

# Summary of Written and Oral Submissions

## Zoning By-law Amendment – 216 Murray Street

In addition to those outlined in the Consultation Details section of the report, the following outlines the written and oral submissions received between the publication of the report and prior to City Council's consideration:

### Number of delegations/submissions

Number of delegations at Committee: 9

Number of written submissions received by Planning Committee between June 14 (the date the report was published to the City's website with the agenda for this meeting) and June 24, 2021 (committee meeting date): 13

### Primary concerns, by individual

#### **Liz MacKenzie** (oral submission and slides)

- concerns about safety issues for tenants of the site and neighbours, including:
  - people will have to cross Murray Street to access the dining hall / soup kitchen; truck traffic here will also be a clear danger
  - the capacity of the drop-in is unknown, but it is unlikely that it would accommodate the numbers of people that are fed at each meal as well as the people waiting or socializing around the supervised injection site (SIS); it is also unlikely that non-drug users will want to congregate in the drop-in centre
  - 233 Murray has ample adjacent space to accommodate truck traffic and parking associated with the operations of a food service and general deliveries to the facility and there is no programming on the site; the narrow lane at the rear of 256 Murray is proposed to accommodate deliveries and waste collection etc., access and egress will be from King Edward Ave. and neighbours whose properties back onto the lane will be subject to an increased level of this industrial noise
  - the neighborhood resemble one under siege; it has become a gated community, with danger (threats, violence and property damage) on the streets adjacent to the Shepherds of Good Hope and SIS operation, as evidenced by the level of security measures being used by neighbors (e.g. gates, secured mailboxes, taller fences, window privacy screens, use of rear entrances instead of street entrances); the fact that the Uber app denies service to the area; mail theft; home invasions and the amount of discarded needles in the area

- Lowertown has the highest concentration of social services in the city and consequently the highest population of people with serious complex health issues; while these sites and services offer help to those in need, they unintentionally attract those that prey on the vulnerable and even the most compassionate residents in the community have become fearful with their own daily safety challenges; it is not a suitable place for vulnerable women to be housed
- the application does not conform to the Official Plan (OP) or Provincial Policy Statement (PPS); in accordance with the OP, a Health and Resource Centre is not permitted when it includes overnight care or living accommodation; in accordance with the PPS, in relation to housing options, growth is to be focused away from "areas which may pose a risk to public health and safety", and development and land use patterns that may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns are to be avoided

**Sandra Milton** (oral submission)

- cited safety concerns, including:
  - this building does not conform to CPTED principles (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design), for example: cutting down the only tree, glass windows to view inside stairwell, entry doors along the street
  - Murray Street is an arterial road; it is used by visitors as a park for those attending the center, but the sidewalk is not a place to congregate, nor a place for clients of the shelter or soup kitchen, which creates an inability for people to walk by
  - the first floor is a low barrier drop-in center for anyone; it is a community medical center, a place to eat and a place to access various programs, and is not designed with safety in mind or with adequate space to accommodate users
- asked for a second generation review and audit of the current state of programming and use and various states at the project lifecycle, to ensure that this location provides integration into the community and guards against land use that detracts from safety
- the development combines soup kitchen and housing and, with this increased complexity, it needs to mitigate for the effect of spilling onto the streets; it does not provide adequate space for First Nations or other residents and will not provide safe housing for the vulnerable women to be housed there
- in the broader context, it is necessary to mitigate potential effects on social economy and the environment; there is no link to green space in this development; the Official

Plan and community safety and well-being plan should provide for being aligned for the space to be safe for all residents of the site and surrounding community, and 15-minute neighborhood

**Nausikaa Muresan** (oral and written submission)

- RE affordable permanent housing versus transitional temporary housing:
  - the proposed units seem to be an expansion of the overcrowded emergency shelter in an area where this is no longer permitted
  - it is not in line with City of Ottawa plan to eradicate homelessness by 2030, as it does not follow the Housing First approach to provide safe, stable and affordable housing that does not limit the length of stay
  - affordability seems expensive in Ottawa, despite tens of millions of taxpayer dollars spent on combatting homelessness, but a big part of the funds still go to intermediate steps and emergency solutions such as this one.
- RE safety and security risks for new residents and neighbouring community
  - no one states that the concerns raised by the community are ignorant of people by homelessness, but loitering, littering, public toileting, trespassing, and dealing and injecting drugs, are daily realities of the neighborhood; these are safety and security risks that need to be identified, not dismissed; a direct response and solutions, not just comments, needs to be presented by shepherds of Good Hope and the City of Ottawa.
- the trees that are added to the project are great, and it would be amazing if some garbage bins were also added along with the trees

