

As We Heard It Report

The National Capital Commission (NCC) has submitted applications for Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment for the lands known as 1 and 19 Sir John A. MacDonald Parkway.

The NCC proposes to amend the Scott Street Secondary Plan and Zoning Bylaw 2008-250 to enable future development of embassies. The development of embassies aligns with the “Capital Function” of the lands as defined in the NCC’s Canada’s Capital Urban Lands Plan, and Ottawa River South Shore Riverfront Park Plan. The Scott Street Community Design Plan similarly contemplates a “Capital Function” subject to the NCC’s plans. The concept plan shows six potential buildings and an approximate 3,600 square metre federal park.

An amendment to the Scott Street Secondary Plan is required to add a site-specific exception to allow diplomatic missions and office uses within the Open Space designation. The Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to add “diplomatic mission” and “office” as site-specific permitted uses within both the R5B and O1L zones.

Consultation

City staff deemed the applications complete in December 2020. Residents had an opportunity to comment on the applications from **December 18, 2020** to **May 29, 2021**. The City notified residents of the initial comment period by:

- Placing a development sign on the property
- Notifying the Ward Councillor
- Circulating notices of application to surrounding property owners as required by the Planning Act
- Notifying local community associations

An open house webinar was held by the Ward Councillor on **February 10, 2020**, to provide residents with the opportunity to pose questions of the applicant. The webinar was attended by approximately 100 participants.

As of the end of **May 29, 2021**, a total of 144 responses were received, and 117 respondents were opposed or had concerns. Most were concerned with the loss of greenspace and environmental preservation. A total of 2 were in support and the remainder had requested more information or to be kept informed.

What We Heard

Written comments were provided over the course of the five months since the applications were deemed complete. The majority of the comments received fall within ten themes:

1. Land Use
2. Built Form
3. Site Layout
4. Vehicular Traffic
5. Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety
6. Parkland and Greenspace
7. Noise and Development Impacts
8. Necessity of the proposal and Choice of Location
9. Trees, Landscaping, and Environment
10. Equity

The written comments received to date have been categorized by theme and listed below. Other comments and questions are also grouped at the end of this document. Comments that are substantially verbatim to one another have been condensed.

Concern 1: Land Use

Comments in this section are related to the proposed land use of diplomatic missions. Some commenters expressed opinions on other land uses that they thought may be more desirable, and some expresses concerns with the potential impacts of the activities associated with diplomatic missions. Some commenters expressed concern that diplomatic missions may be the target of protests or violence.

1. The land is very close to major employment centres and the brand new LRT and should be used for residential, preferably a mix of open market and subsidized housing. The developments should be medium to high density, comparable with the surrounding built form.
2. If it's necessary to develop that land, please consider something that would liven up the area and bring in more foot traffic, not another institutional complex to bring in cars during the day and become a ghost town at night. This is not mixed use development.
3. Our bottom-line is that using this space for any purpose other than as recreational space for the area and Ottawa, seems inappropriate based on

ecological considerations and the fact that open space very close to the planned site already exists and would be more than appropriate for an “embassy mission”.

