

# 114 Richmond Road Update

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To: Kitchissippi Ward <Kitchissippi@ottawa.ca>

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*Sent on behalf of Councillor Christine Leadman*

## **Statement on the Beginning of negotiations for Section 37 for 114 Richmond Rd**

Before and ever since 114 Richmond Rd. was auctioned, I have been pushing for a consistent and fair framework in which the site can be developed in a manner that respects our official documents, the community and the rights of the builder.

The proposal that came before the committee caused significant and correct concerns that the development was too dense, diminished our public green space and could cause gridlock in our community. I worked with the City to utilize, for the first time, a design review panel for the site to critique the proposal and they developed many positive suggestions that were incorporated but many recommendations such as removing a building were not adopted.

The developer and their representatives have continuously indicated to the public, media and city staff that the convent was to be used for public space as part of the development however no official or binding agreements were developed. Despite the mention in the staff report on the convent that some additional consideration was being given due to the potential use of the convent, it also noted it could just as easily be used for regular commercial use.

With such vague commitments from the developer who had closed discussion on positive use of the convent with the relevant stakeholders and significant community opposition to development, it is clear that we need a firm commitment and further refinements to the development. The Planning and Environment Committee unanimously supported this approach.

I have been steadfast in my position that the site as proposed to committee and the planning rationales that supported it violates many of our planning principles and official planning documents. During negotiations, I will work to have our community vision is protected and correctly interpreted. The committee provided guidance to city staff that the negotiations would be led by me.

I believe we need to provide an opportunity to Ashcroft to live up to their public commitments and work with the community to reach a solution that will provide for all interests. This is a chance for Ashcroft to become a signature builder and have this site showcase what can happen when we work together to build a great community.

Shortly, I will be presenting modifications to the developer and the public through a series of public consultations that I think will be fair to all parties involved and hope the developer will seek to work within that framework, refine it and agree to an appropriate Section 37 agreement as well as associated incentives. This framework will address:

- Increasing public and not-for-profit space in the community,
- Getting significant funding from the City to update and help with the adaptive reuse of the convent,
- Protecting the Byron Linear Park while ensuring adequate transportation access for the

site,

- Estimating the financial benefit being received by the increase of density and height requested by the developer above the initial framework provided to all bidders based upon the Official Plan and Secondary Plan,
- Only increasing height and density over the initial terms of reference so it provides a fair return for the developer and the community,
- Purchasing and increasing additional public green space on the site.

Although the devil is in the details, I am prepared and was supported by the community at committee to provide the developer a fair opportunity to work with us to modify the site in a manner which is conducive to positive long-term growth of the area. I will continue to work to see our community benefit from this development and look forward to sharing more details as they become available.

Kindest regards,

Christine

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Backgrounder

- Section 37 of the Planning Act permits Council to require agreements from the developer for the provision of services, facilities and other matters for the public good in exchange for increases in height and density.
- The City Planning Committee unanimously accepted the motion proposed by Councillor Leadman to engage with the developer, the community and staff.
- As the report was deferred, there was no discussion or approval of the application. As such there was no review by committee of the accuracy of the planning rationales submitted by the developer, the cut through of Byron Linear Park and addressing departmental comments.
- While the process has not been used in Ottawa before, Councillor Leadman is working to ensure a fair terms of reference for the discussions as committee gave her the lead. Further details will be provided shortly.
- She will work in an open and fair manner with all parties to provide an accurate and meaningful opportunity for dialogue and agreement.
- It is hoped Ashcroft will work with all parties to achieve a positive outcome.