**Nancy Miller Chenier** (oral submission)

- with its exceptional uses, this eight-storey building will have a negative impact on the heritage conservation district, as the expansion of services perpetrates demolition by alteration
- the area has been fortified by residents of the neighbourhood, with doors and windows barred, gates locked, and fences with no trespassing signs; instead of the once vibrant family homes in the block directly across from and adjacent to this proposed development, they have been turned into painted gray, drab structures, barricaded behind increasingly high protective fences - alterations to heritage by owners under siege; over time, the owners progressively introduce paint over graffiti, lattice window coverings to protect tenants from turmoil on the streets, higher and higher fences to discourage intruders
- through these alterations we blame the owner rather than acknowledge that the

responsibility lies elsewhere

- residents and people of all ages and backgrounds used to spill onto streets to go to school, church, the park, the ByWard Market, or to chat with neighbors but now the occupants tend to be short-stay clients who wonder how soon and how quickly they can find another location away from the chaos
- other parts of the heritage district will also be affected by the proposed rezoning with all the exceptions; the proposal will have an eight-storey tower pop up along a historically low-rise street and the height alone will seriously compromise the use of Saint Bridget's Church, a nationally recognized landmark
- it's not about putting heritage over individuals, or rejecting wanderers, or rejecting supportive housing in a safe location, it is about the City adhering to an established policy about heritage, and it's about respecting cultural values
- it's about ensuring that Lowertown ensures that it has affordable housing for families
- it is about a community that has a balanced service for all residents
- the Official Plan (OP) and Provincial Policy Statement both speak to heritage; the OP commits to sustainable communities, to Lowertown as an attractive village; the Secondary Plan requires that Council ensures Saint Bridget Church and Parliament Hill views are maintained
- zoning and development is needed that builds and sustains a neighborhood, that creates a true 15-minute neighborhood, with places to shop and play, and homes for families, and that makes Lowertown be seen by residents and visitors as a historic destination with an economically and socially healthy stable community

**Brian Nolan** (oral and written submission)

- the proposal in its current form should be rejected and the City should demand more for residents and businesses; this project does not serve the best interests of the clients that are planned to be housed there and poses a great threat to the surrounding community
- RE the consultation process
  - the report was distributed by email on Monday June 14th, at 4:59pm, with one minute to spare before the deadline, and provided stakeholders with the least amount of time possible to review the report and respond
  - the report states that the consultation was undertaken in accordance with the public consultation policy approved by Council; this process is autocratic and opaque and its outcome is pre-determined rather than focusing on holistic well-

being

- RE building height and planned services
  - there is a bylaw for a reason to restrict the height but once again staff are 'satisfied with the conformity'
  - the proposed building would be above the view plane; the height of this building is not consistent with the surroundings, with the exception of one hotel that is close to this height; the surrounding communities will be forced to live with the obstruction of this 'sore thumb'
  - the funding for this project comes from the Rapid Housing Initiative, which is not rapid kitchen or rapid drop-in initiative or rapid shelter building initiative; when you put those three things together in the same building, what you get is another shelter, which is prohibited by zoning in the ward because of an oversaturation of shelters; this saturation has made this ward dangerous, violent and barely livable
  - if the Shepherds truly wanted to build housing and not a shelter, they would have spent all that money on building real housing, where people can heal with their families
  - the report refers to this as a livable housing but a 10x10 publicly funded room is not affordable, it is a shelter
  - the newly vacant space on the corner building could be used for a drop-in center if needed; if 48 beds are going to be removed from the current shelter, it is unclear why that now vacant space is not being planned for use as a drop-in center; this extra floor is not needed
  - the existing kitchen can be renovated instead of spending more money to add another floor in a completely new building; this money should be spent to build appropriate housing in an appropriate location; the Shepherds have indicated that the current kitchen building on the north corner will be used for admin purposes and staff parking but it is unclear how much admin staff and expenses they have or why they need more parking when this is minutes from LRT; this is an unnecessary addition to the height, has absolutely nothing to do with actual housing, and should not be accepted
- RE security:
  - through this entire process, the community has been consistently highlighting the risk to the security of their families and local businesses, and asking the City and the SGH what they will do to address the massive issue, but no responses /

plans have been provided and those questions have been completely ignored; the City is steamrolling their political agenda on the backs of the surrounding community and the vulnerable aboriginal women that they are purporting to help; this is the most dangerous and violent block in the entire city and this is a build of another shelter right beside a drug addiction site; nobody will heal in that environment

- the SGH have said publicly and unapologetically that what happens outside of their walls is not their concern or responsibility but they say they want to be a good neighbour; the response from the City and ward Councillor has been some variation of 'not in my purview' since the very beginning, unconcerned with family and business safety and security or the violence they have to deal with on a daily basis
- this report indicates the project was reviewed by the CPTED unit with no major issues identified, yet that street is an unmitigated violent and dangerous disaster zone, the issues known by Ottawa Police Services; the community is concerned about their children's safety as they come and go from home, school and work, but the City is concerned about colour pallets; the community is concerned about the safety of the vulnerable aboriginal women that are planned to be moved to this location, but the city and SGH are concentrating on their political agendas and empires; last year there was a range of 20,000 discarded needles in Lowertown, plus drug dealers, stabbings, shootings, violence and prostitution an any normal day; businesses can't or don't want to survive there for the protection of their employees; the Uber app won't even allow drivers to stop here for a matter of seconds in order to protect their drivers; it is an extremely dangerous place for anybody to live, let alone vulnerable aboriginal women; if housing is to be built there, the injection site needs to be moved and that whole block cleaned up to make it safe
- RE transitional housing vs. shelter vs affordable housing
  - the City has been adjusting their marketing and language throughout this entire process based on concerns raised by stakeholders; the report is now referring to this project as "Affordable Housing", which it is not, by any means; it is 100% funded by taxpayer dollars and is not housing; it is another shelter, which is prohibited by existing bylaws; it is ridiculously small rooms with shared kitchens, shared eating spaces, small shared hang-out spaces, with shared social services and no families or kids allowed
  - this building is downtown housing, yet the report is recommending approving the reduction of greenspace by more than 50% of the acceptable area based on

zoning / bylaws; this is not healthy for the residents; removing the kitchen, thus removing the truck delivery, and adding greenspace is one more idea if you truly want to create healthy housing

