



ERLTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

A Calgary Community Since 1906

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1811 4th Street SW
PO Box 241
Calgary, Alberta
T2S 1W2
erltoncommunity.com

February 25th, 2014

Federation of Calgary Communities
Suite 301, 1609 - 14th Street SW
Calgary, AB T3C 1E4

Attention: Natasha Kuzmak, Urban Planner + Engagement Facilitator

Dear Natasha,

The City of Calgary has arbitrarily implemented a major change to the information included in Development Permit material circulated to communities.

Point 5, extracted from the Final Communication on DP Changes.pdf states:

5. Circulations to Community Associations: New Context Questionnaire.

The new Context Questionnaire allows Community Associations to provide value added comments to identify how the proposed application will impact the community, rather than providing commentary on Bylaw non-compliance issues. Circulation packages will continue to contain a full set of plans and the new Context Questionnaire but will no longer contain a completed bylaw check and policy review. If a Community Association wishes to comment on a proposed development, the Context Questionnaire should be completed and returned to Administration within the current 21 day timeframe.

This change was implemented with no consultation or discussion with the communities. We fail to see how this change, and especially the manner in which it was done, supports the spirit of collaboration and transforming planning in a positive way. The City's Mission Statement of this initiative - Transforming Planning is a collaborative partnership between stakeholders and City staff to design and deliver a high-performance planning system for Calgary - was clearly ignored.

While the questionnaire may prove a useful tool to capture community comments on the impact of a proposed development, not including the bylaw assessment and deficiencies in the permit circulation package is a step backward, since those deficiencies - along with the Municipal Development Plan, the Calgary Transportation Plan, and the Area Redevelopment Plan policies - are so interrelated to the impact of the development on every community.

In essence, the City now wants communities to comment on a development in the absence of all the relevant facts. We saw this already in a DP the City is currently reviewing, where the DTR, a cross-section showing the relationship with the east neighbour, a shadow study, and a streetscape view were all missing from the DP package we received. While we asked for this information in our community comment in mid-August, we've had no response whatsoever from the City. If this becomes the standard method of operation, how can communities provide the City with a truly informed contextual assessment of the proposed development?

The lack of contextual information, as well the absence of an assessment of bylaw deficiencies, calls into question whether the development approval authority has in fact themselves adequately assessed the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding neighbourhood. We fear that this failure to include bylaw deficiencies and other relevant information in the circulation packages, a necessity for communities to ascertain the impact of a proposed development, will give rise to an increased rate of appeal, and further impede the development permit review process.

It should also be noted that Point 4, extracted from the Final Communication on DP Changes.pdf states:

4. Circulations to Councillors

Councillors will continue to be circulated for information purposes only. The circulation package will include a copy of the proposed plans and will no longer include a bylaw check or policy review.

We are also troubled that bylaw checks and policy reviews are being removed from the packages being circulated to City Councillors. Without these assessments for reference, how can Councillors be expected to make an informed comment on the proposed developments within their wards, and how they will affect the citizens they are elected to represent?

We ask that the FCC immediately contact the City and seek a freeze on these arbitrary changes until all communities have had an opportunity to review, comment on, and determine their support, or not, for it. We also ask that this be the subject of a direct email to all community associations Presidents and Planning chairs, directly asking for their thoughts - time being of the essence.

Sincerely,

Kirt van der Woude

President

Erlton Community Association

president@erltoncommunity.com

cc: Jane Haig - jane.haig@calgary.ca
Mayor Nenshi
Councillor Carra
Leslie Evans, FCC

Bcc: ECA Planning Committee, ECA BOD