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September 20, 2023

Nader Kadri, MCIP RPP
Planner II, Development Review Urban Services Branch
Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department
City of Ottawa

Subject: 187 Boteler Street - Site Plan Control Application – Enhanced Planning Rationale
File No.: D07-12-22-0041

Dear Mr. Kadri,

The following is the Planning Rationale for the project:

Introduction

The overarching approach to the project design is to integrate the new Embassy/Consulate with the immediate neighborhood setting, the wider ‘family’ of other diplomatic installations in the immediate area with a very high-quality project that establishes a distinctive and suitable presence for the State of Qatar in Ottawa. The following describes the planning rationale for the project and the approach to compliance with applicable policy and guidelines.

Official Plan

The site is located within the Downtown Core Transect, with an ‘Evolving Neighborhood’ overlay. Notwithstanding its proximity to Sussex Drive, the property is outside the area delineated by Schedule C6-A - Views, Viewsheds, and View Sequences of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols and those noted at Schedule C7-A Design Priority Areas – Urban.

The site is not located in an area subject to a Secondary Plan, nor is it subject to an Area Specific Policy.

The project is well aligned with the Strategic Directions of the official plan as it intensifies use, with a purpose suitable to its location and complementary to the neighboring properties, being another diplomatic installation amongst others in the vicinity and a quiet, human-scale neighbor to the residential uses near-by, with much of the landscape development of the site visible to the public. The site is well situated with respect to opportunities for sustainable transportation, being located near bus transit, bicycle routes and adjacent to a walkable neighborhood.

The project also aligns with the Energy and Climate Change Directions of the Official plan, with the design targeting LEED Silver.

Bird Safe Design Guidelines

The proposed design will comply with the City of Ottawa Bird Safe Guidelines by providing markings on the large areas of glazing associated with the main lobby of the facility. The balance of glazing on the facility is above the ground floor is delineated by the perforated screen. Design traps and other areas of concern (landscape, Lighting, noted in the Bird Safe Design Guidelines are not applicable. Please see attached Illumination Concept and Bird Safety Practices.

Urban Design Guidelines

Design and Planning Guidelines applicable to the project are addressed in the following commentary.

1. Streetscape

The Embassy complex establishes itself on the street edge with a one-storey wing facing the street that includes a direct street entrance to the Consulate.

The site design proposes that new street trees in the public right of way will 'repair' gaps in the existing row of street trees. The existing sidewalk will be made good as necessary. The existing sidewalk has recently been extended eastward by the City of Ottawa to make pedestrian circulation continuous and safe by connecting the sidewalk to other sidewalks and paths. A continuous streetscape is established by new planting, sidewalks and street trees and fence treatment.

The fencing of the property will be treated as part of the architectural language of the building. At the Consulate entrance, feature paving will extend from the entrance doors to a protected area in the space between the building and the fence, to the sidewalk.

2. Built Form

The site is at the boundary between the existing residential neighbourhood which in the immediate vicinity of the site is made up of wood frame homes of 2 and 3 stories, some low- rise apartment buildings and a 4-storey apartment building to the immediate south of the Embassy development.

The site design continues existing pedestrian desire lines and integrates with the residential community with a Consulate wing at the street side, one storey in height, that allows the canopy of new trees planted on the property to be appreciated.

The main mass of the complex (2nd, 3rd and 4th levels) is drawn in from the property line and oriented to reduce its impact on the surroundings – while assuming its own distinctive and interesting character. The one storey Consulate wing at Boteler transitions the development to the 4 storey Embassy, with the fence/façade treatment providing visual interest in building elements along the pedestrian facade of the building.

The site is planned to enable future development on the eastern portion of the property, with the main vehicular entrance gate able to serve both the current and future requirements, and the formal entrance to the Embassy on the east façade orienting itself towards the future development.

The property is a corner site by virtue of the intersection of Boteler and King Edward at its eastern edge; however, the eastern half of the property will only be developed at some future date and the corner condition will be addressed then.

The Embassy complex is conceived of as part of the family of distinctive diplomatic installations in the area and in this context its unique building character is entirely consistent with the pattern of embassy development in the area.

The portion of the site that is being developed at this time occupies the lot frontage, with the consulate entrance, which serves the public, directly accessible from Boteler Street.

3. Pedestrians and Cyclists

The existing sidewalk on the north side of Boteler has recently been extended eastward by the City of Ottawa to connect to the existing sidewalk at King Edward. The sidewalk will be continuous at the private access driveway. The pedestrian walkway from sidewalk to Consulate entrance is generously scaled – commensurate with its public orientation. Building entrances are all protected with canopies.

Site furnishings are restricted to areas within the security boundary of the property.

4. Vehicles and Parking

It is anticipated that future development of the property will utilize the vehicular entrance required for the Embassy.

