WHAT WE HEARD REPORT
Public Engagement Session Feedback Summary
LDA19-0297 - Garneau

PROJECT ADDRESS: 11023 - 86 AVE NW
11027 - 86 AVE NW
11031 - 86 AVE NW
11033 - 86 AVE NW
11037 - 86 AVE NW
11039 - 86 AVE NW
11041 - 86 AVE NW
11043 - 86 AVE NW
11045 - 86 AVE NW

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed rezoning from (RF6) Medium Density Multi Family Zone to a (DC2) Site Specific Development Control Provision would allow for the development of a 28 storey apartment tower on a townhouse style podium. To facilitate this rezoning, an application has also been made to amend the Garneau Area Redevelopment Plan.


EVENT TYPE: Drop-in Engagement Session

MEETING DATE: October 22, 2019

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 103

ABOUT THIS REPORT
The information in this report includes feedback gathered during the October 22nd, 2019 public engagement session. This report is shared with all attendees who provided their email address during the event. This summary will also be shared with the applicant and the Ward Councillor.
If/when the proposed rezoning advances to Public Hearing, these comments will be summarized in a report provided to Council.

MEETING FORMAT

The meeting format was a drop-in engagement session where attendees were able to view display boards with project information. Participants were encouraged to ask questions of City staff, the applicant, and the developer. Participants were invited to share their feedback on a “Graffiti wall” by offering responses to the following questions:

- What do you LIKE about this application?
- What do you NOT like about this application?

Additional written feedback forms were also made available for attendees to provide more comprehensive feedback relating to the application. 76 completed forms were received.

The comments & questions we received across both feedback methods are summarized by main themes below. The number of times a similar comment was made by participants are recorded in brackets following that comment.

WHAT WE HEARD

Feedback Forms

Appearance & Built Form

- Too big / out of scale / oversized / out of place (x10)
- Like the base townhouses / apartments / units (x8); but don’t want the tower (x4)
- An eyesore / monstrosity (x7)
- A good addition to the area / very nice / good overall design / well done (x6)
- Inappropriate / stark transition (x4)
- Inappropriate / inconsistent design / doesn’t reflect historical character (x4)
- Aesthetically fits the neighbourhood feel / neighboring buildings (x2)
- Has great setbacks (x2)
- Should be required to achieve LEED sustainability standards / consider the carbon footprint (x2)
• Would like to see high-quality materials being used (x2)
  ○ Stucco should be prohibited as it looks dirty after several years (x1)
  ○ Stone and brick should be used throughout the facade (x1)
• Existing properties should probably be demolished and replaced, but proposal is wrong (x1)
• Lacks uniqueness (x1)
• Like the smaller brick facade along the building base (x1)
• Creates a wall (x1)
• No storage facilities (x1)
• No drop-off by the main entrance (x1)
• Should have two parkade entrances (x1)
• Collection area will cause garbage truck to block lane; should be reconfigured (x1)
• Prefer some commercial / community units on the main floor (e.g. gym, daycare space) (x1)
• Brings modern flair to area where many houses are dumpy / need a face lift (x1)
• Better design than a 4 - 6 storey square block building (x1)
• What is the final unit breakdown? Single rooms vs multi-rooms? (x1)
• Will likely end up with more rooms than originally proposed (x1)
• Types of units provided will have a negative impact on the area (x1)
• More family units needed (x1)
• Should be row housing (x1)

Economics
• Units are too pricey for families / students / in general (x5)
• Only serves developer interest for profit (x5)
• Amenity contribution is insufficient (x4)
  ○ 30% of units should be affordable housing or cash equivalent (x1)
  ○ Should buy and restore heritage homes in the neighbourhood (x1)
  ○ Upgrade playgrounds, school facilities, and daycare spaces (x1)
• Developer should provide more commitments to affordable housing (x2)
• More rental competition makes it harder to use investment property for renting / already difficult to rent out (x2)
• People are already considering moving out in anticipation (x1)
• Speculation of an underlying bribe (x1)
• More rental units would decrease demand for regular housing and property values (x1)
• Low income housing likely not going to be captured in the family units (x1)
• Will negatively impact families, other landlords, and other developers (x1)
• Would like to live in the units if pricing is affordable (x1)
• Market conditions not conducive for a tower (x1)
• Any provisions for low income housing? (x1)

