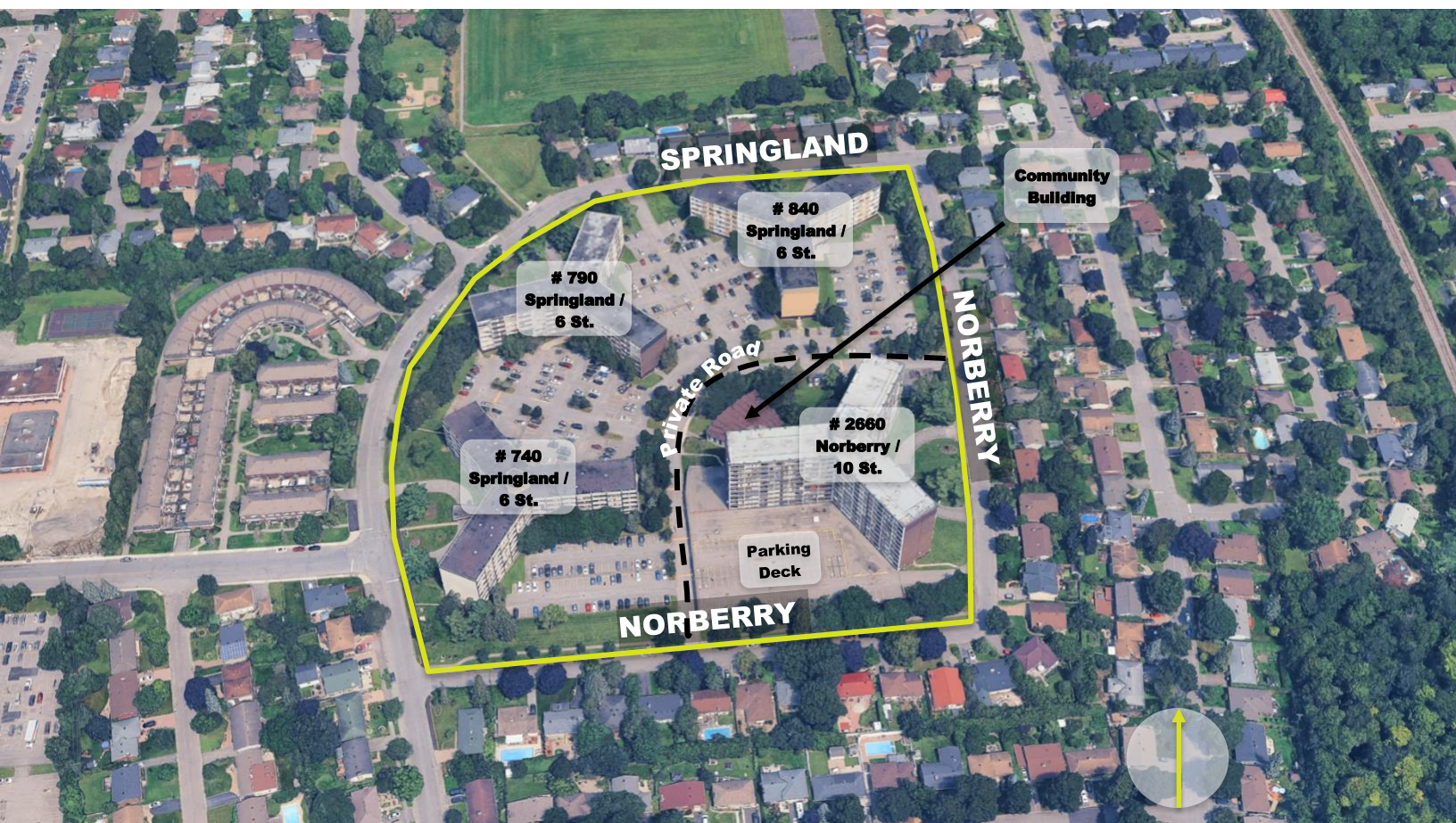


Figure 1: Site Location and Details

The site includes four residential buildings (Norberry Residences) and a small community centre with a pool and convenience store. One 10-storey building (2660 Norberry Crescent) and the community centre are in the southeast quadrant, while the other three buildings are 6 storeys each. The site contains 761 rental units and 759 parking spaces, mostly surface parking with some in/on a one-storey parking deck.