4. Just because previous "planning" said that diplomatic missions could be built here, doesn't make it a good idea.
5. Having a concentration of embassies will likely mean a revolving door of protesters outside the embassies. Again, more traffic. Plus, traffic tie ups, plus the inconvenience of having traffic blocked by protestors. In addition, there is no guarantee that the protests will not be violent or that someone with a grudge will not try an attack or plant explosives. The more embassies that are in one spot the greater the likelihood of this happening.
6. If this very valuable, scenic piece of public parkland must be developed, then using it for embassies is greatly preferable to using it for general housing. This unique parcel of land should NOT be used to deal with Ottawa's housing emergency. This unique green space is a great asset to hemmed-in, increasingly densely populated Mechanicsville.
7. I am usually very "anti developer". I am frustrated that they walk all over the city abetted by the OMB, that development in Ottawa is architecturally "bland" at best, that neighbourhood development plans seem to count for nothing, that zoning seems to count for nothing as variances seem never rejected. But you know, I'm not against the idea of the Embassy Row. It seems to me, at first blush, like a good place for the embassies that we as a capital city must host.
8. The Geotechnical report identifies the presence of a major fault line, splays and a deep ribbon of “poor quality” fill running north-south from Lazy Bay to [Laroche] Park bisecting the proposed embassy precinct. Hence, the geotechnical analysis attests to the fact that the highest and best use for 2 eastern most embassy sites in the proposal is definitively “open space” not “embassies” within the embassy precinct.
9. What happens if countries become enemies? They will be in pretty close quarters if that were to happen. I think it is a bad idea to build so many embassies in one place and to building them on this property.
10. Using prime green space that is near the LRT for embassies, rather than for critical infrastructure like housing, would be a huge disservice to people in this neighbourhood. The space is near the LRT, bike paths that connect people to downtown, several grocery stores, and other important amenities.

11. The proposed embassies represent a land use that by virtue of symbolic associations, becomes a favoured soft target for malign actors and terrorism around the world.
12. [I request that] Global Affairs and the NCC provide a “threat and risk analysis” including review, oversight and approval by the mandated authority addressing site selection, land use and physical security provisions, such that Planning Committee can reasonably assure the exercise of requisite due diligence in terms of health and safety while mitigating, as possible, damage to proximate privately-owned real property assets.
13. The application to rezone the open space into use for multiple embassies is seriously flawed. For one thing I can find no evidence that grouping so many embassies into one location has happened anywhere else in the world. This stands to reason because the incidents of terrorism have increased since 9/11 and it creates a huge security risk both for embassy staff and for the community in which it is located. The more embassies, the greater the risk of an extremist group, domestic terrorist, bomber, car bomber or explosives expert targeting such a visible target to make a point or make a name for themselves.

Concern 2: Built Form

Comments in this section are related to the potential size, height, location, massing, and design of the building(s) on the site. Some commenters expressed concern with building heights and impact to views.

14. While I am not opposed to considering the development of embassies on the indicated site along Sir John A MacDonald Parkway, I would be opposed unless it could be confirmed that they would not be more than a few stories tall – similar to the current Embassy of Indonesia at Parkdale & Emmerson Ave.
15. I vigorously object to the westernmost building site due to its negative impact on the Emmerson Avenue and Riverton buildings, including lower enjoyment of the views, a primary reason for selecting these properties, and the resulting potential depreciation of property values.
16. Given the location along the Parkway, as well as the existing and proposed housing currently planned in the neighbourhood, we would feel that any structures build under this plan should be no taller than three storeys in height, so as not to dominate the area and block any view of Parkway and Ottawa River.

17. The height should be restricted to two storeys a matter of right with the option to three depending on design.

18. I am not opposed to having an embassy or embassies across the street from my home. I once again wish to stress that any building directly across from our condominium should be no more than three stories. If possible the structure should have a green space at the west end of the lot and should be aesthetically pleasing to the eye.

19. Relocate the R5 zoned parcel to the eastern side of the site at the corner of Burnside Avenue and Slidell Street and designate it an R1 zone, in keeping with the zoning for other embassies.

Concern 3: Site Layout

Comments in this section are related to the layout of the proposed embassy sites. Many commenters expressed concern with the concept plan submitted with the application which showed surface parking between the buildings and the street. Other commenters suggested the design should relate more to the existing neighbourhood and be set back from the Parkway, while avoiding intrusive security fencing.

20. Why are over 200 parking spots necessary? Would one shared parking lot with fewer spaces not be sufficient? What about underground parking?

21. The land use allocation and conceptual site schematic as proposed, are effectively unworkable in terms of accommodation of physical security requirements commensurate with an embassy land use.

