



Building Stronger Communities Together
Bâtir ensemble des communautés plus fortes

July 25, 2019

Ms. Ann O'Connor, Planner
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Ave West
Ottawa ON, K1P 1J1

Dear Ms. O'Connor,

**RE: Demolition Control Application for OCH Property - 818 Gladstone Avenue
Phase II Redevelopment of our Rochester Heights Community**

Dear Ms. O'Connor,

Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) is a non-profit affordable housing provider with 15,000 units on 160 sites across the City. Our Rochester Heights community is located on two parcels of land at 811 and 818 Gladstone Avenue. Phase 1 of Rochester Heights (811 Gladstone on a 1.1 acre parcel) had its 26 townhomes demolished in 2018 and construction is slated to commence on a 140-unit development this September. Phase 2 of Rochester Heights (818 Gladstone on a 4.2 acre parcel) is currently improved with 78 townhomes (among 11 two-storey buildings built in 1966), two parking lots, 1 play structure, 1 basketball court, and associated patios/fencing/sheds/landscaping. Please see the attached survey.

The purpose of this application is to have Demolition Control lifted and to secure a Demolition Permit to demolish 63 of the 78 townhomes along with their associated improvements, per the attached plans. You should know that these 63 townhomes are 53 years old, were marginally designed/built in their day, have provided residence to approximately 900 families, are at the end of their service life, and are now in a dire state. They must be demolished to make way for redevelopment, new and improved affordable housing, within a denser urban form, to accommodate broader needs.

You should know that these 63 townhomes are all vacant, with tenants having been successfully rehoused to other properties within our portfolio. Rehousing activities were initiated in September of 2017, when we initially conveyed our plans for redeveloping the property to a 'higher and better use'. Units have been entirely vacant since end June 2019, utilities have been disconnected and consequently, the site is ready for demolition.

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We have chatted with you in regards to our intent to rezone and to redevelop this property. OCH is envisioning several residential buildings (affordable and market) with upwards of 1,000 units (mix of bachelors, 1-beds, 2-beds and 3-beds), coupled with retail/office uses, a central park area, and associated landscaping. Redevelopment as such will require a major Zoning Bylaw Amendment, a Plan of Subdivision, and Site Plan Applications. Our applications for phased redevelopment will be initiated pursuant to the City's Gladstone Secondary Plan exercise this year, City-led land use amendments, and the neighbourhood's engagement in such. We are excited about this project for its provision of affordable housing, mixed-uses, as well as the ability to animate the neighbourhood and frontages along Gladstone, Rochester and Booth.

Vacated units have already been boarded up, yet remain vulnerable to break-ins, vandalism, graffiti, and the like. They will pose safety/security threats for the neighbourhood if left unoccupied for a protracted period. Demolishing the 63 townhomes sooner rather than later is the right approach. Our aim is to demolish these townhomes this summer, pursuant to an expedited approval by the City.

We plan on submitting our ZBA and SPA applications for an initial phase of redevelopment in early 2020 and receiving City approvals 8 months later. The duration of construction for an initial phase of redevelopment would be 20+ months, with occupancy following. We are excited about the opportunities to come.

Again, timing is of the essence to remove unacceptable health/safety threats for the neighbourhood, not to mention the unnecessary burden of protracted security/operating costs for OCH. Pursuant to demolition, the site will remain enclosed with fencing, awaiting development applications in 2020.

Your expedited review and response will be greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Robert MacNeil
Senior Manager, Realty Initiatives

cc. Cliff Youdale, CDO, OCH
Stephane Giguere, CEO, OCH
Catherine McKenna, Ward Councillor

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