

Purpose

Zoning by-laws exist for a reason.

When zoning by-law changes are applied for, the community is provided an opportunity to see what they think about the application.

This presentation looks at the details used to support the proposed development of 343 Waterloo Avenue.

Housing as human right

Canada's National Housing Strategy Act, implemented in 2019, recognizes housing as a human right.

This Act recognizes that:

housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of the person and to building sustainable and inclusive communities [and] that access to affordable housing contributes to achieving beneficial social, economic, health and environmental outcomes

Waterloo Avenue development – Variances

- Parking for 8 vehicles instead of 20
- Four stories instead of three
- Rear yard set back of 1.2 meters instead of 6.2 meters
- Reductions in rear and exterior side yard buffer strips
- Gross floor area 1276 square meters instead of

What does the development provide?

Sustainability

- Bicycle parking
- EV parking

Accessibility

- Elevator
- Accessible parking

Affordability

- Two affordable units
- Seven units that don't meet criteria for affordable

Questions about accessibility

1. Is the accessible parking for residential or commercial tenants?
2. Are two accessible parking spots required?
3. How will a barrier free path of travel be achieved?
 - Bicycle parking
 - Tandem parking
 - Garbage bins
 - Snow

Affordability - Context

Top 10 most expensive cities to rent in Canada.

Rent above the national average - a one-bedroom apartment is \$2,084 and two-bedroom apartment of \$2,452.

Eleven percent of households are unaffordable, inadequate, or unsuitable for those who live there.

The majority these households are led by women, people who are racialized, over 65, or women parenting on their own.

Affordability - Context

Housing has increasingly become a for profit industry with the financialization of purpose-built housing.

- The financialization of purpose-built rental housing is growing
- Most is being built as a financial investment
- The focus on profit in purpose-built rental housing is at odds with housing as a fundamental human right

Affordability – What does the development provide?

- Two affordable units out of nine units
- 22% affordable
- Guelph's housing strategy – 53% of rentals affordable by 2051

The details

This proposed development requires multiple **variances** for

- reduced setbacks
- increased building height and square footage
- significant parking shortfall

It offers nine units, two are **affordable**.

There are questions about its **accessibility**.

Conclusion

Solving the affordable housing problem will not be quick. It requires municipalities to:

- be thoughtful about approving variances for purpose-built rental housing
- use evidence to determine if proposed developments meet the needs they intend to address
- use long term strategies rather than short term goals to avoid unintentionally reinforcing existing inequities