

Appendix “B”: Public Comments

Matthew Mundy – email May 21, 2024

I just wanted to send a note in advance of tonight’s meeting, which I unfortunately cannot attend, expressing my strong objection to the proposed development at the corner of Reynolds and Spruce. I agree with all of the concerns in the attached document.

Moreover, as a longtime homeowner in the area, I have an emotional reaction to developers coming in and trying to turn our neighborhood into a collection of McMansions to make an easy profit. I urge the town to strongly oppose the development.

Attached Document

Comments on Spruce Rose Inc. Proposed Development Hammond/Best | DRAFT

Objections

- 1) **The proposed Spruce Rose Inc. development, transitioning from a former community church to residential use, should adhere to the same requirements, processes, and restrictions as other residential properties situated in its immediate area. This adherence ensures uniformity and equity in development standards and maintains the integrity of the Town of Oakville’s efforts to maintain the neighborhood's heritage and character.**

Concerns with the Current Proposal:

- I. The proposal, as it stands, fails to conform to several key area-specific standards – most notably in terms of Density, Massing/Building Height, Environmental Impact and Heritage requirements. The proposal also disrupts visual harmony by contrasting sharply with the scale and architectural style of surrounding family home lots, which comprise a part of Old Oakville historically known as the Brantwood Annex/Tuxedo Park.
- II. The current design does not conform with the planning submission requirements of residential building projects in its vicinity. This includes homes immediately adjacent to the site that are variously (a) recently constructed, (b) currently under construction, or (c) in the process of submitting proposals for construction, and are required –
 - a. *in all instances* – to meet *Density* (lot coverage limitation) requirements substantially lower than the development proposal is advancing;
 - b. *in all instances* – to adhere to *Massing/Building Height* guidelines as dictated by the Livable Oakville Plan, which mandates that new constructions should

Appendix “B”: Public Comments

not exceed the typical two-story height common in residential areas, to preserve the visual continuity and scale characteristic of the neighborhood;

- c. *in all instances* – to adhere to *Environmental Impact* guidelines for maintaining existing natural features and green spaces as outlined in the Livable Oakville Plan. This includes requirements to minimize the footprint on green spaces, ensure adequate permeable surfaces for water absorption to prevent runoff issues, and preserve mature vegetation and tree canopy coverage which are integral to the local ecosystem and community character;
- d. *in numerous instances* – to follow *Heritage* preservation process requirements involving the designation (or review) of properties under OHA Sections 27 and 29 with the explicit goal of preserving character and ensuring architectural continuity*.

* The lots along the south side of 304-318 Spruce Street at Reynolds Street are located adjacent to the limits of the Trafalgar Road Heritage Conservation District; diagonally across the street from a building designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, and adjacent to 4 properties listed on the Oakville Heritage Register. Heritage listed/designated homes in the area include 232, 311-313 and 351 MacDonald Road, 308 and 312 Maple Avenue, 395 and 409 Reynolds Street, 321, 325, 335, 336, 339, 338 – 340 and 348 Spruce Street.

III. Allowing the [Spruce Rose Development] to proceed in its current form, either as a non-conforming development or under a modified zoning arrangement, would set a concerning and detrimental precedent. It would suggest that existing residential planning standards are flexible/inconsistently applied and can be overlooked, undermining the substance and consistency of urban planning in this part of Oakville. Such a precedent would significantly challenge the Town of Oakville’s longstanding commitment to preserving the community’s aesthetic, historical, and cultural values – representing not just a deviation, but a substantial weakening and compromising of the integrity with which Oakville has protected and shaped the identity of the Brantwood Annex/Tuxedo Park area.

- 2) As currently designed, the Spruce Rose Inc. development proposal contrasts starkly with the established character and integrity of the surrounding neighborhood, violating and/or conflicting with several of the Town of Oakville’s core planning standards.**

Specifically, the Current Proposal:

- ***Conflicts with the Livable Oakville Plan*** –

Appendix “B”: Public Comments

The proposed development conflicts with, and undermines, the Livable Oakville Plan – particularly its objectives related to maintaining architectural harmony and community fabric.