The site was constructed in the 1960s; the development reflects that era's design and layout. The legal description is PLAN 749 PT BLK A & PLAN 775 PT BLK D.

The following is a breakdown of the existing buildings, height, and unit count.

Address	No. of Storeys	No. of Units
740 Springland Drive	6 storeys	168
790 Springland Drive	6 storeys	171
840 Springland Drive	6 storeys	171
2660 Norberry Cres	10 storeys	251

Context

The site is located in the City's Outer Urban Area within the neighbourhood of Riverside Park and Ward 16 – River. Specifically, the site is bound by Norberry Crescent to the east and south, and by Springland Drive to the north and west. In a wider context, the site is contextually surrounded by the following:

- **North:** Brookefield Road followed by Confederation Heights and Carleton University across the River
- **East:** CN Rail Line followed by Airport Parkway and the O-Train Trillium Line
- **South:** Walkley Road and McCarthy Woods, with the Ottawa Airport approximately 5 km to the south.
- **West:** Riverside Drive followed by Mooney's Bay Park and Terry Fox Athletic Facility

The immediate vicinity predominantly features low-rise residential buildings, including townhouses and low-rise apartments, along with a few institutional buildings. The residential structures, constructed primarily between the 1960s and 1980s, reflect the architectural styles of their respective eras.

Green spaces such as Mooney's Bay to the west offer recreational opportunities for residents. Within 1.5 kilometres of the site are a number of uses complementary to medium and high-density residential development.

The following are some of the notable nearby land uses: public and catholic elementary and high schools, day cares, churches, Carleton University, Banquet Centre, Mooney's Bay, Hog's Back, Riverside Park, Riverside Mall, Billings Bridge, O-Train Station. Please see the context map on the following page.



Figure 2: Area Context

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The previously Site Plan Control approval was to permit the proposed development of three new residential buildings. As part of this approval, the existing parking deck needs to be replaced along with reconfiguration of surface parking and landscaping. Additional visitor parking spaces were located on the semi-circular driveways of existing buildings.

The three proposed buildings (A, B, and C) shown in red outline below are proposed to be located along the Norberry frontage within the open spaces between the existing buildings. The Site Plan Revision application is to add an additional storey on to the existing approved buildings. Buildings A and B require minor relief from the maximum building height (18.0 m) of 0.5 m and 0.6 m respectively. The variance request identifies a maximum height of 19.0 m (1.0 m relief) to account for construction flexibility.