Height
• Too tall (x21)
  ○ Should be 55 - 60m (x1)
  ○ Should be a maximum 10 storeys (x2)
  ○ Should be a maximum 8 storeys (x1)
  ○ Should be a maximum 5 storeys (x1)
  ○ Should be a maximum 3 storeys (x3)
  ○ Keep to RF6 Zone heights (x1)
  ○ Cut off the top 24 floors (x1)

• Concern over shadowing (x21)
  ○ Effects on neighbouring properties (x13)
    ■ Summer shadowing to the east during prime 3 - 7 pm hours (x1)
  ○ Plant-life is obstructed (x2)
  ○ Shade should be from trees not towers (x1)
  ○ Is a giant sundial (x1)
  ○ Will negatively affect emotions (x1)
• Obstructs view of the sky from street level / need access to the sky (x3)
• Shadow impact is low, but the visual impact is high (x1)

Surrounding Effects
• Traffic congestion (x28)
  ○ Will generate congestion (x12)
  ○ Existing traffic flow already busy / poor (x8)
  ○ Leads to safety concerns of children / cyclists / pedestrians (x4)
  ○ Volumes inconsistent with residential character (x1)
  ○ How will movement work with neighbourhood’s one-way system, named roads, and bike lanes? (x1)
• Parking is / will be an issue (x22)
  ○ Provided parking is not enough (x8)
  ○ Concerns over street parking as an issue (x8)
  ○ Bike lanes have made it harder to park already (x1)
• Alley is / will be too congested (x13)
• Infrastructure can’t handle proposal (x10)
  ○ Sewer system can’t handle current use, how will it manage hundreds more toilets flushing / other water usage? (x2)
• Negative wind effects / wind tunneling (x8)
• Noise issues (x6)
• Litter concerns (x3)
• Will generate more pollution (x3)
• Neighbouring buildings will be structurally compromised during construction (x3)
• Small units encourage short-term residents (x3) rather than people who care about the neighbourhood (x1); will become a transient neighbourhood (x1)
• Privacy Issues (x2)
• Will help provide a boost to local businesses and business owners (x2)
• Would ruin my ability to enjoy my property and community (x2)
• Loss of Trees (x2); Parkade will damage trees - roots will need to be cut (x2), replacing trees with flowers and shrubs (x1)
• Allows more families into the area (x2)
• Will destroy our quality of life (x1)
• Provides housing options for university students (x1)
• Garneau Tower residents will no longer get a panoramic view (x1)
• More people will use the bike lanes and trails instead of driving through (x1)
• Concern over impact on STAR Air Ambulance’s hospital pathways (x1)

Policy and Regulations
• Does not fit within Area Redevelopment Plan / ARP should be adhered to/ Why would the city even consider deviating from the Area Plan? (x12)
• Does not fit within current zoning / no change in zoning should be permitted (x9)
• Redevelopment Plan is essentially useless / has no purpose / is a mockery (x4)
• What’s the point of Zoning Bylaws if they can be routinely changed? (x1)
• Just because someone buys multiple lots, why should they be able to have the existing zoning changed? Could this happen anywhere in the city? (x1)
• Existing plan already allows too much (x1)
• Neighbourhood character dependent upon reliance on existing zoning (x1)
• City should pay attention to their own planning work (x1)
• Is it true the ARP requires 50% of the units to be family oriented? If so, there must be more 3 bedroom units and no higher than the 4th or 6th storey (x1)