Surface parking is very limited and will be typically restricted to pre-approved visitors to the Embassy. The parking is situated to allow it to be largely screened by the planted traffic islands at the Embassy forecourt. Parking is limited to the quantities required by the Embassy. Pedestrian arrangements within the property enable safe and convenient paths from surface parking to entrances.

5. Landscape and Environment

The surface parking area is very limited and has ready access to pedestrian walkways.

The existing row of street trees at Boteler are honey-locust. It is proposed that new trees filling in gaps in the row would follow the City of Ottawa suggestions for new species. The new trees will follow the alignment established by existing trees along Boteler.

The Eastern portion of the property, available for future development will be planted with a simple pattern of sodded berms and a modest number of trees along with seating boulders to present a finished appearance. These landscaped curvilinear ‘mounds’ are a low maintenance measure, and sympathetic to the architectural language.

This project is targeting LEED Silver. The use of green roofs has been considered and rejected by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Qatar.

6. Signs

Signage is integrated with feature wall elements in stone at the ground floor level, finished in a manner commensurate with the status of the complex as an Embassy.

Lighting will be designed to discreetly illuminate the signage as required for legibility.

7. Servicing and Utilities

All mechanical equipment is located within rooms, including penthouse area screened by curving wall finished to match the balance of the complex. The generator is screened and the Hydro transformer and switchgear are in a separate secured compound screened behind the security fence/ wall at the southwest corner of the property. The garbage and recycling container storage, loading area, and vehicular ramp are within the property and screened from view.

Lighting will be largely limited to that provided by municipal lighting. Security lighting will be mounted to the interior face of the perimeter security wall. Lighting of driveways and paths entrance areas will be done with bollard lights. The aluminum decorative screen will be softly illuminated to highlight the curvilinear form of this facade element.

The emergency exit from the courtyard space and access to the Hydro equipment on site will be behind solid doors integrated with the fence design to minimize their visual impact.

National Capital Commission

While the NCC does not have jurisdiction related to the proposed Embassy, the City of Ottawa has elected to super-impose an informal design review by the NCC on the normal site plan control approval process. The NCC has prepared design guidelines for the development of diplomatic missions. Compliance with these guidelines is a requirement for foreign countries when Canada sells federally owned properties for the purpose of developing diplomatic facilities on these sites.

Our review of the NCC design guideline shows an excellent alignment between the proposed design and the objectives and the detailed requirements of the guideline, in all respects that the guideline articulates, with

a few minor exceptions which are noted further in the interest of completeness and accuracy. It is noted that in many instances guidelines are 'should do' and not design directives.

Guidelines articulate requirements related to:

1. Siting
2. Design Excellence
3. Site, Context and Cultural Landscapes
 - Siting
 - Streetscapes and public spaces
 - Access and traffic flow
 - Views and Vistas
4. Architecture and Landscaping
 - Architectural Expression
 - Building Massing and Form
 - Landscaping
 - Security
 - Ancillary Structures and utilities
 - Lighting

In a very limited number of instances the proposed design deviates from the guidelines as noted below.

1. The NCC states that diplomatic missions should not exceed three stories in height. The proposed design is 4 stories in height, including a mechanical floor at the second level. This guideline is written in the context of missions located on Sussex Drive, not the Boteler Street site – which is one storey below the adjacent King Edward Avenue and next to a four-storey apartment building.
2. The NCC advocates for security fencing to be 2.0 metres in height, unless security requirements dictate otherwise. The security team at the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested a minimum 3.0 metre height, in alignment with the City of Ottawa by-law. The fence height has been reduced to 2.4 metres.
3. The NCC stipulates that fencing may not be opaque. In order to screen electrical infrastructure (transformers, generators) and the roof of the north wing of the complex from public view, some portions of the fencing are proposed to be opaque. This being said, the opaque portions of the fence will have a design appearance closely related to the transparent portions of the fence.

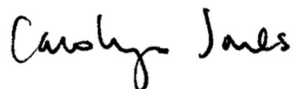
Commentary from the NCC on the design has been received and is addressed as follows:

1. Plans and renderings demonstrating the appearance of the building in a range of lighting conditions is provided as part of this re-submission for Site plan Control.
2. Details of the illumination concept are as follows: Please see attached Illumination Concept and Bird Safety Practices.

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3. Measures for Bird safe lighting design are as follows: Please see attached Illumination Concept and Bird Safety Practices.
 4. The perimeter fencing design as initially tabled was concerning to the NCC. The design been amended to reduce its overall height, and to maximize transparency, as noted above.
 5. The NCC has requested additional planting between the north property edge and the MacDonald – Cartier bridge. We await direction from the City of Ottawa regarding this matter, as this will involve work on City property, the review and approval of the City of Ottawa, the City’s agreement to maintain this additional planting at its own cost, and additional capital cost to the project which has not been budgeted for.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office should you require additional information.

Yours Truly,



Carolyn Jones, Principal, OAA, OAQ, MRAIC, LEED AP-BD+C