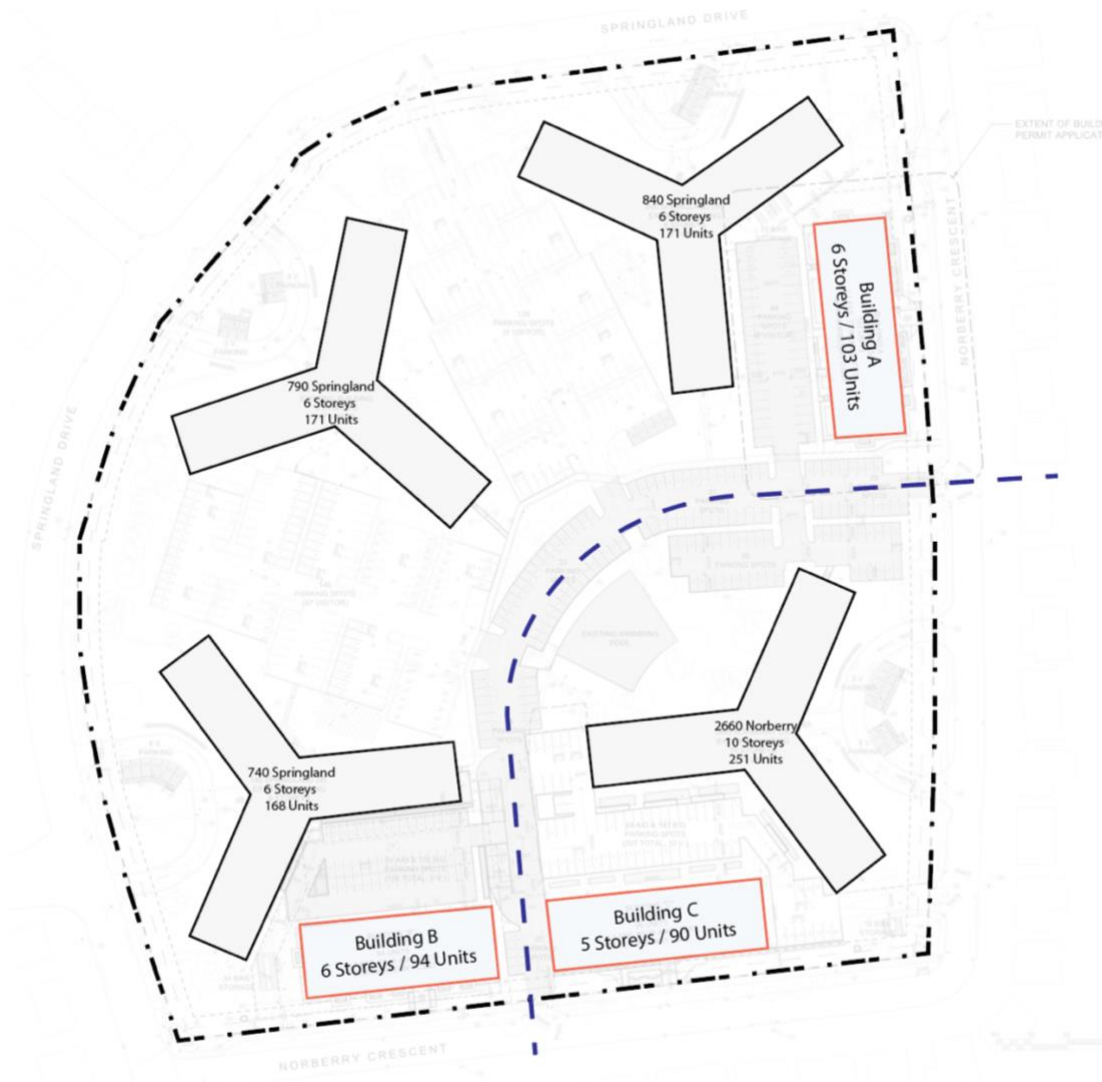


Figure 3: Simplification of Proposed Site Plan

The following table identifies the original approval with a column to identify the proposed changes captured by the Site Plan Revision and Minor Variance Application:

Address	Previous Approval		Proposed Revision	
	Height	Units	Height	Units
Building A	5 storeys / 16.4 m	85	6 storeys / 18.5 m	103
Building B	5 storeys / 16.4 m	78	6 storeys / 18.6 m	94
Building C	4 storeys / 14.2 m	72	5 storeys / 17.2 m	90
TOTAL		235		287
Relief Required			+ 1.0 m Height Increase*	

**Note: Proposed building height is 0.5 m / 0.6 m above the permitted 18.0 m. The relief requested is 1.0 m above the permitted building height to allow for variations during construction if necessary given that this is a developed site with existing greenspaces, surface parking, and other buildings.*



Figure 4: Proposed Elevation of Building A, showing proposed height (red) and permitted height (blue).

POLICY REVIEW

In order to obtain approval for the proposed minor variance relief, it is necessary to review the relevant policies: Provincial Policy Statement, 2024, City of Ottawa Official Plan 2021.

PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS) came into effect on October 20, 2024, and merges the previous “A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe” and the “PPS (2020)”. It provides broad policy direction on land use planning and development, emphasizing intensification to reach a target of 1.5 million homes in the province of Ontario by 2031. These policies must be integrated with other provincial and municipal plans, including local Official Plans and Secondary Plans, and all planning decisions must be consistent with the policies of the PPS.

Section 2.0 provides policies to ensure that planning authorities prepare for long-term growth by using provincial forecasts, maintaining adequate land for residential and other uses, and incorporating any additional growth from zoning orders into future plans. It emphasizes the creation of complete, accessible, and equitable communities through a diverse mix of land uses.

Section 2.1 - Planning for People and Homes

2.1.6 Planning authorities should support the achievement of complete communities by

- a. accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, employment, public service facilities and other institutional uses (including schools and associated child care facilities, long-term care facilities, places of worship and cemeteries), recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;
- b. improving accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and
- c. improving social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.