22. Due to the combination of the proposed building orientations (which cut the neighbourhood off from the River) and the proposed parking lot locations (which further reduces the aesthetic value of the neighbourhood), I do not support this development.

23. Policies in the Official Plan for these lands should specify that where parking lots or parking structures abut public streets, they should be amply landscaped at the street edge to screen them from public view.

24. Parking should be underground to relieve impact on the environment and site enhancement.

25. I have studied this site plan for some time and find the placement of the buildings in a row quite unattractive - looks like a shopping mall.

26. The large number of surface parking spaces (a total of 206 on the plan!) is totally unacceptable in 2021. The property is within a short walking distance of both Tunney's Pasture and Bayview Station. The City of Ottawa is supposedly actively discouraging passive transportation (i.e. cars). In the time of a climate emergency we should not be cutting down trees to make parking lots.
27. I believe that in general, developments should be kept as far back from the river as possible.
28. Embassies are usually made of cold, hard, concrete and not the most appealing to look at. They hide behind high fences and/or concrete blocks (i.e. US embassy on Sussex).
29. If I have to choose between embassies and other designates, I would choose embassies with restrictions: no higher than 2 stories high, inside parking and very limited outside parking for visitors.
30. Barriers around embassies should be as transparent as possible.
31. The parcel on Hinchey and Burnside should mandate the building to front on Hinchey.
32. I think there is way too much surface parking.
33. The design of sites and buildings should reflect their Parkway setting and avoid features that present a barricaded appearance from adjacent public areas, through such measures as perimeter fencing that is visually permeable, thereby allowing people to see clearly in and out of the site.
34. Have Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 give onto Hinchey Ave only, with no access onto Forward Ave.

Concern 4: Vehicular Traffic

Comments in this section are related to the traffic that may be generated by the proposed development. Commenters expressed concern that on-street parking may be reduced, that existing local streets are congested with traffic, and that increased development will exacerbate existing issues.

35. The vehicular traffic, especially from Quebec, travels very quickly. Adding more density here will only add to the traffic issues.

36. There should be no direct access from these properties to the Sir John A MacDonald Parkway, only driveways on Burnside.
37. Burnside Avenue is constantly being used as a “shortcut” to the parkway and Parkdale Avenue. I personally have witnessed no fewer than half a dozen accidents on Burnside in my almost 6 years living here and countless near misses.
38. I am concerned about potential demonstrations, CCTV/security measures taken by the embassies themselves, and the increased vehicular traffic in the area by motorists with diplomatic immunity.
39. With a massive amount of people already moving in, traffic will be overwhelming.
40. A traffic study including the potential impact on very narrow, congested Forward and Emmerson Avenues must be done before any redevelopment—especially given the proposed R5 zoning of the embassy parcel fronting Forward Ave.
41. Mechanicsville is seeing intensification (good!) and development with no parking minima (fantastic), and yet these embassies will offer over a dozen parking spots per embassy?
42. The proposed embassies will be fronting on Burnside and Hinchey Avenues which are totally unsuitable to commercial traffic in an already high density high rise zone.
43. The dead-end of Hinchey Ave. is simply very crowded, and to add another parking lot entrance would cause tenants and embassy employees a lot of headaches, I'm sure. Perhaps you could extend Hinchey Ave. further North and construct the embassy parking lot entrance further away from the apartment.
44. Adding more density here will only add to the traffic issues.
45. No adjustment should be made to the traffic flow restrictions at the intersection of Slidell and the Sir John A MacDonald Parkway (ie. keep the no turn northbound on Slidell, no left turn westbound on Sir John A MacDonald Parkway). Vehicles from the new residences should be forced to Bayview Station or Carruthers to access the properties.
46. Building the embassies takes away the limited parking we have on Forward Avenue. There will be nowhere for visiting friends to park. Many in the people in buildings in the area are seniors and have friends that are elderly with

mobility problems. LRT use is not possible for them and many other visitors unfortunately.

