



# Coopérative d'habitation Voisins Inc.

440 Wiggins Private, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1A7  
Tel. 613 565-0284 email: [coopvoisins@rogers.com](mailto:coopvoisins@rogers.com)

July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Andrew McCreight  
Planner  
City of Ottawa

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the updated plans for the 2 Robinson Ave. development. This submission is written on behalf of Coopérative d'habitation Voisins, located at 440 Wiggins Pvt. We have summarized our position into four key areas below.

## 1. Affordable Housing

While it has been encouraging to hear that the developer is committed to including affordable housing in the development, there is no written agreement to date to confirm this. This does not inspire confidence. We strongly call on the City to receive a legally binding agreement from the developer in which they will agree to allocating **30% of units as affordable** (a mix of below market rent and rent-gear-to-income).

The City is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis and needs to use all the tools in its toolbox to get more affordable units built. Ensuring that new developments include affordable units is in line with the City's inclusionary zoning policy and '5 Big Moves' planning document.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Livability

A very important aspect of ensuring livability for current residents is their access to sunshine. There are still significant flaws with the two 'Sunshade Studies' submitted in the updated application.

- The study submitted under '2021-01-26' – Sunshade Study – D01-01-20-0028 is the exact same study that was submitted in the initial application. As the City knows, there have been changes to the design of the development. It's disappointing that the developer wouldn't at least make an effort to include the correct study in this part of their application.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Ottawa, 5 Big Moves, "Big Move 1: Growth Management," Pg. 2.



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- However, the sunshade study included in '2021-07-06-Architecture Package – D01-01-20-0028) does reflect the updated design, but again, does not meet the City's standards for shadow studies.

***We are reiterating and expanding on our points we raised in our letter of March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, because this is an area of key concern to our co-op members and our neighbours in Ottawa Community Housing. Of note:***

- *The standard requires hourly imaging for mid- and high-rise buildings. The current report only notes imaging at two- hour intervals from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Further, the study does not show the full extents of the shadowing on all of the images. For example, at June 21 at 8 a.m. the shadow extends west of the page, but curiously the engineer has chosen to move the extents of the map eastward to cut this area off, meaning our building is not shown at all. Further, because the study is only showing the shadows until 4:00 p.m., it is deliberately omitting the worst-case scenario shadowing of for example, summertime in June, when the sun sets at 8:00 p.m./9:00 p.m.*
- *The City guidelines also state that the study area is “a distance adequate to show the entire length of the shadow(s) during the September test date and times.” The study doesn't meet this requirement by far, even for 4:00 p.m., and they are required to go until 8:00 p.m.*
- *There are requirements for a written report and evaluation of net new shadows on public spaces, communal amenity areas and “ground level residential private outdoor amenity space.” The grounds of Co-op Voisins (facing onto Lees Ave.) are considered to be outdoor amenity space as they contain communal plants and vegetable gardens. These are not noted in these studies, but will most certainly be affected by these buildings. The gardens along the public footpath leading to the sloped path down to Robinson Field will also be affected.*
- *Referring back to the standards, the City notes that:*
  - *“No new net shadow within the no impact zone of any residential private outdoor amenity space being cast in shadow for more than two consecutive hourly test times during the June and September test date only.”*
  - *“The new net shadow must allow for an average of 50% of any communal amenity area being exposed to sun light during two consecutive hourly interval times per day between 11 am and 3 pm during all three test dates.”*



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***Therefore, because the current study does not meet the above standards, Co-op Voisins requires the developer to complete an accurate new arch shadow study, (using the updated design), that meets the standards as set by the City.***

**It's clear that this development will cast our neighbourhood in perpetual shadow at certain times in the day. Can the developer at least be honest with the community and show this in their application?**

### **3. Sustainability and Design Excellence**

We appreciate that the developer has varied the heights of the buildings to avoid a repetitive look. However, our co-op still feels there's a missed opportunity to make this development a world-class, sustainable, 15-minute neighbourhood in Ottawa.

Namely, traffic being allowed into the development misses a prime opportunity to make the central courtyard area a landmark gathering place. By continuing to place design importance on the car versus people, there is limited opportunity for features that would allow the community to grow and prosper. The outdoor amphitheater is neat, but the amount of space devoted to parking and traffic flow leaves no space for other features highly rated in the community survey such as a community garden, active spaces (e.g. basketball court), and relaxation (e.g. picnic tables, hammocks).

It's disappointing that this development will be more of the same, instead of thinking big and bold. We understand the window of opportunity has been missed, but are encouraging the developer to [review this article](#) for future inspiration.

### **4. Connectivity**

We support the points raised by ASH in their submission that these updated plans do not reflect the concerns raised by community groups as it relates to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

We also remain concerned that the developer did not complete a traffic circle study for the Lees and Robinson Ave. intersection, as we had called for in our first submission. We believe a traffic circle will enable easier access/egress to the site and will have a calming effect on traffic coming downhill on Lees.

### **Closing**

As a panelist recently noted in a webinar about Community Benefits Agreements, "construction is about building community, it's not just a physical structure."



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Our co-op remains concerned that the developer is only taking the bare minimum of community feedback into consideration, and is - not surprisingly - focused only on the physical structures of this development.

This is where the City can and should step in. We encourage the City to use the planning tools that you have at your disposal (inclusionary zoning, City standards for sunshade studies, planning rationale in your '5 Big Moves' document) to force developers to focus not just on building physical structures, but building community too.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide further feedback.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Mitchell  
President, Board of Directors  
On behalf of Coopérative d'habitation Voisins