**Sharon Odell** (oral and written submission)

- asked why, when there is a report on modular housing (within the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women report 2018-21) that indicates modular housing is not recommended for indigenous women, modular housing is still being recommended for this eight-storey build (note: written submission states “*I would like to ask why or how modular housing has NOT been recommended for indigenous women (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women report 2018-21), in reference to the height of the 8-storey build ...*”)
- has questions and concerns about consultation with indigenous and Inuk women, as it has been very vague as to what communication has happened and with whom; if it has not been conducted or considered fully, it may be conceived by the public as being a repeat of the colonial system, pressing what others think will be good for them; the Shepherds of Good Hope has a Catholic Church background, which has not had good press lately in reference to indigenous wellbeing, especially with the history of residential schools, also run by the Catholic Church system
- noted the temporary space for picnic tables and porta potties that is being proposed by the Shepherds of Good Hope this summer 2021 and asked whether turning their parking lot into a temporary space for outdoor drop off and communal use, away from sidewalks and the dangerous King Edward multi-traffic lanes, could be done permanently, with less pavement in place and more healing trees and greenery
- the spaces seem to be very small, and the focus is on the loading dock and the truck getting supplies in to what would be kitchen needs and drop-in for injection; there’s lack of planning considering the multi uses here
- there is dangerous exposure to vulnerable women in the area, with the concentration of crime; the SGH has not seen other women's shelters in Canada for comparison, such as downtown Toronto or Montreal, where Indigenous Women Housing has low-rise, away from the concentration of shelters and crime hot spots, and situated in safer areas with actual permanent green space for cultural use; this 8-storey building for Indigenous women in Ottawa (the capital of Canada) gives a public impression of them being placed on shelves
- these women and their children are going to be made to crisscross through immediate troubled areas to see family and friends and get to daily amenities, and vice versa for families to visit them; domestic violence, which has risen during Covid,

must be considered

- there is too much embedded in one building; for their security, health and wellbeing, and everyone's wellbeing, to mitigate those risks that run against this being a success; for housing vulnerable women (and Indigenous women at that), the focus needs to be on them and the long-term plan solutions and not just an emergency shelter or the optics for the City to look good

**Julie Lanteigne** (oral and written submission)

- as a Métis and a woman, she was troubled that this project is still being pursued and that, despite the community's concerns about the safety and security of women, the only thing delegates are permitted to discuss at this Planning Committee meeting is the size and plan of the proposed building
- she urged everyone to visit the site with their families and see for themselves how unsafe it is
- she noted the sad discovery of the bodies of 215 children in Kamloops and pointed out that consultation with the Indigenous community has not been done for this proposal, adding that, sadly, what they have heard with the Indigenous community is 'bad housing is better than no housing'
- she referenced two paragraphs from "The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls" which spoke to access to safe and affordable housing being an integral first step in restoring safety to the lives of Indigenous women and girls, and which indicated there is a deficit of resources especially for Indigenous women to help them heal, support them and keep them safe

**Salma Al-Shehabi** (oral submission)

- as an active housing advocate at various committees who has provided evidence-based policy recommendations, she indicated that should the City approve the plan as presented, without rectifying its shortcomings, legal action will be brought against the City

**John Chenier** (written submission)

- disagreed with the findings of the staff report that the proposed project complies with Official Plan policy to prohibit intrusions into the two protected viewpoints from Beechwood Cemetery, noting previous developments at Beechwood and McKay, Beechwood and Marquette, Beechwood and St Charles and King Edward and St Patrick have all been required to respect the sightline in the past and have configured their buildings to conform with these requirements
- questioned whether subsequent development proposals for the area would be



exempted from respecting the site line from the two viewpoints if an exception is made for this project; projects should be approved or rejected strictly on whether they meet the requirement to protect those sightlines (i.e. a 'yes' or 'no' response without exception)

- the staff analysis is not consistent with the viewplane diagrams provided with the report, which show that the proposed height does intrude into the sightline; photographs from the viewpoints would indicate that there is room to question the accuracy of these drawings as to the true scale of this intrusion
- staff's "furthermore" reference to Schedule 77, which notes that heights of 36.6 metres are permitted on the blocks immediately north and south of the site along King Edward Avenue, is totally irrelevant in relation to the viewpoint requirements, which would not permit such heights in any event; one could just as easily have pointed out that there is a height restriction of 13 metres in the adjacent HCD across the street from this project and that the current zoning at 216 Murray and the land all along Murray Street from King Edward Avenue to Sussex Street does not permit such height