47. The site plan shows 4 driveway entrances off Burnside, three of which are located on a hill. I see this as an important safety issue for drivers going East down the hill and not having time to react to vehicles stopped on the hill waiting to turn left into these driveways.
48. Forward Avenue and its connection to Emmerson Avenue are already today highly congested at many times in this vicinity making it very difficult to pass another oncoming vehicle. It often forces vehicles to reverse to facilitate passage, causing an awkward chain reaction with other vehicles following.

Concern 5: Pedestrian / Cycling Safety

Comments in this section are related to the safety of pedestrians and cyclists in the area. Commenters expressed concern with traffic speed and sightlines, and with the lack of accessible pathway connections from local streets to the riverfront pathways.

49. The establishment of multiple embassies may increase traffic in that stretch, making it more dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists.
50. The number of entrances to buildings from Burnside is a concern. Burnside is a blind hill at Carruthers and at Hinchey. This is already a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.
51. Provide better/safer access to the river path for pedestrians and cyclists. There are currently three main access points (Bayview Station, Parkdale, and Slidell) and I have safety concerns for all of them, gained from experience, and hearing of death and injury in the news. If there could be a publicly accessible grade-separated access point from Mechanicsville to the river, it would be a fair trade -- take away the grassy hill, but give the river.
52. A 4-way stop sign or traffic signal on the intersection of Hinchey Ave and Burnside would be beneficial as many people cross that intersection.

Concern 6: Parkland / Greenspace

Comments in this section are related to the removal of the land that residents have informally used as open space. Many commenters expressed concern with a lack of nearby parkland, the loss of space that has been used recreationally by the community, and the health benefits of green space.

53. The proposal negates the open space nature of the site and the massing is simplistic. The park is offered as a trade-off but should be located in the center of the parcels to interrupt the wall effect along the parkway.
54. Living near this site, I know both how much it is used as a park by local residents, and how important it is as a local greenspace for the neighbourhood.
55. This development will greatly interrupt my quiet enjoyment of the river and parkland adjacent to it. As an elder with limited activities and mobility, the surrounding natural views from my apartment are very important to my mental health and general mood.
56. This is a parcel of open woodland, offering peace and quiet to nearby residents in neighbourhoods that are expected to at least triple in population over the coming years; this greenspace needs to be available to future residents.
57. The densification in the area has become overwhelming. LaRoche Park is not large enough. The population density must be amongst the highest in the city and is on a sharply upward trajectory.
58. My dog and I love walking through it and around this neighbourhood down to the river.
59. Removing this space will degrade the morale of Ottawans after an already brutal year, in a time where mental illnesses are at an all-time high and only rising in incidence.
60. Already, our neighbourhood is sorely lacking natural, peaceful, serene green areas to walk in safely with mature trees with shade and air cleansing properties and nesting areas for birds.
61. Would love to help keep the city green. Let me know what I can do to make that a reality!
62. I cannot believe you would even consider allowing buildings on the north side of the parkway. I always bragged about the fact that all land is public along the

SJAM portion of the river, not privately owned. This is also one of the most scenic locations.

63. Please please don't ruin our beautiful parkway and riverfront with buildings but leave the natural setting.
64. The "open space" land use allocation as embodied in the proposal, is less than a third the size of the open space allocation in the [Capital Urban Lands Plan] whereby it was conceived and approved as a green space continuation of [Laroche] Park connecting the Mechanicsville community to the NCC Riverfront Park.
65. Under no circumstances should the city approve the NCC's misguided request ... there is no reason why embassies should chew up prime green space. I'm sure there is plenty of prime already-existing office space that they can use.
66. Why must we always pave over paradise?
67. It is a safe space and also a staple in our community and lives. We have had so much taken from us already with buildings being built right and left. Please leave us our green space, so future generations may enjoy that freedom.
68. It would be horrible to lose this oasis.
69. Taking it away would rob future generations of close-by natural greenspace, and in my opinion would substantially lower the overall quality of the neighbourhood.
70. I worry that with the new proposed space, we will lose nature and wildlife, and instead, our community will have to deal with increased noise pollution, traffic, and emissions.
71. Hundreds of people use this area for walking and cross-country skiing. At one time, when the bike paths were not being groomed in winter, people used this green space and the one to the east to commute to work on skis.
72. Follow through or enhance the planned Laroche Park improvements. Mechanicsville has a lot of greenspace compared to other similar downtown neighborhoods. And thus, I think people would benefit more from a higher quality park than absolute acreage.
73. The land in question obviously also has natural and ecological value as it hosts mature trees and habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. In addition, the natural topography and rock outcropping of the land is unique and fits in well with the rest of the general area abutting the river.