Broader Neighbourhood Context
• Out of/ goes against / destroys / changes / ruins / distorts / fatally compromises / fundamentally alters community character (x22)
• Not appropriate in the middle of a neighbourhood / Belongs on the main thoroughfare / surrounding arterials; not in the centre of a residential block (x18)
• The area is dense enough / has enough towers; increase density / build it in other neighbourhoods (x11)
● Would destroy / gravely threaten / scar / kill / ruin / negatively change / is catastrophic to the Garneau community (x9)
● Concerns over precedence (x7)
  ○ Will cause loss of low density / single family houses (x2)
  ○ Garneau will become dominated by towers (x1)
  ○ In 50 years Garneau will be a series of shiny glass Soviet blocs (x1)
● Inappropriate around historic housing (x5)
● Doesn’t serve community interest / provide community benefit / community benefit unclear (x5)
● Impinges / Overloads community schools / amenities (x4)
● Existing road infrastructure is in bad condition (x3)
● Density is desperately needed here (x3)
● I like higher density, but this is too much / lower scale densification is more appropriate (x3)
● No indication demand exists / other area proposals are sufficient for demand (x3)
● Garneau needs more green spaces / open spaced for the public (x3)
● Would be horrible to lose more history / heritage in the area (x2)
● Sidewalks aren’t clear forcing people onto roads, which is a hazard with more traffic (x1)
● Will help revive the area (x1)
● I am downsizing and don’t want to deal with the maintenance of something old in the area (x1)
● No LRT will cause more and more family houses to be removed (x1)
● Neighbourhood is more family oriented than tower lends itself towards (x1)

General Comments
● Shouldn’t be up to the community to fight to uphold zoning plans / bylaws (x2)
● Pictures of proposal / potential surrounding development is misleading (x2)
● Plan changes should be city led, not developer led (x1)
● It’s open season on the Garneau community (x1)
● If approved, people will lose trust in the process (x1)
● Those building it won’t live in it; it’s not their neighbourhood (x1)
● People in tall towers are not interested in ground level residents (x1)
● I enjoy Garneau for the single family homes (x1)
● It is difficult to grow into a ‘bigger city’ with a small city mentality proposed by neighbourhood residents (x1)
● Is a step towards gentrification (x1)
● Where is the traffic plan? (x1)
● Traffic study is inaccurate (x1)
• Would rather live next to a new townhouse/condo than an old house not up to code (x1)
• Need to plan ahead for younger generations (x1)
• This is an identity neighbourhood (x1)
• Should have another opportunity for neighbours to hear from the developer directly (x1)
• Won't add value to the neighbourhood (x1)
• A travesty (x1)
• Would be nice to have renderings of what views the new units provide of the neighbourhood (x1)

Graffiti Wall Comments

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL?

• Like the modern design (x3)
• Like the idea of a tower in the area (x2)
• Great for students, university faculty, and hospital staff (x2)
• Great for families (x2)
• Like the street level / street presence (x2)
• Like the option for townhouses in a more central location (x2)
• Like the amenity space (x1)
• Like the setback (x1)
• Encourages community building through shared opposition (x1)

WHAT DO YOU NOT LIKE ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL?

Appearance & Built Form

• Nothing to like about design / proposal (x13)
• Architectural design / Built form does not reflect character of Garneau (x10)
• Would be better without the tower (x5)
• Proposed parking stalls are insufficient (x3)
• Zero landscaping plans / very little greenspace / bad for trees (x3)
• Concerns over environmental-friendliness / sustainability of the development (x3)
• Completely out of place (x2)
• Too many units not targeted for families (x2)
• Unspecified negative effects of the University on surrounding residential (x1)
• Increases noise & pollution (x1)
• Colours on tower aren’t very good (x1)
- No space for children to play (x1)
- Outdoor amenities do not feel inviting and safe (x1)
- Looks like a mish-mash of other surrounding buildings (x1)
- Tower setback doesn’t exist because it's being used for podium dwellings (x1)
- Loading area should be away from the road (x1)
- Improper transition to neighboring existing buildings (x1)
- Needs better supporting amenities (x1)
- Nice building - wrong spot (x1)

**Economics**
- Community being sold out / only serving private interests (x4)
- Students can’t afford units (x1)
- Price point does not make it affordable housing (x1)
- House values will decrease (x1)

**Height**
- Too tall / too much density (x17)
- Blocks sunlight for other houses / areas (x10)
- Should be 4 - 6 storeys max (x5)

**Surrounding Effects**
- Brings in more traffic / traffic already too much (x9)
  - Concerns over childrens’ safety at Garneau Elementary School (x1)
- Too many new people using an ill-prepared back alley (x4)
- Inappropriate / damaging to historical area / houses (x4)
- Concerns over wind tunnel effects (x2)
- Traffic spillover blocking roads, residents, and services (x2)
- Concern over additional crime (x1)
- Effects from partying on balconies (x1)
- Concern over power grid capacity (x1)
- Cafe Leva will be completely masked (x1)