- ***Disrupts the visual and aesthetic character of its surroundings –***
The project's scale and architectural style sharply contrast with the surrounding single-family homes, disrupting the area's visual harmony. Moreover, failure to provide necessary transitions in building height and mass significantly undermines the character and property value of nearby properties;
- ***Violates Heritage and Design Compatibility requirements –***
A significant proposed increase in massing and height compared to adjacent properties – coupled with contravention of established yard setbacks – violates guidelines aimed at maintaining visual compatibility and respect for existing neighborhood scales and proportions. Furthermore, the proposed structure's uniform and repetitive design fails to adhere to guidelines that advocate for breaking up massing to harmonize with community structures. This lack of thoughtful integration reflects the proposal's failure overall to meet established community standards and expectations, including architectural style as well as land use/conservation values.
- ***Undermines the cultural and historical context of the area –***
By introducing structures that depart meaningfully from the cultural and historical context of the area, the proposed development diverges from established community values and planning intentions. This area has been subject to numerous municipal decisions, including heritage actions, aimed at preserving the distinctive character and contextual value of its homes. The introduction of an inappropriately scaled and styled development not only disrupts this continuity, but also disregards established guidelines designed to integrate new constructions seamlessly with the existing fabric of the community;
- ***Lacks integration with the neighbourhood –***
The design and density of the development do not reflect community values with respect to heritage, style, conservation, and responsible development;
- ***Introduces privacy concerns (in contravention of planning standards) –***
Increased height and density will lead to significant shadowing, compromising privacy and contradicting planning guidelines;
- ***Contravenes Oakville Town Council obligations –***
The development challenges the Town Council's mandate to ensure development that respects and enhances the established community fabric, in accordance with the Livable Oakville Plan's objectives. The proposed development is contradictory to this obligation.

Appendix “B”: Public Comments

Key Questions for the Developer and Town Council to Address

- How does the proposed Spruce Rose Inc. development justify its lot coverage and density when it substantially exceeds the limits set for other residential properties within the same area, particularly in the context of the heritage attributes of its immediate vicinity?
- Given that the Livable Oakville Plan strictly limits new constructions to a typical two-story height to maintain neighborhood scale, what rationale supports the proposed deviation in building height and mass for this development?
- What steps have been taken to ensure that the proposed development complies with the Ontario Heritage Act, particularly Sections 27 and 29, and how does it reflect the architectural continuity and character preservation goals of the area?
- Can the developer provide detailed plans on how the proposed development will minimize its footprint on existing green spaces, manage water absorption, and preserve mature vegetation as per the Livable Oakville Plan’s environmental guidelines?
- In what ways does the current design align with the established architectural style and community fabric of the surrounding neighborhood, especially considering the sharp contrast it presents in current form?
- How will the proposed increase in height and density address the potential negative impact on privacy and increased shadowing for neighboring properties?
- How does the Town Council reconcile its approval of the proposed development with its obligation under the Livable Oakville Plan to ensure development that respects and enhances the established community fabric?
- How will the proposed development maintain the cultural and historical integrity of Spruce Street and the Brantwood Annex/Tuxedo Park area, considering its significant departure from the local historical context and established community values?
- What measures are proposed to mitigate the impact of the development on the visual harmony and property values of nearby homes?

Specific Comments on Developer Submissions [INCOMPLETE / WIP]

Document	Issue	Comment
Planning Rationale Report	Compliance with Local Policies	Claims of policy compliance lack specific evidence addressing the disruption to the neighborhood's unique character, particularly Spruce Street (historical Brantwood Annex/Tuxedo Park) area
Planning Rationale Report	Heritage and Design Compatibility	The Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) does not adequately demonstrate how the proposed development preserves the historical and cultural integrity specific to the community's needs [GO THROUGH THIS IN MORE

**Appendix “B”:
Public Comments**

		DETAIL BASED ON OUR HIA EXPERIENCE]
Planning Rationale Report	Environmental Impact	Though environmental strategies are mentioned, the developers understate the environmental footprint and lack detail on how green space and tree canopy coverage are to be preserved
	Community Integration	Claims of integration with existing neighborhood character overlook deep community resistance and focus insufficiently on how scale and massing contrast with existing homes
[ETC.]		