74. It would make greater sense to put the proposed 3,600 square meter park on the western end of the overall 3.7 hectare plot of land.
75. I am an enthusiastic supporter of the NCC development plans for the SJAM corridor, but I am afraid this proposed rezoning and development of an embassy row misses the mark. The proposed rezoning of Lots 1 and 19 as requested by the NCC is inconsistent with the stated goals for the SJAM Park and misses the opportunity to better utilize a unique property to provide a natural corridor to access the SJAM Park physically and visually.
76. No study was done on the human impact of this study: residents use this parkland joyfully daily and need some parkland to walk in and exercise their dogs. A neighbour picks up debris daily in the park so that it is always neat; another has placed a park table in it for our enjoyment
77. A major priority embodied in the NCC [Ottawa River South Shore Riverfront Park Plan] and the [Canada's Capital Urban Lands Plan] is maintenance and enhancement of the dynamic view constructs for the benefit of Riverfront Park and Parkway users. [...] the proposed land use and site morphology does not, and cannot, provide the requisite landscape buffering to mitigate the impact of upcoming intensification/ building massing on the Park and Parkway view dynamic.

Concern 7: Noise and Development Impacts

Some commenters expressed concern about the impacts from construction such as noise, dust, and traffic.

78. Complete a thorough soil analysis and develop a remediation plan to address exposure risks during any construction.
79. My main concern will be blasting/and or drilling and the potential for damage to my home.
80. It is very difficult for anyone at 110 Forward Ave. to tele-work while there is drilling from sunrise to sunset. If permission is granted to construct embassies on that wooded-plot of land, it will cause further noise, dust, traffic and distress to the residents of our area.
81. What would the noise impact be related to construction? There is already a lot of construction going on in the areas with the development of new apartments.

82. The obvious reduction in greenspace (replaced with an unsightly parking lot) and higher traffic and noise levels are also objectionable.
83. It is our understanding that the current 3.7 hectare parcel of land is contaminated from fill and/or other historic industrial use. We understand that the environmental risk is low as long as the site is not disturbed and the existing ground cover is maintained. Is there a plan for the decontamination of the land prior to construction and for measures to be taken to prevent a negative impact on the surrounding neighbourhood?
84. Rather than create a lot of construction noise, disrupt the wildlife, and rob the citizens of Ottawa of parkland they are using. Keep the park and parkway as it is.
85. Phase 2 ESA Site Sampling and Analysis, identifies the presence of significant quantities of contaminants in fill across the entire site such that the [Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks] requirements for the proposed land use are not met.

Concern 8: Necessity / Choice of Location

Comments in this section are related to the choice of this site to be proposed for diplomatic missions. Some commenters expressed opinions that they would prefer to see the proposed use be located elsewhere. Other commenters questioned the necessity of planning for diplomatic missions.

86. The focus for federal and municipal authorities should be on accelerating plans to develop Tunney's Pasture and Bayview Yards. If need be, embassies can be integrated there, or moved into vacant office towers elsewhere (as many developing country embassies currently are).
87. Why not build the embassies in some vacant government buildings or on a property that is not so integral to the existing local community?!
88. Tunney's Pasture is one block away from this embassy site; Tunney's is a totally degraded, sterile, built-up site with more surface in parking lots than buildings, and buildings that at present appear to be undergoing demolition or re-definition. The Tunney's campus would be an ideal site for these embassies.

