

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, my name is Chad Rollins and I am a resident of Sandy Hill. I'm here today primarily because I want to defend the importance of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan of which the City's Planning Department is so dismissive. We in Sandy Hill actually agree that it needs to be redone, but until such time, it is the only planning document relevant in this case and no rationale has been provided for it's amendment here.

Dominant Character



I want to give you a quick overview today of Laurier Avenue East, arguably the most significant historical street in the City behind Wellington and Sussex. From the West end with the University of Ottawa, ...

Dominant Character



To Strathcona Park in the East, Laurier Avenue is dominated by low-profile residential development and tree-lined boulevards just as it has been since it was laid-out by Louis Theodore Besserer in 1838. In fact, Laurier Avenue East was long called Theodore Street.

Heritage Character

Stadacona Hall



Laurier House
National Historic Site



Laurier has been home to four Prime Ministers whose houses still grace its boulevards. Including Stadacona Hall which was once home to Sir John A. MacDonald. And of course, Laurier is so named in honour of Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier whose home, Laurier House, is now a National Historic Site.

International/Diplomatic Presence

Canadian headquarters of
Amnesty International



Home to several embassies



Laurier is currently home to several embassies and important international institutions, including the Canadian headquarters of Amnesty International and the Angolan embassy, both shown here.

Low-Profile Residential

Dominate character is low-profile residential



High-rises are anomalies and do not contribute to character



It's important to note that the dominant character of Laurier remains low-profile as can be seen in the photos today. The high-rise buildings referenced in the planning report are anomalies built in the 60's and 70's, they do not contribute to the character of the area. In fact, they were the impetus for the creation of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan, which made it clear that Laurier was to remain low-profile residential.

Low-Profile Residential

Heritage buildings repurposed but preserved

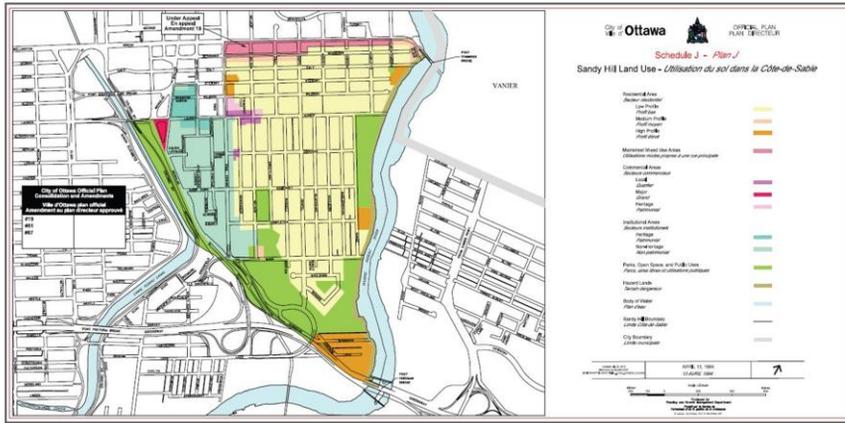


Low-profile residential character maintained



Here we see examples of some of the heritage homes along Laurier that have been repurposed but maintained in keeping with the character and heritage of the area.

Schedule J – SH Secondary Plan



I'd like to draw your attention now to Schedule J of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan which identifies permissible land-uses in Sandy Hill. All the areas shaded in yellow are low-profile residential. Let's zoom in on the subject area.

Schedule J – SH Secondary Plan



The arrow identifies the site in question and as you can see the land at the corner of Laurie and Friel is shaded in yellow, denoting low-profile residential. The existing commercial area, seen here in purple, is grandfathered but the secondary plan and zoning were designed to keep it contained to this part of the street and to prevent it from expanding east along Laurie.

Proposal for 275 Laurier



The height and mass of this proposal along with the inclusion of commercial space are inconsistent with the secondary plan. The proponent's image shown here with Laurier Avenue to the left clearly demonstrates that this building would loom over its surroundings.

Proposal for 275 Laurier



Another of the proponent's images, looking East along Laurier, shows again how the proposed building would dominate the area. The planning report has provided no rationale or justification for changing the secondary plan to accommodate this development. The OMB's recent ruling and comments on 335 Roosevelt criticized the City's planning department, stating that, "Though staff addressed many individual components of the project, the rationale for changing the mid-rise skyline itself was not just flawed; it was non-existent,". The same thing is happening with this project, the planning department has provided no rationale for amending the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan choosing instead to simply dismiss it.

Vision for Laurier



STREETSCAPE OF EXISTING CONDITIONS SHOWING BUILDINGS FACING LAURIER AVENUE EAST



STREETSCAPE OF EXISTING CONDITIONS SHOWING BUILDINGS FACING FRIEL STREET



The existing buildings on the site, as shown here in the proponent's images, contribute to the character of the area. It's also worth noting that all these buildings have been identified in the Sandy Hill Heritage Study as being of heritage interest. Surely facade-ism is not the only way to preserve the character of this charming block.

Compatible Infill



There exists already an excellent example just a few blocks East of this proposal for how Laurier can be developed successfully and sensitively. Barry Padolsky's infill project shown here saved two heritage houses and added a new condo building between and behind them in a manner that is barely noticeable. The existing buildings did not have to be demolished, nor was any extra height required.

Mr. Chair, on your website you state that you, "believe Community Design Plans (CDP) articulate our expectations for how future development will integrate with our community." In this case, we have a secondary plan for Sandy Hill that does just that. So Mr. Chair and Member's of the Planning Committee, I call on you today to reject this application and uphold the statutory importance of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan as the planning department has provided no rationale for amending it. Thank you.