



HUME NEWS

COUNCILLOR PETER HUME

ALTA VISTA—CANTERBURY—RIVERVIEW

Playfair Towers Update

Dear Neighbours,

As you have learned from various newspaper articles, flyers and web blogs on the subject, the owners of the property at the corner of Playfair and Kilborn have applied to redevelop and intensify their site. They are proposing to add 217 units to the site in the form of a new condominium tower and condominium town homes.

You can see the development information on line at:
<http://app01.ottawa.ca/postingplans/appDetails.jsf?lang=en&appId=671474>

Politically, the easiest thing for me to say and what I am sure most of you want to hear, is that this proposal will be fought and defeated and that the property at Playfair and Kilborn will remain exactly as it is today.

Unfortunately for all of us, the situation is not that clear cut. It will be almost impossible to prevent additional units from being developed on the site. This is not what you want to hear, but regretfully it represents the reality of the situation.

The owner has applied to amend the zoning that was approved in 1996. That zoning controlled development, on this site and many others across the old City of Ottawa, by way of a floor space index. A floor space index relates the size of a building or buildings to the area of land upon which the building sits. On this particular site the floor space index is set at 1.5 times the land area and the zoning does not have a height limit.

In 2005, the City of Ottawa began the process of updating and harmonizing the 1996 zoning by-law. The new zoning by-law harmonizes the existing 36 zoning by-laws from the former municipalities into one by-law and implements many of the policies of the City's 2003 Official Plan, which focuses growth within the urban part of the City. Planning and Environment Committee held public hearings on the new zoning by-law on June 8, 2007, October 22 & 23, 2007 and April 8, 2008. City Council gave final approval to the new by-law on April 23, 2008.

The new Council approved by-law eliminates floor space index as a means of controlling development on this site and all other similar sites across the City. Instead of a floor space index the new zoning bylaw imposes height limits as a means to control development. The new zoning by-law imposes a 14 storey height limit on the Playfair and Kilborn property.

This means that zoning permits the owner to build, as of right, up to a maximum of 14 floors and neither the community nor I have any mechanism to prevent these additional units.

However, the owner has proposed a development that asks for increased height and reduced setbacks and they have not yet filed a detailed site plan. Therefore, we do have *some leverage* to minimize the impact that these additional units may have on the surrounding community.

The City staff and technical agencies are currently reviewing the owner's proposal. I, along with the City's urban planner, have organized meetings with abutting neighbours to identify local issues. We have met with the organizer of the No Rezone Playfair petition, the Executive of Rosewood Estates Co-Tenancy and the Condominium Board at 1705 Playfair. These meetings have been very successful at identifying community issues and we will be meeting again to discuss potential resolutions to the issues identified. In addition we have received a wealth of information from the surrounding community.

We have identified a number of common issues for which we will be seeking resolution:

- Reduction or elimination of traffic and accesses on Playfair Drive
- Relocation of the entrance to 1705 Playfair Drive
- Greater control of on-street parking on Playfair Drive
- Loading and unloading, garbage and deliveries for 1701 Kilborn and 1695 Playfair Drive
- Reduction or elimination of 39 condominium town home units on Playfair Drive
- Improved Playfair streetscape by changes to town home configuration including setbacks
- Parking located behind 1695 Playfair Drive moved underground
- Reconfiguration of Condominium tower to reduce western impact
- Increased green separation between Condominium tower and Rosewood Estates
- Requirement for detailed landscape plan and opportunities for the City to acquire control of greenspace.

These are not all the issues that are being explored, just the most common. Other small issues such as gate access to Grasshopper Hill Park and pedestrian pathways are also being discussed. If you have issues that you would like to be researched and explored please feel free to forward them to me at Peter.Hume@ottawa.ca.

The development review process is a very thorough review and as a result what is originally proposed can and often does change. Along with the City Planner, I will be meeting with the owner to seek resolution of the issues that the neighbours have identified. Once we have the final proposal, I will host a public meeting. I expect this meeting to take place in late June or early September.

Planning and Environment Committee and City Council will not be considering this proposal until late fall – this gives plenty of opportunity for a thorough community review. I assure you that I will provide the community, as I always do, with the necessary legal, planning & architectural support to understand and fully participate in the review process.

I will continue to update you as this review progresses and if you would like further information please feel free to contact me at 613-580-2488 or by email at peter.hume@ottawa.ca.

Sincerely,