89. It is not more important for foreign embassies to enjoy this space than it is for the residents of Ottawa.
90. Embassies should be in central areas to serve their constituents best. This is not central and, if I'm not mistaken, is also a flood zone and/or potential flood zone if climate change impacts are taken into account.
91. If more space for embassies and their workers is truly necessary, then I understand having to develop a well-loved green space for the good of Canadian diplomacy, but I just don't see a lot of evidence that such space will be needed in the next few years -- it's my understanding that the proposed buildings don't yet have tenants, or specific requests for occupancy.
92. It seems there are lots of vacant plots of land in the city center that are eye sores, that could be beautifully reimaged to house embassies (Lebreton Flats comes immediately to mind as an example) without destroying existing green space.
93. As an alternative, why not consider the large tracts of open land along the eastern parkway in the stretch from the boat house to the Rockcliffe airport?
94. Embassies are usually more centrally located to the city's core.
95. If these embassies wish to be centrally located, I don't see why they couldn't locate to Sandy Hill or Rockcliffe Park where the other embassies and consulates are located. Alternatively, Lebreton Flats is a prime central location which is currently an ugly space devoid of any development.
96. Neither the City nor the NCC is obliged to provide space for embassies. Foreign governments can go to the real estate market for office space, or they can contract with a developer to assemble land and build their own.
97. There are other far less destructive options for these embassies. There are many empty offices near the downtown core that would be a more appropriate location for government properties. Alternately, repurposing already built upon areas such as Tunney's pasture would be a much more sensible and less costly option to pursue.
98. With the City's investments in public transportation including the existing and future expansion plans for the OTrain, there are many other areas in the City where these embassies could locate to if transportation is a factor.

99. I'm going to assume that these new embassies are needed to replace older, crumbling structures that can't be saved. If not, I don't understand why the city needs new embassies especially at this time of extreme economic stress.
100. Do the City and the federal government not have surplus buildings/property that could be used instead of taking away much needed greenspace next to the river?
101. Surely, there has to be other property in the area that could be allocated for future embassy builds that would not sacrifice the environmental treasure that is this property.
102. [I]t did not seem like there is actually a pressing need from embassies for more space. The NCC did not mention any specific embassy needing this space. While I understand that the NCC is concerned about fulfilling its mandate, it seems to be getting ahead of itself on the development of this space in particular when there is not an urgent need for it from foreign entities.
103. The proposed office buildings could be integrated into the ongoing redevelopment of Tunney's Pasture. Among other advantages, this would allow them to be near the public transit hub there. There is also plenty of office space currently available in downtown Ottawa, close to Parliament Hill and to key Government of Canada buildings, as well as to OC Transpo stations.
104. It seems redundant to develop embassies for yet-undesignated nations, especially when there are currently dozens of government buildings sitting empty just West in Tunney's Pasture.
105. The city is currently investing in a brand-new LRT system. Surely it would make sense to build embassies within walking distance to this new transit infrastructure, thus eliminating the need for such a large parking lot.

Concern 9: Trees, Landscaping, and Environmental Preservation

As noted under Concern 6, residents have informally used the lands subject to this application as open space. Comments in this section are related to the removal of trees and potential environmental impacts of the proposed development. Many commenters expressed concern with the loss of green space, impacts to birds, and removal of mature trees.