**Board of Directors, Carleton Condominium, Clarence Gate (CCC664) (Jamine Ackert, Li Fang, Jennica Fudge, Ted Lawrence, and Nausikaa Muresan)** (written submission)

- CCC664 as a corporate entity as well as individual owners of the condominium provided extensive comments to City planning staff on the proposed development, which were wide ranging but were concentrated on concerns about safety and security, crime, and the social environment; their lived-experience and firsthand knowledge and almost 20 years as neighbours of the SGH qualify them as experts on the dynamics of life in Lowertown; they are disappointed that the staff report ignores their concerns and has not used them to advise decision makers on the negative impacts of this project and its likely long-term effects on the safety and livability of their neighbourhood and for the prospective residents of the proposed housing; in many instances staff responded that the comments are not within the prevue of the current review so they question when the comments will be considered, as, if they are not dealt with, the neighbourhood will be faced with further safety concerns and rising crime rates
- RE Affordable Housing:
  - the Province of Ontario defines affordable housing as "the least expensive of: 1) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or 2) a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area."

- questioned whether the proposed build is affordable housing where residents pay rent and are protected under the *Landlord and Tenant Act* or whether it is at best transitional housing, or an expansion of shelter accommodation, which is no longer permitted in this area
- RE Risk and Mitigation Strategies:
  - while the response indicates that there were numerous concerns by many stakeholders put forward regarding this plan – the document clearly stipulates that there are “no risk implications”, which would assume that there are no risks for sustainability; no gender-based concerns (including for Indigenous women); and no safety and security risks for the new residents or the community; all potential risks should clearly be identified – they may be graded from low to high, but they need to be placed on the table and appropriate corresponding mitigation measures developed (e.g. a gender-based analysis for the development and programming and services associated with it)
- RE consultation:
  - the City’s definition of “consultation” and related procedures and protocols should also be more fully developed to address actual engagement practices; while they were “consulted”, their concerns have little impact on the project and it looks as though this poorly planned build will go ahead with no regard for the concerns outlined by the community, which point to an exacerbation of the existing situation in Lowertown, the responsibility and effectiveness of this build will lie on the shoulders of the Mayor and the Councillor for this ward; the very limited level of social analysis undertaken, and the dismissive approach to community and “do no harm” concerns that have been raised for both beneficiaries and their Lowertown neighbours and their families are all very concerning
- they think there is an opportunity to improve the quality of life, safety and the economy of the neighbourhood, and ensure the safety of the proposed new residents, but until this project is modified to address their concerns it will not happen and so the project should not be approved as it currently stands

**Ted Lawrence** (written submission)

- the report recommends the approval of the development plan and rezoning application without thoroughly considering the wide spread public concern; the report cites only two comments in support of the project, while there are hundreds of comments expressing concern with respect to numerous issues including security and safety, supportive housing, design, CPTED, heritage, zoning, height, view

planes, waste management, noise and others

- the report's response to safety and security concerns are woefully inadequate, providing only general comments about the building and its infrastructure and not about ensuring the safety and security of clients, neighbouring residents or the public in general; the PPS calls for matters of safety and security within the neighbourhood to be fully considered yet this staff report says that these concerns are not within the purview of a planning application
- this application raises a plethora of serious concerns and numerous unanswered questions that have a direct bearing on the safety and security of the clients of SGH, neighbouring residents and businesses; the application should not be approved until such time that the project and its operation are more fully evaluated and a safe environment can be provided for all

**Deborah Paterson** (written submission)

- supports the good work of the SGH, but in this instance believes that an alternative, and more just solution to providing permanent supportive housing for women, particularly indigenous women, must be pursued
- "city planning" is about creating safe and sustainable communities, not just about zoning, and these points should be given full consideration prior to rendering a decision on this project:
  - Canada has not adequately met the needs of those who are experiencing homelessness and we cannot ignore the devastating human cost of homelessness on our streets
  - there is an opioid epidemic and mental health crisis that is ruining lives across Ottawa and this country
  - recent federal, provincial, and municipal government initiatives to mitigate the crisis in homelessness, addictions and mental health are critical to moving forward but so much more needs to be done to adequately address the problem in Ottawa
  - most residents of Ward 12 and the Lowertown/ByWard Market community are compassionate and are supportive of the many social services available for vulnerable citizens
  - the present day problems both at and around the Shepherds premises are not safe and profoundly affect the community: the drug sales, the drug use, the violence, the yelling and screaming at all hours of the day and night, the sex acts, the panhandling, the garbage, the perpetual police presence, just to name

