

Committee of Adjustment

From: Barbara Wood [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2020 12:40 PM
To: Committee of Adjustment
Subject: B-11/20

As a neighbour of 4 Sherwood Drive, Guelph, for 50 years I wish to comment on the application to demolish the existing house and sever the corner property at 4 Sherwood Drive to create 2 new building lots.

Our neighbourhood is distinct in terms of post-war development. Sherwood, Callander and Walnut Drive were laid out as “executive” lots within the subdivision. Entry streets like Renfield have generous proportions and setbacks.

I realize that the lot in question is zoned as R1B but it is in fact part of a street (Sherwood) that is made up of oversized R.1A lots. The existing lots and setbacks on Renfield are also far larger than standard R.1B zoning would require. This was part of an intentional design for the neighbourhood. Many of the houses on these streets are unique; some have been recognized for their residential designs. I value this history and the spaciousness that the neighbourhood embodies.

While the proposed severance and redevelopment appears to fit the zoning requirements “on paper” I would argue that the plan as proposed is not compatible with the spirit and the specific context and dimensions of the neighbourhood.

The proposed retained lot on Renfield will create a new building far forward of the rest of the houses on the street. It appears that the new house will project over 6 metres in front of the neighbour at 117 Renfield and will be a protrusion on the corner unlike anything else surrounding it.

The proposed retained corner lot will in no way relate to its neighbour 109 Renfield which is over 45 m deep along Sherwood and has the house set back over 12 m from the frontage.

The proposed severed lot on Sherwood, at 15m wide will be closer to half-as-wide as many of the lots on Sherwood Drive and provide half-as-wide side yards. It is not in keeping with the rest of the over-sized R.1A streetscape that the existing house at 4 Sherwood Drive currently fits into.

If the plan proceeds as drawn, it will permanently degrade the character of the neighbourhood.

Lots this size need to be preserved. Never has it been more critical for our children to have room to run around and play in their own yards than during this pandemic.

Children need to get outside and play. Their mental health depends on it. For many they don’t have this opportunity. Allowing the destruction of a lot this size in this neighbourhood will be precedent setting and potentially destroy the fabric of the neighbourhood.

The City’s Official Plan provides direction on ensuring redevelopment is “compatible” within established existing neighbourhoods. I understand the need to intensify where appropriate, but there is also the need to recognize the context and impacts of redevelopment on existing, valued properties.

The policies of the Official Plan require consideration for what redevelopment means for this neighbourhood beyond the technicalities of the Zoning By-law.

Approving this application as it is will result in the permanent disfiguring of our neighbourhood and will have an irreversible impact on not just the immediate neighbours but the whole local community.

I ask the Committee to reject the current proposal and direct the applicant to work with staff and the community on an improved design.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

Barbara J. Wood
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Guelph, Ontario