106. I'm concerned that this development, among other house-flipping developments in the area, are causing a decrease in biodiversity in our neighbourhood.
107. This parcel is home to many bird species and is part of the migratory pathway for many others.
108. I oppose [the proposal because] the areas that they will use for development are crucial environmental areas of interest where endangered species rest and take refuge such as monarch butterflies.
109. I am concerned with the number of trees that will be destroyed. Our urban canopy is too thin, and these trees are needed
110. I frequently see fox, geese and other animals in this space. There is not much room for wildlife as it stands, and this area provides the water access they need.
111. Site Plans submitted for buildings to be located on these lands should include Tree Preservation plans showing existing and proposed new grades with a view to maintaining existing trees as much as possible.
112. As a birdwatcher, I have observed more than sixty species of birds on this property over the past few years. Several species have nested on the property, including Great Horned Owls, which nested there in the Spring of 2020.
113. I wish the NCC would invest more in this space. Perhaps we could create a community garden, add in some benches for people to admire the views, and do more to enhance the biodiversity
114. Our urban canopy is too thin and these trees are needed.
115. Its close proximity to an inlet of the Ottawa river also would have numerous negative effects on waterfowl and migrating birds that inhabit the area.
116. There should be no sightline from the parkland along the Sir John A MacDonald Parkway that allows park goers to see these residences. The residences should be responsible for a flora barrier that obscures these residences from the parkland.
117. The plan destroys a significant section of green space which is an integral and essential part of the neighbourhood. First, it removes mature trees as well the habitat for a range of wild life and birds. In fact, in recent times over 160

different bird species have been recorded in this space, which included the great horned owl in Spring.

118. I would only feel comfortable with the changes if there will still be enough green space left for us.

119. While I understand the responsibilities that come with being the national capital, I question whether this is the best use of the shrinking available greenspace in the city. No serious long-term plan for building sustainable cities can revolve around the replacement of publicly accessible spaces for exclusive compounds.

120. The 3.7 hectare property contains approximately 130 trees, of which 66 are slated for removal, according to the Tree Assessment and Conservation Report (D02-02-20-0072). Particularly disturbing are the scheduled removal of some of the largest, mature trees, such as the Red Oak (Tree inventory # 33) which has a diameter at breast height (DBH) measuring 75 cm. Similarly, the magnificent Larch (Larix, inventory # 32) is slated for removal to make way for a 48-space parking lot. Large white pines and sugar maples are also to be removed. This area is one of considerable biodiversity.

121. This is perhaps the only property along the entire SJAM park that has a natural geologic escarpment feature. When one drives east along the SJAM this rock face and slope stand out as a natural feature.

122. This rolling terrain is particularly unique in that the sedimentary rock outcrop is very visible and as it descends north to the river it gives a true sense to the geography of our Ottawa valley.

Concern 10: Equity

Comments in this section are related to housing and equity in planning. Comments discussed housing affordability, neighbourhood demographics, and Mechanicsville's history as a low-income community.

123. Allowing embassies to relocate in such a scenic place would be a slap in the face for the residents of the area who are often less privileged and who deserve to have access to the limited green spaces.

124. There is a housing emergency and the area proposed is good space for the local fauna. If anything should be built on that land it should be high density affordable housing.

125. I do not see any benefit to the surrounding communities from this development. On the contrary, the community would be losing one of the few remaining green spaces that has been left in a non-manicured state.
126. I would love to see some of this space dedicated to low-income housing while maintaining the beautiful green space that currently exists.
127. It strikes me that Mechanicsville is a convenient scapegoat to locate this conclave of embassies in. It is a marginalized, working class community with 14.4% of people earning \$20,000 or less. Household income is 22% lower than in Ontario. Only 26% own their own home which is 61% below the Canadian average. Almost 30% of the population are visible minorities. Crime rates are 20% higher than in Ottawa.
128. Every year my rent goes up, and it's forced my brother to move out of the neighbourhood already this past October - we used to be neighbours. Many families here are experiencing the same, children growing up will not be able to buy into the same neighbourhood they grew up in. These luxury 3-story diplomatic embassies I fear this proposal will exasperate this problem significantly while destroying an amenity enjoyed by the community. This neighborhood has traditionally been one available new immigrant families and people with lower wage jobs, but all of the luxury condos are pricing them out of their own neighborhood. This area should be used for the betterment of our community.
129. Mechanicsville is a lower-income-mid-income neighbourhood experiencing gentrification. Every year my rent goes up, and it's forced my brother to move out of the neighbourhood already this past October - we used to be neighbours. Many families here are experiencing the same, children growing up will not be able to buy into the same neighbourhood they grew up in. These luxury 3-story diplomatic embassies I fear this proposal will exasperate this problem significantly.
130. Ottawa Neighbourhood Planning dissected the recent census and show that Hintonburg-Mechanicsville has a higher prevalence of low income (20.1 for the community vs 12.6 for the city) and is a racialized community (nearly 20% BIPOC). As we strive for a just Canada where we are all equal, Will the NCC put the needs of all Canadians first, rather than the desire for an embassy row on this specific site and save greenspace for marginalized communities?
131. If Mechanicsville will be subjected to the loss of this land and presumably years of disruptive construction, I sincerely hope that benefits to the community will be considered and planned.

