

Submission to Planning and Environment Committee

27 June 2006

Agenda item 6: Zoning - 1002 Karen Way

In a letter dated May 19, 2005 the Federation informed members of the Committee of FCA concern regarding spot rezoning. For ease of reference, a copy of the letter is attached.

In the view of FCA member associations, any rezoning decision must be justified in terms of public benefit. It is to be expected that development will be consistent with the Official Plan and will contribute to the efficient delivery of public services to citizens through compact development. Nevertheless merely conforming to such expectations does not constitute adequate justification for a zoning amendment.

In the case of 1002 Karen Way, the Committee is considering rezoning a parcel of land from I1 - Institutional Zone to R6 - High-rise Apartment Zone. The land is presently unutilized – putting the land to any use whatever would constitute “intensification”.

The question is not whether the land should be rezoned; there is no dispute that some other zoning would be appropriate. The issue before the Committee is whether R6 is the appropriate zoning to apply.

The Official Plan calls for intensification throughout the city and specifies that growth will be directed to certain areas - Central Area, Mixed-Use Centres, Employment Areas, Enterprise Areas, Developing Communities and Mainstreets. 1002 Karen Way does not fall within any of the designated areas identified as offering special potential for intensification.

The property in question is described as being on Karen Way but it also faces on St. Laurent Boulevard. This portion of St. Laurent is not identified as a Mainstreet in the Official Plan. If St. Laurent were a traditional mainstreet, the Official Plan would support building heights in the range of four to six storeys. If St. Laurent were an arterial mainstreet, the Official Plan would support building heights in the range up to eight storeys. But since St. Laurent is not a mainstreet, it is reasonable to expect lesser heights and more modest targets for intensification.

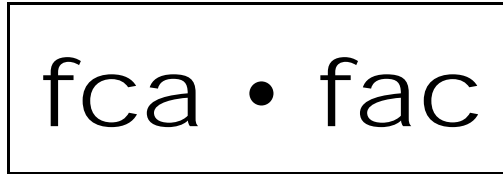
The properties surrounding 1002 Karen Way are zoned R5A, R2A, R4B and CS. None of these designations provide justification for assigning a zoning of R6 to the site at 1002 Karen Way.

Documentation prepared for the Committee indicates that the initial proposal for development at 1002 Karen Way called for an 18-storey building. This was scaled back to 12 storeys.

However the documentation provides no compelling argument for any high-rise building on this site. A high-rise building is neither encouraged by Official Plan designation of St. Laurent Boulevard nor by surrounding zoning designation. Moreover simplistic claims of advancing the objective of "intensification" do not justify a decision to designate the property R6.

Accordingly, the Federation requests that the Committee reject the rezoning proposal as presented and require that a more appropriate proposal be prepared by the Planning and Growth Management Department for consideration at a subsequent meeting of the Committee.

Federation of
Citizens'
Associations of
Ottawa-Carleton



Fédération des
associations
civiques d'Ottawa-
Carleton

Box/BP 55038, 240 rue Sparks St., Ottawa K1P 1A1

May 19, 2005

Councillor Peter Hume,
Chair, Planning & Environment Committee,
City of Ottawa

Dear Councillor Hume,

Member associations of the Federation of Citizens' Associations (FCA) are becoming increasingly concerned by the alacrity with which applications for spot-rezoning are being approved by staff and Council in the name of "intensification" and the "Official Plan".

As you are no doubt aware, the zoning by-law of the old City of Ottawa was written to promote intensification while respecting neighbourhood character. That by-law was carefully crafted as a result of a lengthy consultation and mediation process to achieve a balance between developers' desires and community sensibilities.

During the consultations leading to the adoption of the 2003 Official Plan, we were assured that the existing zoning by-laws would be respected until the new comprehensive zoning by-law was in place. Under such circumstances, the FCA and its members supported the Official Plan with limited reservations.

We are participating in the consultations which have just begun for the new zoning by-law. Pending the implementation of the new by-law, it is our contention that existing zoning in and adjacent to established residential neighbourhoods makes full provision for intensification – no amendment is needed to accommodate intensification.

Spot rezoning should be the exception, rather than the rule.

Every application for zoning amendment requires rigorous examination prior to being brought before the Planning and Environment Committee. Any application for spot rezoning demands justification far beyond mere use of the buzz words "intensification" and "Official Plan". We recognize that there may be valid cases for spot-rezoning but applications to allow for intensification should especially be subject to critical analysis.

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We request that Planning and Environment Committee instruct staff to initiate all negotiations with applicants on the basis that intensification is part and parcel of existing zoning. In effect, we recommend an interim control by-law for residential neighbourhoods with respect to rezoning applications justified solely by intensification.

Yours truly,

Robert Brocklebank
President

cc. Councillor Feltmate
Councillor Bédard
Councillor Bellemare
Councillor Cullen
Councillor Harder
Councillor Holmes
Councillor Hunter
Councillor Kreling