

PC 27Jun2019 - Item 1 - [Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendment 10 Oblats Avenue and Sites Designated Mixed Use Medium-Rise in the Old Ottawa East Secondary Plan](#)

Speaking Notes of Erwin Dreessen, on behalf of the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

Back in November 2015, when an amendment to the zoning for Greystone Village came forward, I spoke to Planning Committee on behalf of the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital. We said then that it was a pleasure to be able to praise both the proposal and the process that had led to it.

Starting in 2005, the community identified the potential of this land, even before the developer bought it. The community "owned" the CDP. In 2011, the CDP was turned into a Secondary Plan and Zoning by-law amendment. So when the developer came into the picture, its options were clear. When Regional later desired some amendments to the zoning, we praised the company's leadership for realizing that a better way than confrontation and antagonism was dialogue and cooperation. It led to fruitful discussion. Compromises were made. The community agreed with the 2015 amendments.

This exemplary process -- doing intensification smartly -- was noted by many, including former Attorney General Yasir Naqvi and, if memory serves, former OMB Member Marc Denhez.

That was then. Less than four years later, last March and today again in modified form, the developer is breaking that agreement, that contract with the community. And the City is facilitating that breach of trust.

Legal Services was smart to insist that the Secondary Plan had to be amended. Since the latest amendments to Ontario's land use planning appeal process are not yet in force, the test on appeal will be whether the requested zoning conforms to the Secondary Plan. Of course it will, since Council will just have changed it!

But that doesn't make what you have before you morally correct. The Secondary Plan, as it was, represented a community consensus. The community expected that to be respected and rightfully objects to the proposed change.

We are in full sympathy with the views expressed by Councillor Menard as reproduced in the staff report.

Madam Chair, when staff came forward with a workplan for the new Official Plan, you wondered why there wasn't more excitement about that. Approving what is before you today will help explain why there isn't more excitement. As Clr. Menard says: "How does it look to be allowing an amendment ostensibly because the developer wishes it now, despite years of understanding and agreement between multiple parties? We cannot reasonably go back to residents of Ottawa and say that our Official Plan will be defended by Councillors if this goes ahead."

Unfortunately, the City has set a precedent. When the proposal for 900 Albert was approved, Council unilaterally changed the 2013 Secondary Plan to accommodate it. It was a shocking move. Secondary Plans are supposed to be grounded in and reflect the consensus in the community. That amendment, too, was a moral failure on the part of Council for having only listened to the proponent and not having obtained the approval of the community.

The proponent deserves severe criticism for letting greed overtake the good sense it had shown scant years ago. If you deny this application, Council will set a new precedent, one that respects agreed-upon plans, and respects the integrity of the planning process.