



28 September, 2013

Nina Maher  
Planning Department  
City of Ottawa  
110 Laurier Ave W.  
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

**Re: File Nos. D02-02-13-0076 (Zoning By-law Amendment) & D07-12-13-0155 (Site Plan Control)**

Dear Ms. Maher,

Action Sandy Hill (ASH) is a volunteer-led community association that represents and promotes Sandy Hill and its residents. One of our primary objectives is to preserve and enhance Sandy Hill's residential integrity and unique urban heritage in architecture and landscapes. To that end, we believe that any development in Sandy Hill should be required to be respectful of the surrounding neighbours and make a positive contribution to the overall community.

With the above in mind, ASH must oppose the application to rezone and redevelop the site known as 87 Mann Avenue, as the proposed development will result in unprecedented and unacceptable density in this residential neighbourhood and negatively impact the quality of life of neighbours.

Although the "repurposing" of the church for residential uses is not without merit, the expansion, to accommodate so many small units, is simply overdevelopment for the site. In fact, the proposed expansion and redevelopment will almost obscure the entire church from view, even the spire, and the demolition of the attractive well maintained adjacent residence for no reason but to maximize the number of units is troublesome.

**Sandy Hill Secondary Plan:** While the applicant argues that their proposal is consistent with the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan, nothing could be further from the truth. The Sandy Hill Secondary Plan identifies four key objectives which are:

- a) To preserve and enhance Sandy Hill as an attractive residential neighbourhood, especially for family living.
- b) To provide for a broad range of socio-economic groups.
- c) To accept a modest increase in population, primarily as a way of housing some of the growth in the Central Area labour force.
- d) To maintain and co-ordinate both the local functions of Sandy Hill (primarily as a residential neighbourhood) and the functions that serve a wider area (e.g., the mainstreet mixed uses area along Rideau Street and the University of Ottawa).

This proposal fails to meet any of these objectives. This proposed development certainly does not serve to provide residential accommodation for family living and will, in all likelihood, negatively affect the quality of life of the families who already live in proximity to the site. This type of development may provide housing for a certain demographic, but it is one that is already well served in Sandy Hill where there are

numerous licensed and unlicensed rooming houses and a very high proportion of rental accommodation, therefore, this development would not provide for a broad range of socio-economic groups but rather contribute to the loss of diversity in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, this development would not result in a modest increase in population, nor is it intended to provide housing for the growth in the Central Area labour force; this issue is addressed further under the heading "density", below. Finally, this development neither maintains nor co-ordinates local functions nor functions that serve the wider area.

**Density:** The development of this property to include 60-units on what are essentially three lots for single-family homes is far too significant an increase in density. These 60-units could house between 60 and 120 people on a 1500 m<sup>2</sup> site. That would be a density of between 400 and 800 people per hectare. The current density in Sandy Hill is less than 100 people per hectare, so this development would be a 400% to 800% increase in density. Even in the areas that the City has identified for significant intensification (eg.: TOD zones around future LRT stations) the proposed density is around 200 residents per hectare.

**Height:** Although the increase in height may seem insignificant, since most of the surrounding rooftops are considerably lower, the height combined with the mass of this development will be out of scale, particularly for the neighbours on Russell Avenue. The overall height and mass of the building will almost completely obscure the original structure from view along Russell and if heading east on Mann.

**Setbacks:** The applicants are relying on the "grandfathered" rear yard setback of the existing church, or institutional part of this property, to justify the rear yard setback of 0.4 metres for the four-storey windowless addition, where a modest garage now stands. The rear yard of this development will be particularly bleak for the neighbours to the north and will certainly affect their light. The included sun study may not reflect this given that it only covers the period between 08H00 and 16H00. The existing "grandfathered" setback along the east side of the property may not have previously had a negative impact on the neighbouring properties because of the use of the building. However, with the repurposing of the building to numerous small residential units, and the addition of 14 large new windows to the east façade, the side and rear yards of the adjacent properties will now be overlooked by about 18-units. This is certainly a significant loss of privacy for the neighbours.

**Parking:** Since there is a community/commercial space included, there is a parking requirement of six spaces for that use, 10 for visitors and 30 for the sixty residential units, for a total of 46 spaces according to the zoning by-law. However, the developers plan only six spaces to be provided on a small surface lot which certainly is further indication of the dramatic overdevelopment of this property. It is unrealistic to allege that occupants, whether "young professionals", or students, or seniors will not require parking spaces for themselves and/or visitors. In this part of Sandy Hill, parking is often at a premium due to proximity of a school, city arena, the University of Ottawa Sportsplex, a small shopping area and mosque. The nearest transportation hub is within 600 metres but it is not an easy hike especially in inclement weather. There are no large grocery stores, post offices, pharmacies nor libraries within walking distance.

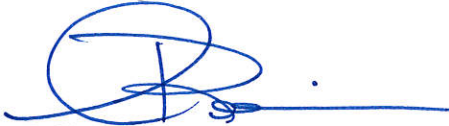
**Amenity space:** The developers propose to meet the requirement for amenity space largely through the inclusion of a large rooftop terrace on the new addition in the southwest corner of the property. Roof top terraces of this size are virtually non-existent in the neighbourhood and in this case will almost certainly be detrimental to the immediate neighbours, whose quality of life will be affected due to the noise and loss of privacy and enjoyment in their own yards. This rooftop amenity space, with its stair access, railings and pergola, also adds significantly to the overall height of the development.

**Other issues:** Although the applicant claims that the design is at least in part the result of advice from City planners, and although it is understood that design issues are difficult to assess, the west and north facades of this development are particularly unattractive and massive. The proposed cement rainscreen panels have proved unreliable on other buildings in Ottawa, e.g. the EcoCité condominium at the corner of Bank and Wilton Crescent. In addition, the electrical transformer box in the west side yard on Russell Avenue is also unsightly and unacceptable and should be accommodated inside the structure.

In summary, ASH opposes this application because the applicants have failed to demonstrate any justification for this major conversion and redevelopment. The proposal reveals a lack of consideration for the character and built form of the immediate neighbourhood and does not demonstrate responsible planning for its future inhabitants.

Given all of the above points, it should be clear that the proposed development is not desirable for the property nor appropriate use of the land, and does not meet the general intent and purpose of the zoning bylaw and official plan; and, therefore, should not be approved.

Best regards,



Chad Rollins  
Vice-President, ASH  
Co-Chair, Planning Committee

Cc: Mathieu Fleury, Councillor, Ward 12  
Rakan Abushaar, Director, Black Iris Developments