132. Developing this land for embassies would contravene the justification/rationale given to the residents whose homes were appropriated to create this green space several decades ago.
133. It is tone deaf to the desperate need for progressive and aggressive housing action in Ottawa. It was only in November, 2019 that the NCC and the City forced the eviction near the Bayview LRT station of 20 people made homeless months earlier by a rooming house fire.
134. Moving from a house to a small apartment upon retirement has been challenging especially since my husband lives in a nursing home. This greenspace across the road is an 'emerald' in a mass of surrounding growth and concrete.

Other Concerns

Comments were received on a broad range of subjects, some falling outside of a discrete set of categories.

135. The City's response to the NCC application to allow the development of new embassies along the Ottawa River should be swift and precise, much like the elite predator birds that currently inhabit the space.
136. The plan as it stands now will have a significant negative impact on our quality of life and also on the value of our home
137. I strongly oppose the proposal to further isolate and enclose Mechanicsville while offering nothing to residents.
138. The proposal is reasonably complicated and confusing at best. The notification signs indicate that the maximum height of the buildings would be three stories throughout the entire property. This too contradicts the Planning Rationale provided by the NCC's Consultant, where they state that the property on the North West corner under the present zoning (R5B H(37)) could house a twelve storey apartment building. Page 22 of the Planning Rationale very clearly shows a low rise (1-3 Storey) building.
139. Those of us who call this community home have long known that an Embassy could be built on this site in the future; and in fact welcome the inclusion to our neighborhood. Our experience with the Indonesian Embassy has proven to be very positive over the years. They have become welcome neighbors and an asset to our neighborhood. However, at no time were we informed that there was a possibility of having an Embassy Precinct with up to six (6) Embassies located on this site, and that they would in fact almost entirely cover the little

parkland we have left in this community. The inclusion of six Embassies changes the character and feel of the community. Virtually all Embassies require security fencing on their perimeter, and to say that they fit into the existing community is disingenuous at best. At its best, we will be able to walk around this perimeter, but certainly not enter their grounds.

Questions

Residents also posed questions and sought clarification on the application.

140. Are all 6 structures limited to 3 levels?(R1) Or is Parcel 1 zoned at R5 and will now be rezoned to R1? Does that mean Parcel 1 could possibly have a structure of 14 floors?
141. Where can I read on the city's website about the proposal to allow the building of an embassy?
142. What precautions will take place if there are protests in front of the embassy building?
143. Could you please confirm that the site would be limited to embassies and associated diplomatic offices?
144. Can you estimate when the project will start and its approximate duration?

Next Steps

City Staff have provided feedback to the NCC as the proponent, along with the feedback from the public. The NCC has considered the feedback and revised the submission. This resubmission will be made available for public review before a statutory public meeting is held and a recommendation is made to Planning Committee by Planning staff.

City staff will notify individuals who have provided comments of when the statutory public meeting is held by Planning Committee.