a few

- this Ward is a crisis due to the over concentration of those services that already exist to support vulnerable people, and the Murray St. project will only magnify the problem
- the area around 216 Murray Street is replete with drug traffickers who exploit the concentration of homeless people nearby; panhandlers, often seen under the influence of narcotics, often in the middle of the street, are a danger to themselves and to the public
- people who find themselves homeless must be provided the ability to find real and permanent housing to end the physical and psychological trauma; housing “the most vulnerable of the vulnerable” on this site, where they will continue to be preyed upon by the drug dealers and others who will cause them harm, is unacceptable
- in its current form, the SGH housing proposal contradicts the principles underlying Housing First and Supportive Housing, primarily the immediate access to safe and secure permanent housing
- the Province of Ontario defines affordable housing as “the least expensive of: 1) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households, or 2) a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area”; the proposed build at 216 Murray is not affordable housing as there is no rent required and thus it is at best transitional housing, or an expansion of shelter accommodation which is no longer permitted in this area
- as (the ward) Councillor has stated, emergency shelters are a way of the past, and government investments going forward need to be made in permanent, affordable housing, in all neighbourhoods of Ottawa; if SGH truly wants to provide housing for those individuals who are ready to embark on a new hopeful life, they must not build housing on this site immediately adjacent to a supervised injection site; this only will be, at best transitional housing, and at worst, an expansion of the shelter model
- people struggling with homelessness, disabilities and other challenges should have the ability to live permanently in a place they can call home; women who need housing deserve not to live on the most violent, drug-ridden corner in the City of Ottawa
- the project was conceived and was adopted without true and meaningful consultation with residents, businesses and service providers in the

Lowertown/Bytown community; because of the “Rapid” in Rapid Housing Initiative the decision to move forward quickly on this project was made solely by the Mayor, the Shepherds, and likely Ottawa Inner City Health in December of 2020 or very early in January of 2021

- public input through the planning and development application process appears to be a farce as the project has been presented virtually from the beginning as a fait accompli; the idea of alternatives seems to elude City officials; it's no wonder that “engaged” citizens are left wondering exactly how they can participate in decision-making that affects their quality of life
- contrary to the Planning report there has been a limited level of social analysis undertaken related to this development; there are, for instance, abundant “risk implications”, e.g. risks for sustainability; risks pertaining to gender-based concerns; risks for indigenous women and reconciliation efforts; risks respecting safety and security for the new residents of the housing; risks for the neighbouring community; all potential risks should clearly be identified, graded from low to high, with corresponding mitigation measures identified
- an alternative supportive housing site should be immediately found which will remove women requiring housing with supports from this most distressing corner of our City; particularly, in this time of reckoning and reconciliation, we are obligated to look for a better, more culturally appropriate space (i.e. greenspace) for this supportive housing to be developed

**Laurie Clifford** (written submission)

- RE affordable housing:
  - the Province of Ontario defines affordable housing as “the least expensive of: 1) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or 2) a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.”; the proposed build at 216 Murray does not appear to be affordable housing as there is no rent required and thus it is, at best, transitional housing, or an expansion of shelter accommodation, which is no longer permitted in this area
- RE risk and mitigation strategies
  - while the response indicates that there were numerous concerns by many stakeholders put forward regarding this plan, the document clearly stipulates that there are “no risk implications”; this would assume that there are no risks for sustainability, no gender based concerns (including for Indigenous women); and no safety and security risks for the new residents or the community, etc., all

potential risks should clearly be identified – they may be graded from low to high but they need to be placed on the table and appropriate corresponding mitigation measures developed (e.g. a gender-based analysis for the development and programming and services associated with it)

- RE consultation
  - the City’s definition of “consultation” and related procedures and protocols should also be more fully developed to address actual engagement practices; her 25 years of experience with community related project and gender equality programming has been mostly through federal processes rather than the opaque and seemingly haphazard municipal ones; it looks as though this poorly planned build will go ahead with no regard for the concerns outlined by the community, which point to an exacerbation of the existing situation in Lowertown, and the responsibility and effectiveness of this build will lie on the shoulders of the Mayor and Councilor for this ward
  - she wishes the SGH and the City luck in making this project successful for members of the vulnerable homeless populations, but remains very concerned with the limited level of social analysis undertaken, and the dismissive approach to community and “do no harm” concerns that have been raised for both beneficiaries and our Lowertown neighbours and their families

**Sylvie Grenier** (written submission)

- Lowertown is the perfect example of how a City has and continues to destroy a downtown neighbourhood (next door to its national Parliament no less); the recipe consists of bulldozing much of it to build major arterials, an interprovincial truck route and social housing and concentrating most of its social services for the vulnerable population, as well as most of its bars, in that neighbourhood; the net result is a very high level of crime, homelessness for everyone to see and a dysfunctional neighborhood that residents wish to leave and tourists are recommended to avoid
- The City should adopt the following resolution in respect of the proposed development as a starting measure to put a stop to the on-going destruction of Lowertown:
  - ❖ Whereas, the City has declared a housing crisis and there is an urgent need for more supportive housing in Ottawa;  
Whereas Lowertown lies at the heart of historic Ottawa;  
Whereas, Lowertown is already home to a large concentration of the city’s services for the homeless population;

Whereas Lowertown and ByWard have become dangerous and unwelcoming for residents and visitors alike, as evidenced by local media, police reported crime rates and the negative comments on Trip Advisor;

Whereas the project proposed for 216 Murray does not respect the current limit of four stories in an R4 zone, and the height and design of the proposed new building at 216 Murray is not consistent with the heritage designations on the north side of Murray;

Whereas the specific project at 216 Murray will locate a very vulnerable population directly beside the areas of greatest concentration of people with mental health and drug addiction in the city and will put the targeted vulnerable residents in arms way;

Whereas, crimes, noise, drug paraphernalia, threatening behaviour are endemic in the area around 216 Murray.

