

Document 12- Comments from the RPRA

RPRA comments for staff report on Smart Living proposal: 229-247 Beechwood Ave, Rockcliffe Park

The Rockcliffe Park Residents Association strongly opposes the proposed development. While this proposal for two apartment buildings may meet the requirements of the zoning by-law, it dramatically fails to conform with the legal framework protecting Rockcliffe Park as a designated heritage conservation district. It conflicts with the Provincial Policy Statement, with the Rockcliffe Park Secondary Plan, and with the Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District Plan in myriad ways.

Our opposition and the reasons for it have long been shared with the owner and city staff. In short and partial summary:

Joining of lots: “New lots created by joining smaller lots together shall be consistent with the general lot sizes within the associated streetscape” in Rockcliffe Park. The proposal ignores this requirement.

Height and mass: Multi-unit development is permitted on this part of Beechwood Avenue in Rockcliffe Park but the height and mass, size and scale of development must be compatible with the adjacent residential development on the same side of the street. This is clearly possible - as illustrated by a number of nearby multi-unit properties. In contrast, the proposed development is dramatically out of scale and dwarfs adjacent residential development. (A comparison to development across the street in Vanier cannot override the Rockcliffe Park Secondary Plan and Rockcliffe Park Heritage Plan.)

Conservation of the defining landscape character of Rockcliffe Park: “New development is conditional on the conservation of existing landscape features including trees and open space” and “the dominance of soft landscape over hard landscape is an essential heritage attribute of the HCD and shall be retained”. The proposal ignores these requirements.

Demolition: “Demolition will be permitted only where .. the proposed building is sympathetic to the traditional surrounding natural and cultural environment.” The proposal fails this test.

The Rockcliffe Park Heritage and Secondary Plans explicitly govern the whole of Rockcliffe Park, including the “Panhandle” which includes this stretch of Beechwood Avenue. The fact that Beechwood Avenue is at the edge of the conservation district does not alter this basic fact.