[**Comment:** The proposed development currently has four existing buildings in a mix of mid-rise and high-rise. The existing buildings are situated on a large parcel of land surrounded by green space, surface parking, and a community building. Beyond the site is low-rise medium density residential. The proposed development is to revise the existing approval for three new apartment buildings in order to add a single storey to each building with no proposed changes to building footprint. This will allow for an additional **52 units**. This proposal and requested relief will serve to increase the number of provided rental units in a manner that is compatible in the existing mid-rise context of the subject site. This proposed minor variance supports the intensification goals and housing diversity identified in Section 2.1 of PPS 2024.

Section 2.2 Housing

Planning authorities must ensure a diverse range of housing options and densities to meet current and future needs by:

- a) Setting affordability targets to address all housing needs
- b) Allowing and supporting all necessary housing types, including those for changing demographics and job-related needs, and encouraging residential intensification.
- c) Promoting efficient land use through higher housing densities that make good use of infrastructure and encourage active transportation.
- d) Prioritizing transit-oriented development which includes intensification near transit.

[**Comment:** The proposed increase in units facilitated by the height increase supports the existing transit in the area, including the 5 bus stops along Springland Drive and more in the surrounding area that service routes 290, 90, 190. O-Train Line 2 is located 1.4 km to the north and can be accessed via a walking route taking 19 minutes. Mooney's Bay Station provides access to the rest of the city. Mooney's Bay Park and Hog's Back Park are both nearby greenspace amenities to support the increase in residential density and a complete community. The proposed rental apartment buildings add variety in the existing low-rise, predominantly freehold tenure neighbourhood. A healthy mix of rental and freehold options, dwelling types, unit types, allow for a supportive mix of affordability in a community. The three buildings together provide **38 3-bedroom units**, 30 2-bedroom units (some with den), and the remaining in bachelors and 1-bedrooms.

[**Comment:** The three proposed buildings are intending to apply for CMHC Apartment Construction Loan Program that will result in affordable rents for at least 20% of the proposed units.

Based on our review, it is our professional planning opinion that the proposed development is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2024.

The City of Ottawa Official Plan

Designation: Neighbourhood, Outer Urban Transect.

The City of Ottawa's Official Plan was amended on November 4, 2022, and was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The new Official Plan outlines goals, objectives and comprehensive policies to guide growth and development within the City of Ottawa until the year 2046.

Section 2 provides strategic directions for the new Official Plan to help Ottawa become the most liveable mid-sized City in North America over the next century. The Plan is guided by five broad policy directions which call for increased growth through intensification, more sustainable transportation, context-based community design, more environmental and health considerations and integrated economic development into planning policies.

- [**Comment:** The proposed minor variance is to support an additional storey onto three approved rental apartment buildings in Riverside Park near Mooney's Bay Park. This proposal supports gentle intensification (+1 storey) on an appropriately higher density site that is located in proximity to major greenspaces, accessible transit, schools, and other amenities to support a complete community and address the intended goals of the City of Ottawa Official Plan.

Section 3 of the Official Plan provides a growth management framework that is vital for guiding future growth patterns in the City. Its premise is to allocate sufficient land to allow for varying types and intensities of growth. It divides the City into urban and rural, with more concentrated growth allocated to the former. *Section 3* also identifies a target of 5% large-dwelling units (being 3 bedrooms) for mid-rise buildings.

- [**Comment:** The proposed minor variance will allow for appropriate growth in the urban area on a parcel of land that already supports a context of mid and high-rise buildings. The gentle nature of the increase, being 1 additional storey bringing two of the proposed buildings to 6 storeys from 5 storeys where the site already contains three 6-storey buildings and one 10-storey building. This residential intensification is appropriately located in a manner to support the growth management framework.
- [**Comment:** The proposed development meets and exceeds the large dwelling unit target. Of the 287 proposed units, 38 are 3-bedroom units which translates to **13% of units are large dwellings**, greatly exceeding the 5% target.

Section 5 provides more detailed policies for each of the six transect policy areas within the city. Each transect, which ranges from most urban to least urban, has a different type of land use and built form and the Plan provides policies catered to each transect.

