

January 9, 2018
Via Devapp

re: Development proposal at 21 Withrow

The local community has been trying for years to retain this property at 21 Withrow as greenspace. Unfortunately, at every turn, they have been shut down and it's now the 11th hour. The development plan put forward by the current developer/owner would cram 13 single detached homes cheek by jowl on the property and in the process cut down many trees, including a number of large mature healthy ones. This two acre island of greenspace would be lost forever, leaving the community bereft of access to greenspace within their neighbourhood.

When the Saint Claire Gardens neighbourhood was built, access to parks and greenspace was not a consideration as it was a village beyond the city boundaries, surrounded by greenspace. Now it is surrounded by concrete and more recent suburban development and access to greenspace is more important than ever for its residents.

The City of Ottawa has a policy which calls for publicly owned open space and leisure land to be provided within 400 metres of all homes in primarily residential areas of the city. Many homes in this neighbourhood, including most homes on Lotta Avenue, Saint Claire Avenue and Cote-des-Neiges Rd. are beyond this limit. And this is a generous interpretation as the closest park, which is beyond the 400 metre limit, is City View Park, a tiny parkette with a narrow strip of grass running behind the Money Mart and KFC, a stone's throw from Merivale Road.

Turning all or part of 21 Withrow Avenue into a publicly owned piece of greenspace that is accessible to the local community would fulfill this policy objective and give proof that, as per the Official Plan, "Council supports a target of providing open space and leisure land within 400 metres of all homes in primarily residential areas in the urban area."

Paul Johanis
Chair, Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

cc: Mayor Watson, Councillors Chiarelli, Harder and Chernuschenko