Be it resolved that:

- The City reject the current proposal for 216 Murray;
- The City request that the federal government agree to devote the funding currently slated for 216 Murray to a more suitable site to be identified by Shepherds of Good Hope, at a safe distance from activities that are detrimental to the needs of the residents of that facility;
- The City support, from its own funds the building of a facility for an improved soup kitchen and a day service facility at 216 Murray;
- The City require that any project for expanding the services provided to the homeless community be subject to a CPTED analysis by OPS which would be available to the public;
- The City and other levels of government expand substantially budgets need to create a network of supportive and affordable housing across Ottawa;
- The City use the money currently set aside for the project at 216 Murray to fund a supportive housing project or projects at a suitable distance from existing concentrations of the most troubled homeless population;
- The City impose immediately a moratorium on all expansion of services for the homeless in Lowertown
- The City create and implement a 'community impact assessment tool' to be used in the evaluation of all municipally funded projects to ensure that city-wide and community issues are addressed when making decision;
- The City conduct a complete review of the impacts on the City of the

current policies, practices and projects aimed at helping the homeless population in Ottawa.

**Christine Hanson** (written submission)

- having lived next to SGH for 18 years and on Cumberland and Clarence St. for approx. 20 years, considers herself very informed on the consequences of having people who are surviving with extensive homeless, mental health and substance dependent issues; as a homeowner, is concerned about the status of the homeless crisis in our City
- has observed and experienced the decline of safety in this neighbourhood – Market Area; it's lacking the beauty and amusement that residents and visitors to our Capital once experienced and many people do not want to come to the Market Area anymore due to the risk of violence, homeless loitering, noise, theft, trespassing, toileting (everywhere), garbage on the streets and private properties, being approached by aggressive panhandlers, observing drug deals and vulnerable homeless people with mental health issues who are intoxicated / drugged, being threatening and intimidated by homeless population, break ins, etc. – daily occurrences here
- the people that live here deal with this daily; they are entitled to have the quiet enjoyment and safety of their home and community but this is no longer the case and every year the issues escalate; it is time that the residents are heard and that the City acts on behalf of the residents of Lowertown and Market area
- the 216 Murray St. Shepherds of Good Hope project, along with the many exemptions it requests, will be putting the residents here and the community at further risk; the increased concentration of services for the homeless, right beside the area whether the city's drug trafficking and using drugs is happening is not good for the community nor for those experiencing homelessness; isolating some homeless people into a high rise (next to a homeless shelter) further hinders their integration into society and the community; expansion without any support outside the premises of 216 Murray/ Shepherds of Good Hope facilities creates an unsafe neighbourhood for all and further isolates this already disadvantaged population
- with the installation of the self-injection site(s) they have experienced that the people using these sites roam the streets and private properties after they inject drugs, and nothing positive happens after someone is intoxicated; the deteriorating safety and security in the neighbourhood impairs the very community in which this vulnerable population is supposed to integrate
- the \$219 million project to revitalize the market under the City's ByWard Market Public Realm by making it a pedestrian friendly, safe and inclusive destination



attractive to families is in direct contrast with the increase in the shelter population concentration of homeless services in the Lowertown

- solutions should be found so the community as a whole can benefit

## Primary reasons for support, by individual

**The owner/applicant as represented by Deirdre Freheit, President and CEO, Shepherds of Good Hope (SGH), Jessie Smith, CSV Architects; Kasper Koblauch, WSP Canada Inc.** (oral submission and slides)

- understands and sympathizes with community concerns; the pandemic, the toxic drug supply on the streets and the housing crisis have hit this community exceptionally hard and the impact is visible
- SGH aims to make things better for the community, to respond to problems, not to create them, and the proposed development is part of the solution to many of the problems the community faces and that have been raised
- the development will include a state-of-the-art community kitchen to address food insecurity, expanded drop-in hours to give people a place to go during the day, which they don't currently have in the evening, and 48 units of housing to get people out of shelters; their experience research shows that housing with supports transform lives and clients' mental health improves, their drug use goes down, they have less involvement with police and paramedics, and they become good neighbors; SGH has a solid track record of providing supportive housing in communities from east to west in the city and have seen that residents of their programs very rarely return to shelters or the streets once they're housed because they have a place they can heal, feel valued, and contribute positively to their communities
- the support housing at 216 Murray will prioritize marginalized populations, especially Indigenous individuals and women; careful consideration and extensive consultation was undertaken and while everyone's preference is that this housing should be provided by Indigenous organisations, that capacity doesn't exist now and while it is being developed, the need is great and this is a good opportunity to create more supportive and affordable housing options with culturally responsive, trauma informed services; this will also allow their clients some choice in where they live
- the funding received through the rapid housing initiative necessitated a fairly quick turn around on this project but despite this, the team has consulted extensively and are grateful for all of the feedback that they have received from City staff, elected representatives, neighbours, other service providers, the business community, Indigenous leaders, their own service users, and many more; in response to some of that feedback, they changed the design of the drop-in space to increase its capacity

and provide the staff with better sightlines; changed the truck delivery route to increase the patio and green space and add more trees, as neighbors asked for, and more landscaping; changed the exterior of the building to be more in keeping with the heritage of the neighborhood, and the design of the building will incorporate the Indigenous medicine wheel and Indigenous art

