

Notice of dissent of Guildwood Residents Alliance (GRA)

As a City-registered organization representing the Guildwood Estates Community in which the surplus federal site – former Federal Study Center at 1495 Heron Road, Ottawa – is being reintegrated, Guildwood Residents Alliance (GRA) wishes to hereby express its dissent. We do not concur with the final concept plan released by Canada Lands Company (CLC) on June 4, 2022 and updated on June 15, 2022 for the redevelopment of the surplus site. From GRA's perspective, the final concept plan does not provide harmonious reintegration of the site into Guildwood Estates because it does not ensure visual and functional compatibility with the existing adjacent neighbourhood of 2-storey homes. Transitioning the site from minor institutional to mixed use and residential should be aligned with the Official Plan policies and directions for established low-rise neighbourhoods and promote the Community's quality of life dynamics.

Guildwood Estates is the community most affected by the redevelopment concept plan because it includes the two adjacent plans of subdivision – nos. 822 (1967) and M-267 (1979) – abutting the CLC site. GRA made numerous attempts to recommend changes to the concept plan to make CLC's proposed plan of subdivision more in alignment with the new Official Plan and more compatible with the adjacent Guildwood Estates neighbourhood. None of our substantiated recommendations (pertaining primarily to a uniform 30-metre buffer along the east side, maximum low-rise height, reduction of density, smoother transition with two storeys on first line of low-rise housing along adjacent subdivisions) were accepted by CLC, as confirmed at a meeting between GRA executive and CLC officials on March 29, 2023.

GRA does not support the financial-centered and developer-focused approach on which the master plan is primarily based. CLC officials emphasized during the consultation process that the only way CLC can pay for the retrofit costs of the potential heritage complex is to use the proceeds from the sale of the site and provide greater building heights and density to attract developers. The acreage available for new construction is currently limited because of the retention of the potential heritage buildings. CLC confirmed that no cost estimate has yet been established for the repairs to the nine retained buildings, which will all need major retrofit work at a very substantial cost to upgrade them to current building standards.

GRA has serious concerns about the lack of information and decisions on CLC's heritage designation intention and its repurposing of the Campanile Complex which occupies a major portion of the site. The repurposing of the potential heritage buildings has a direct impact on the overall site development. We have not seen as yet any engineering or economic feasibility assessments or studies in support of repurposing the existing buildings further to the declaration of surplus status, nor have any allowable uses for adaptive reuse been determined and our recommendations on this matter addressed.

March 31, 2023

Ottawa, Ontario

We wish to thank the Vice-President of Real Estate NCR/Atlantic and the Senior Director of Real Estate, NCR (CLC) for accepting to include GRA's Notice of dissent in the final Planning Rationale Report either under the public consultation section or in an addendum to the Report, as agreed to at the meeting held on March 29, 2023.

Respectfully,

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Guildwood Residents Alliance
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