Julie Schuler – email May 21, 2024

As a resident who lives right across the street from this project, I have concerns with allowing for RL5 zoning because the rest of my block & neighbourhood is RL3. I don't think that RL5 zoning & the proposed urban design (larger lot coverage, smaller setbacks) will conform to the existing character of the neighbourhood. The massing of the 7 homes is way too large & I don't feel like this proposal is the best use of land. The developers have clearly taken zero consideration into what our area looks like in terms of trees, lot coverage, setbacks & style of homes. These 4 items are what make up the neighbourhood & are why we chose to live here. Please keep RL5 zoning to larger urban areas, not older, established neighbourhoods.

Adam Schuler – email May 20, 2024

My name is Adam Schuler & I have concerns with the Spruce Rose proposed development at 304/318 Spruce Street.

- this development fails to conform to the existing neighborhood in style, character & sheer mass size of home based on the ask of RL5 zoning.
- I believe that the subject lands should be RL3 zoning to match the existing neighbourhood, including the development of the former OTMH land
- the proposed development conflicts with the Livable Oakville Plan which states that developments should maintain architectural harmony & community fabric
- there are several beautiful, huge trees on that property & I don't see how, with the massive size of these 7 proposed homes, that the land will not change drastically

As a developer myself, I am not against the development of this property, but it needs to keep in line with our neighbourhood. When I built my house in 2021, I had strict rules that I had to abide by (#1 being lot coverage under 23%), so I don't understand how they can come & get 35%-44% lot coverage right across the street when the entire block & 90% of Old Oakville is zoned RL3.

Dean Parro – email April 29, 2024

Appendix “B”: Public Comments

I am a resident of Spruce Street in Oakville and sending an email regarding the proposed development at 304 & 318 Spruce Street as I understand the applicant has recently filed a development application for rezoning and has requested RL5 zoning. The neighbouring residents and I strongly oppose granting RL% zoning for this property and instead should be providing the same RL3 zoning we were all regulated for. Our entire block is zoned RL3 and yet the developers of the church lot are requesting RL5 zoning which we strongly oppose based on the regulations between the two options. Our street has character and all renovations and builds within the past 15 years has been inline with all existing dwellings. In addition to the zoning, during the online meeting with the town and the developers, it seems they will be asking for multiple committee of adjustments as it seemed in every instance, they are requesting more.....increased lot coverage, increased front yard, main wall proportionality, height variance, rear lot lines, enlargement and division, proximity to neighbouring property line, etc.... The committee must ensure the variances satisfy the following:

1. Does the variance maintain the general intent and purpose of the official plan?
2. Does the variance maintain the general intent and purpose of the zoning by-law?
3. Is the variance desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land?
4. Is the variance minor?

It seems their plans do not comply with any of the above and allowing developers to construct sub-divisions in old Oakville will simply go against the Town’s vision.

Julie Schuler – email April 17, 2024

When is the deadline/process for neighbours to voice their concerns over the proposed development at 304/318 Spruce Street? Will there be a variance meeting?

Also, I would like to know the specifics of the type of zoning that they’re seeking to have approved. I know that zoning is currently community use & they want a RL5 with special provision. Can you tell me what that entails?

Julie Schuler – email April 17, 2024

When is the deadline & what is the process for neighbours to voice their concerns/questions regarding the proposed development at 304-318 Spruce Street?

Jennifer Mundy – email April 16, 2024

I am wondering who I can direct my concerns to about the property at Spruce and Reynolds that is potentially being divided into 7 mini lots (merely 14.5 feet wide if I am reading plans correctly) with 7 proposed homes that are nearly identical to one another, mammoth for the lot size, and generally not at all in keeping with the area. The proposal is concerning/disappointing to us and many of our neighbours. I’ve lived in Oakville for 25 years, and in my current home for nearly 10 years, but have never had concerns about proposed construction until now, so I am not sure what the procedure is. Any direction or help would be appreciated.