The subject site is part of the Outer Urban Transect Policy Area. Within this policy area, the site is designated as Neighbourhood.

Outer Urban Transect Policies

Section 5.3 explores the Outer Urban Transect in more detail. Section 5.3.4 specifically contains policies for Neighbourhoods within the Outer Urban Transect. The policies of this section identify support for intensification in a manner to transition away from suburban model and move towards urban built form. The intent is to allow a wide variety of housing types, including missing middle, and context-appropriate built-forms. The designation supports up to four storeys though it is acknowledged the subject site was zoning approved in 2018 (pre-approval of the new OP) for maximum height of 18 metres. An 18-metre height maximum is typically designed to accommodate a 6-storey building.

Generally, the designation supports context appropriate density. Although the height maximum in the designation is 4 storeys, the site is zoned R5B which permits low, mid, and high-rise buildings. The current maximum building height under the zoning is 18.0 metres.

[**Comment:** The proposed development is proposing to modify the existing Site Plan Approval to allow for an additional storey on each of the proposed buildings A, B, and C. This supports intensification within the appropriate context of the subject site. It meets the intent of the zoning which is to support 6-storey mid-rise development. The zoning permissions supersede the more recently approved Official Plan designation.

Based on our review, it is our professional opinion that the proposed development conforms with the City of Ottawa Official Plan.

The City of Ottawa Zoning By-law

Zone: R5B [2459] H(18)

The City of Ottawa zoned this site as Residential Fifth Density, Subzone B, Urban Exception 2459, Maximum Building Height of 18 metres. The existing mid-, high-rise apartments, and the proposed 6 storey apartments are uses permitted by zoning. The site is defined as a planned unit development, and is to be reviewed as one-lot for zoning purposes.

The purpose of the R5 Zone is to:

- | allow a wide mix of residential building forms ranging from detached to mid-high rise apartment dwellings in areas designated as General Urban Area, Mixed Use Centre or Central Area in the Official Plan;
- | allow a number of other residential uses to provide additional housing choices within the fifth density residential areas;
- | permit ancillary uses to the principal residential use to allow residents to work at home and to accommodate convenience retail and service uses of limited size;
- | ensure that residential uses predominate in selected areas of the Central Area, while allowing limited commercial uses;
- | regulate development in a manner that is compatible with existing land use patterns so that the mixed building form, residential character of a neighbourhood is maintained or enhanced; and
- | permit different development standards identified in the Z subzone, primarily for areas designated as Developing Communities, which promote efficient land use and compact form while showcasing newer design approaches

The table below is a review of the zoning compliance for the proposed development, specific to the Site Plan Revision and the proposed Minor Variance.

Zoning Bylaw Designation: R5B [2459] H(18)	Required	Proposed	By-Law Section	Notes
Min. Lot Width	NA	~240 m	164A	
Min. Lot Area	1400 m ²	55,880 m ²	164A	
Max Building Height	18 m	19.0 m (18.5/18.6 m) for Buildings A and B only	H(18)	Relief Required
Min. Front Yard Setback	3 m (Norberry) 6 m (Springland)	6.4 m	164	
Min. Corner Yard Setback	3 m (Norberry)	6 m	164	
Min. Rear Yard Setback	3 m (Springland)	NA – No additional buildings on Springland Proposed	164	
Building Setback	1.8 m	0 m	131(2)	

from Private Way				
Amenity Area	1722 m2	2021 m2	137	
Landscaped Area	30%	31.57%	163(9)	
Resident Parking	692 (0.66/unit)_	849	[2459]	
Visitor Parking	104 (0.1/unit after 12)	104		
Bicycle Parking	144	153	111	

Details of Exception 2459:

- Despite the parking provisions in Section 101, Table 101, the minimum parking space rate for Dwelling, Low-rise Apartment and Dwelling, Mid High Rise Apartment is 0.66 per dwelling unit.
- Despite the visitor parking provision in Section 102, Table 102, the minimum visitor parking space rate for Apartment dwelling, low-rise or mid high-rise is 0.1 spaces / unit and no visitor parking spaces are required for the first twelve dwelling units on the lot.
- Despite Section 109, parking in front of existing buildings identified as 2660 Norberry Crescent, 740 Springland Drive, 790 Springland Drive, 840 Springland Drive is permitted.

