

To: Mayor, Councillors and Staff
From: Sylvia Watson

I am responding to the staff report entitled “Gentle Density”, specifically dealing with 4 plex development as-of-right.

The report under “Engagement on Four Units” includes “What we heard” which does not include two topics discussed at the meeting I attended on Feb 22 at Harcourt, presented by the consultants O2. These two concerns:

1. tree removal
2. parking issues

I would like to use the example of the ongoing infill at 26 Forest St to highlight how these two concerns are and will be, very real outcomes to intensification.

The Committee of Adjustment on March 9, 2023 allowed as a minor variance a 21% reduction in the lot frontage (15m to 11.9m), paving the way for what is, in effect a 9 plex, albeit detached.

To achieve this 9 plex (3 houses, each with a basement suite and a backyard house) the lot was clear cut and even the boundary tree, which was to be protected, was not offered a barrier.

This 9 plex offers 24 bedrooms: 4 in the main house and 2 each in the basement and backyard for a total of 8 bedrooms per lot x3. These units have been offered for rent on thecannon.ca, so essentially this will be a student enclave. Many students have their own car which brings up the second concern: parking. Where will the extra vehicles park...on the street with all the issues that brings re safety, congestion etc.

The concept of gentle density needs to be considered carefully in terms of the impact on urban trees, more folks with cars and urban design that optimistically reflects the existing street scape. Can this goal be achieved? I hope so....unfortunately the example at 26 Forest St is not exactly the ‘poster child’ for gentle density that doesn’t impose itself on an existing neighbourhood.