**Policy and Regulations**
- Goes against the Garneau ARP / Community Plans / City Policies / Standard planning practices (x19)
- Opens up Garneau to more high rises (x2)
- DC2 Zoning should include a good neighbour agreement (x1)
- Developer should make more contributions to the community such as affordable housing (x1)
Broader Neighbourhood Context
- Is destroying to the community / a ‘middle-finger’ / an insult to Garneau residents (x6)
- Development of this nature should be along arterials (x5)
- Garneau doesn’t need another high rise / densify elsewhere (x4)
- No consideration for / loss of historic buildings/character (x2)
- More family spaces (x1)

General Comments
- Doesn’t belong in Edmonton (x4)
- Inadequate community consultation (x3)
- Will concerns / comments really be considered, or is this just a formality? (x1)
- Development process should be meaningful and not token (x1)
- Community clearly says no. Do not rezone (x1)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. Just because someone buys a large number of lots, why should they be able to have the existing zoning changed? Could this happen anywhere in the city? Why would the City even consider deviating from the existing Area Plan? What’s the point of Zoning Bylaws if they can be routinely changed?
   - Under Alberta’s system of property rights and land ownership, coupled with regulations mandated upon municipalities under the Municipal Government Act (MGA), every property owner or party acting on their behalf has a right for their proposal to be heard and considered. In Edmonton, final rezoning decisions are determined by City Council at a Public Hearing. So while all proposals may be heard, having a proposal does not guarantee the zoning will change regardless of the size and scale of the application. This holds true for all land parcels within Edmonton boundaries.
   - The point of a Zone is to provide rules that future development within the zone has to abide by. The vast majority of new buildings that get built are done so without requesting changes to the zone.

2. Is this tower a precedent / is the long term plan to convert the block/area into more towers?
• The Council approved plan for the area is the Garneau Area Redevelopment Plan. Currently, this should be considered the “long term plan”, however, there is a new city-wide planning process being undertaken right now that may lead to changes in this regard in the future. Please read more information about The City Plan.

• From a planning analysis perspective, we do not cite previous approvals in our recommendations to Council. Each site and application has its own unique set of characteristics and contexts that we look at on a case by case basis.

3. How will existing / planned road infrastructure accommodate the increased population? How will movement work with neighbourhood’s one-way system, named roads, and bike lanes? Where is the traffic plan?

• A draft Transportation Impact Assessment can be viewed on the City’s website for this application.

4. Sewer system can’t handle current use, how will it manage hundreds more toilets flushing / other water usage?

• A draft Servicing Study can be viewed on the City’s website for this application.

5. Any provisions for low income housing?

• If the building is not a rental building and if individual dwellings are sold, the City will have the option to purchase 5% of the dwellings at 85% of market value or receive the equivalent value as cash in lieu (at the discretion of the owner). If the City buys the units, they will be operated as affordable housing rental units. If the City receives cash in lieu, the money will be used to purchase units elsewhere.

6. Is it true the ARP requires 50% of the units to be family oriented?

• The ARP directs that when developments are built within the existing RF6 Zone, that 50% of all dwellings should be family oriented.
• If this site was developed within the RF6 Zone, a maximum of 26 dwellings would be allowed and 50% of these (13) would be required to be family oriented.
• The proposed tower requires 22 dwellings to be family oriented.

7. What is the final unit breakdown? Single rooms vs multi-rooms?
Generally, this is not something regulated in the Zoning for a site but instead left up to a landowner to determine at later stages in response to market demand. However, in this case, there is a requirement for 22 dwellings to have at least 3 bedrooms.

8. Will the feedback from this event be used? Will concerns / comments really be considered, or is this just a formality?

- Feedback collected from public engagement events are used for three main purposes:
  - to inform conversations with the applicant about making revisions to the application to potentially address concerns raised;
  - to collect local insight and ensure that the City’s analysis considers all applicable factors; and
  - to inform Council on the feedback received so they have an understanding of the opinions of residents prior to making a decision on the application.

If you have questions about this application please contact:
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