Planning Act Review

Review of Section 45(1) Minor Variances

The *Planning Act* requires that minor variances are only to be permitted so long as they meet the four tests as set in Section 45(1). These tests are: whether the variance is minor; whether the variance meets the intent and purpose of the Official Plan; whether the variance meets the intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law; and lastly whether variance is suitable and desirable for the use of the land.

Variance: To permit a maximum height limit of 19.0 metres for buildings A and B in accordance with the plans filed, whereas the Zoning By-law has a maximum height limit of 18.0 metres.

Is the variance minor?

The proposed variance is to increase the maximum permitted height from 18.0 metres to 19.0 metres in order to accommodate a proposed one-storey addition to an existing Site Plan Approved development for three rental apartment buildings in an existing complex of mid and high-rise development. The actual increase is 18.5/18.6 m but an additional 0.5/0.4 metres is requested for flexibility during construction of the proposed mid-rise building on an existing developed site.

The minor increase of 0.5/0.6 metres beyond the existing maximum height of 18.0 metres is not only minor but it is not visibly perceptible in real world conditions. It is a minor relief allowing for increased number of units on an already developed site. For these reasons, the variance is considered minor. An image below depicts the proposed building height (red) in relation to the permitted building height (blue).



Figure 5: Markup of Elevation Building A Showing Proposed (Red) and Permitted Building Heights (Blue)

Does it meet the intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

The intent and purpose of the Official Plan is to allow for residential intensification that is contextually appropriate. The subject site permits mid- and high-rise development through the existing R5B zone approved by Council in 2018. The proposed addition of Buildings A, B, and C – which are Site Plan Approved for 4 and 5 storeys already – is pursuing a Site Plan Revision in order to add an additional storey to each building in order to reflect the permissions that would allow for 6-storey buildings. As the proposed development and

revision is considered a contextually appropriate intensification, the minor zoning relief of 0.5/0.6 metre meets the intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

Does it meet the intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?

The intent and purpose of the R5 zone is to allow for a variety of dwelling types and densities, including mid-rise residential development. The specific zone approved for this site permits 18.0 metre height limit. A building height of 18.0 metres is generally intended to allow for a 6-storey built form. The proposed 0.5/0.6 m increase will not only support the permitted mid-rise building, but it will serve to add additional units and support intensification in a manner that is consistent with the intent of the site-specific zoning. For these reasons, the proposed relief meets the intent and purpose of the site-specific zoning.

Is the variance desirable for the appropriate development of the land?

The proposed variance, which will have the effect of creating a built form that is 0.5/0.6 metres taller than the permitted 18.0 metre maximum height limit will ensure that the 6-storey intent of the zone is being actualized and that the 1-storey addition to each of the three permitted residential dwellings will add needed apartment rental units, with the inclusion of some affordable housing upon approval from CMHC, to the community where proximity to transit, amenities, and greenspaces is available. The proposed variance supports provincial policy direction and supports intensification in a compatible manner on an already developed site where mid-rise buildings already exist. This minor variance supports a proposal that is very desirable and appropriate for the land.

CONCLUSION

As noted, the proposed minor variance will allow a 0.5/0.6 metre increase beyond the existing 18.0 metre permitted building height (requested relief being rounded to 19.0 as buffer for construction on an existing built-up site). This increase supports a 6-storey building height on a site intended to support mid-rise buildings. It allows for a sensitive addition of 1-storey onto two currently approved 5-storey buildings in order to provide additional rental units. Within the proposal, 13% of the units will be 3-bedroom units. Following approval from CMHC, approximately 20% of units will be considered affordable.

The difference between the permitted massing and the proposed massing is nearly imperceptible and therefore is considered very minor, in support of intensification goals of affordable and market rental housing in a compatible manner this project meets the intent and purpose of both the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law. The sensitive increase in height in order to increase provided rental housing is desirable for the appropriate development of the existing mid- and high-rise developed property.

Collectively considered, the proposal meets the four tests as set out in Section 45(1) of the Planning Act demonstrating that the proposed relief requested is a suitable and desirable use of land, meeting the provincial housing direction.

It is the opinion of Q9 Planning + Design that the proposed minor variance is considered good land use planning.



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