- with this and their other projects SGH is on track in one year's time to have more people in supportive housing than in their shelter; this development would reduce the capacity in the emergency shelter as more people obtain housing with supports and will mean fewer people on the streets with nowhere to go, more security in the neighborhood, more resources to address the root causes of community safety concerns; the issues neighbors are talking about are not because of programs like this, but because of a lack of them, and this project will help create a stronger, safer Lowertown for all
- their slide presentation provided site/ location context, an overview of the proposal and an explanation of associated policy and regulatory framework, including:
  - the site is located adjacent to Shepherds of Good Hope Men and Women's Shelter, and many nearby amenities, currently occupied by a one-storey building; the site is not within the Lowertown West Heritage Conservation District (HCD) but is adjacent to it, and a heritage impact assessment determined the proposed development will not impact the HCD or the former St. Brigid's church; the site is also located within 600 meters of the Rideau LRT station and well serviced by a number of bus routes
  - access for service trucks will be located at the rear of the site
  - there is a security desk upon entrance on the first floor, in keeping with CPTED principles, which will be staffed 24 hours and will have visibility to the street, the patio and all interior open spaces that are available for community users to occupy; adjacent to the security desk is the drop-in center and the soup kitchen, the capacity of which will increase the capacity over the existing facility at 233 Murray by about 50%; this increased capacity, together with outdoor space, will resolve some concerns about about lineups and overflow
  - the second floor is mainly a distinct amenity space for residents of the building, including a large space with a separate dining room, lounge area, access to computers, access to a quiet room and a balcony; the actual soup kitchen is also located on the second floor, while the people using the service of the kitchen only have access to the ground floor
  - with respect to CPTED principles and the design of the building, extensive consultation was undertaken and included community consultation (community

meeting); the Indigenous community, through an Indigenous architect who formed a talking circle with members of both SGH and John Howard Society residents; and the Urban Design Review Panel process

- the design is meant to create a warm streetscape for the community, get respite from the street to create privacy for users of the space and separate them from the street; eliminate a lot of the black fencing along the street, and create warmth and a nice space for the people to be off of the street
- the site is designated 'Central Area' under the Official Plan Schedule B, which permits a wide variety of uses and is a target area for intensification, and also encourages the establishment of increased housing options; the Central Area Secondary Plan applies and indicates the site is designated as being within the Lowertown Character Area, within which residential uses and social services, specifically drop-in centers, are permitted uses
- the site is currently zoned as R4UD [1667] S77, which permits a Community Health and Resource Center, as well as low-rise residential uses; a Zoning By-law amendment is required to allow the proposed development, specifically the height and some performance standards, and it is proposed to be changed to R5S [xxxx] S77; Schedule 77 would be amended to permit the building height of 33.5 m and the new urban exception would also prohibit shelter as a use, remove the requirement for visitor parking, allow for a minor reduction in amenity area, reduce or eliminate a number of building setbacks, and allow for a reduced landscaped area

**Effect of Submissions on Planning Committee Decision:** Debate: The Committee spent one hour and 28 minutes in consideration of the item.

Vote: The committee considered all submissions in making its decision and carried the report recommendations as presented.

## **Ottawa City Council**

Number of additional written submissions received by Council between June 24 (Planning Committee consideration date) and July 7, 2021 (Council consideration date): 2

Primary concerns, by individual

### **Sandra Milton, Citizen Coalition for Compassionate and Safe Communities**

- while this application is basically a planning issue, on two counts, it does not comply with the Official Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement and on two counts it uses flawed arguments to justify the height and heritage compatibility
  - ❖ the proposed Health and Resource Centre is prohibited under the City's

bylaws, as the definition of health and resource centre does not allow for overnight care nor living accommodation

- ❖ the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is clear on the requirement for safety in the provision of housing, including promoting efficient land use and development that protects the environment and public health and safety, and facilitating economic growth (and avoid/mitigates against risks to same)
- ❖ on two counts it uses flawed arguments to justify heritage compatibility and height increases; the proponent chose to use International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Charters to argue heritage compatibility, which is unusual, and by using statements out of context, the Cultural Heritage Impact Statement, paid for by the proponent and developed in consultation with Heritage Staff, unashamedly misinterprets the International Council on ICOMOS Charters
- ❖ the heights allowed on King Edward Avenue, zoned as a Mainstreet, should not be used to justify increased height on adjacent corridors such as Murray Street; this will cause height creep far into the residential community and threaten the Lowertown East Heritage Conservation district

### **Faith Blacquiere**

- the “Consultation with Indigenous groups/residents” section of the report included an insensitive staff response
- other public comments in the report describe major social problems in the area; Councillors should know about the increasing severity of what residents, businesses and the homeless are experiencing because while the City is investing \$129 million to improve the ByWard Market Public Realm, with much more funding required, these changes will drive more homeless persons and predators into this neighbourhood
- other homeless persons were moved to SGH Supportive Housing buildings in other areas of the City to get them out of the environment around the SGH Shelter System where alcoholism, drugs, crime and prostitution are prevalent but SGH is placing this building on the Shelter System Campus and plans to provide a security guard and surveillance cameras, but there will be no guards to walk these residents down the street
- The Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) was announced as providing a “safe and affordable place to call home” but it place constraints on selected projects, one of which is “Select one target population from 3 options – Black Persons, Women and Children, Indigenous Women”; removal of all the other groups, which the Staff

Report implied were being included, gives the perception that the federal government is targeting 2 of these groups due to recent political and social movements and the upcoming election; while there is a lot of money being made available, this should not be a reason to approve this building which is placing Indigenous women in a dangerous environment, both inside and outside the building, particularly when the Truth and Reconciliation issues may make decisions like this appear to be insensitive

- the Staff Report uses “affordable housing” and “supportive housing” interchangeably; this application is for “supportive housing”
- SGH took advantage of this project to move other Shelter System and Community Outreach programs into the same building, thereby increasing the height and the proximity to many more persons; these uses are not funded by the RHI Program and the SGH Servicing Report did not include the additional loads on water and sanitary services
- the applications for this project were received 29 March 2021, just before a 30 March 2021 federal application deadline; a 25 Nov 2020 Council Motion delegated authority to expedite development applications for modular housing; the Staff Report recognizes that there may be a problem meeting deadlines and states that the City “will work with CMHC to determine how we can continue to meet our obligations under our agreement with them in the event of delays to projects”; SGH also needs to obtain approval for the Site Plan Control application and regulatory approvals normally required by agencies in the development review process; SGH informed CBC News on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2021 that occupancy is expected to occur early 2022, despite the RHI deadline being Dec 31<sup>st</sup>
- a 25 Nov 2020 Council Motion delegated authority to sole source to a modular housing provider; 8-storey buildings are not normally constructed this way and modular buildings higher than 4 storeys are rare in Canada; the RHI Applicants Guide shows a 3-storey modular building (attached documentation); the 22 July 2020 article on the Arup report titled High Rise Modular Construction: A Review of the Regulatory Landscape and Considerations for Growth states that only 12 have been completed world-wide in the past decade, with most since 2016, including a 9-storey hotel in Calgary and the article also states that the CSA Technical Committee is reviewing standards that are expected to be approved at the end of 2021, which may be incorporated in the National Building Code and provincial buildings codes, and then be adopted by the industry as best practices; the regulatory system is not ready for this type of construction for buildings greater than 4 storeys
- in the SGH Servicing Report Minutes of the 26 Jan 2021 Pre-consultation Meeting,

a Housing staff member describes the RHI requirements, as including “requirement for new building to use modular construction. Restrictive on construction approach and timeline. Panelized system permitted as well.”, the CSA Report states “Panelized construction refers to the manufacturing and assembly of wall panels and floor panels off-site that are shipped to a site and require additional assembly to form three-dimensional spaces and a completed building. It is off-site construction but not modular construction”; if CMHC is now allowing this to be included, this would be an indication that the rules are being bent

- the SGH Elevation drawings suggest that the building might consist of modular units, however, the SGH reports do not show that the rear of the building is not as wide as the south side in the Elevation drawings; this results in less building footprint and impacts all the reports and plans which included the wrong footprint; the Geotechnical Report does not address the special requirements for this type of building which will need piles driven to bedrock; the analysis of bringing modules to the site was not evaluated in the Transportation impact Memo; the setback and canopies appear to be inconsistent with modular construction
- there are a number of problems with the proposed zoning provisions
  - the Community Health and Resources Centre (CHRC) designation is more appropriate to a centre that provides health services to the public; the definition does not permit living accommodation in the same building, and providing a nurse on staff for residents does not result in meeting this definition; the SGH Design Brief included “soup kitchen (community health and resource centre)” and the SGH Planning Rationale states “The first floor of the proposed development will consist of a community health and resource centre in the form of a soup kitchen and a drop-in centre. The soup kitchen and drop-in centre will offer people a space to congregate and eat 16 hours a day, thus reducing activity outside on Murray Street”; these uses are social services, not health services; CRHC is a permitted use in the R5 zone so only an exception is needed to say that the living accommodation phrase is not applicable
  - the Place of Assembly use should have been included for the drop-in-centre
  - the Staff Report requires 220sm with up to 100sm located on 256 King Edward; Section 137 requires the use to be on the same lot and not in the front yard; the ZBA application and Item title did not include 230/256 King Edward, therefore, despite SGH having purchased the property in 2018, 216 Murray is still a separate lot; the planner had suggested that 2 applications be submitted; reduction of the required 288sm to 120sm removes 42% of the required amenity space; the 8sm allocated for the 2d floor balcony overlooks the Murray

### Street problem areas

- the Site Plan for the interior side yard setback from 212 Murray is 1.5+ metres near Murray Street, whereas, a 1.3m setback is being requested; the Landscaping Plan adds gravel crossing the 212 Murray property line; the Site Plan identifies window well limits at the property line, which will impact ability to access 216 Murray and would need to be coordinated with the 212 Murray drainage, which was supposed to go to Murray Street
- the recommended zoning provisions are incorrect and this Item is being proposed at the wrong time and place for the wrong reasons

### **Effect of Submissions on Council Decision:**

Council considered all submissions in making its decision and carried the report recommendations without amendment.