



November 21, 2014

Brenda Guy
Manager of Community Development
Town of Gananoque
30 King Street East
PO Box 100
Gananoque, Ontario
K7G 2T6

Dear Ms. Guy,

**Re: 129 South Street, Gananoque Ontario
Planning Rationale for Proposed Redesign of Riviya Condominiums
CaraCo Development Corporation**

FOTENN Consultants Inc. has been acting as agent on behalf of Riviya Development Inc. for the processing of a Class III Development Permit application for the above referenced property. The proposed development at 129 South Street has been redesigned in response to comments from the Town of Gananoque and members of the public. This letter provides an overview of this application, the changes made to the development and the manner in which concerns have been addressed.

SUMMARY

Approvals are being sought to permit the development of apartment dwellings on South Street adjacent to the St. Lawrence River. An apartment building is permitted in the Development Permit By-law but relief was sought for lot coverage, building height and yard setbacks. On July 8, 2014 Council approved the proposed development subject to a redesign which addresses public opinion and the architectural character and uniqueness of Lowertown.

The applicant has made significant alterations to the design of the development in order to satisfy these conditions, including:

- Dividing the building into two structures;
- Creating additional viewsapes to the river;
- Providing an interruption to the building façade along South Street;
- Reducing the lot coverage;
- Reducing the number of residential units;
- Introducing additional projections and recessed areas to the building design;
- Increasing the setback of a significant portion of the east building;
- Reducing the height of the building by introducing a more modest sloped roof;
- Introducing a greater degree of glazing in order to lighten the façade of the building; and
- Reducing the visual impact of the building on the surrounding context by altering the perception of the buildings' height and overall mass through the use of building materials.

The Council motion also identified a number of conditions that are required to be met prior to the issuance of a building permit. These will be addressed following the approval of the development permit.

PROCESS

The application is currently in the final step of the Development Permit review process, which is illustrated in Figure 1. On September 9, 2013, the applicant attended a pre-consultation meeting, at which time staff identified all of the supporting documentation and technical studies that would be required to deem this application complete. A number of subsequent meetings and other correspondence occurred between October 2013 and May 2014, at which time staff identified concerns with respect to the scope and scale of the project. In response, revised drawings were provided by the applicant.

The application was deemed complete on June 13, 2014. A planning report, dated June 25, 2014, was prepared by the Town's planning consultant. This report recommended a two-pronged conditional approval:

- (1) The applicant must re-design the structure to address the architectural character and uniqueness of the Lowertown in particular with respect to viewscales and long uninterrupted facades; and,
- (2) Once this condition has been met, a development permit will be issued with conditions attached.

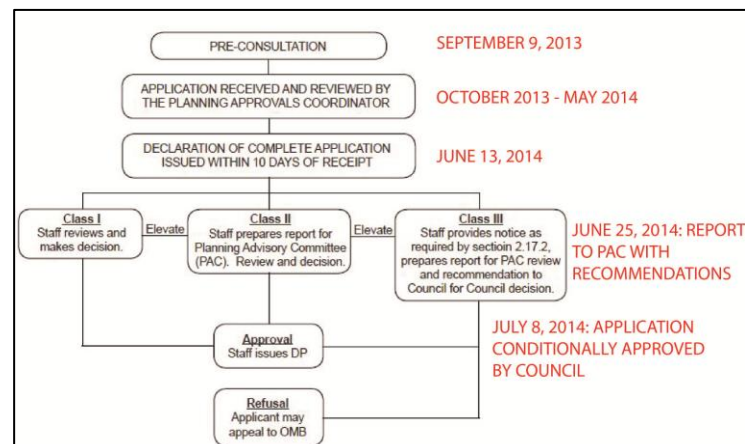
Council approved this approach at the July 8, 2014 Council Meeting.

The relief that was applied for was:

- Maximum lot coverage of 47.7%
- Minimum front yard setback 4.0 m
- Minimum exterior side yard setback 0.5 m
- Minimum rear yard depth 1.0 m
- Maximum building height 23.35 m

These provisions were approved as part of the Council decision.

It is our opinion that the applicant has appropriately addressed the architectural concerns raised and that the Town can now issue a Development Permit with conditions attached.



BACKGROUND

The initial development application was submitted in June of 2014 and proposed a six storey, 100 suite condominium building. The applicant provided a number of documents in support of the application, including a Planning Rationale, Heritage Impact Study, Urban Design Rationale, Transportation Impact Study, Site Servicing Analysis, Preliminary Landscape Plan, Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment, Environmental Site Evaluation, Slope Erosion Assessment, Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment and Wave Uprush Analysis.

The application was presented before Planning Committee on July 2, 2014 and went to Council on July 8, 2014. At the latter meeting, Council approved the application subject to a number of conditions. These conditions include the following:

“That the applicant re-design the structure to address public opinion, the architectural character and uniqueness of the Lowertown in particular with respect to the viewsapes; the long uninterrupted facade; The Town’s relevant by-laws; the Lowertown Study and the Official Plan; and that the re-design be presented at a public meeting to facilitate public feedback.”

The purpose of this letter is to present the newly redesigned development and identify the ways in which it addresses the conditions of approval. It is our intent that the matter will be brought back to Council to confirm that the redesign is satisfactory and that the development permit may be issued.

REVISED DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The development team has made a number of changes to the proposal which can be observed in the site plan and renderings below. First, the building has been divided into two separate above grade structures in order to create an additional viewscape to the river and to break up the previously uninterrupted building façade of one building. This change has also resulted in a reduction in lot coverage to less than 35 percent.

Another change has been the introduction of a greater setback to a large portion of the east building where it fronts onto South Street. This change will create greater architectural interest and variation on the streetscape. The west building, which is set closer to the road, is smaller than the east building, contributing to the character and interest of the streetscape. All of these changes have resulted in a reduction in unit count from 100 to 89.



The design team has generated two sets of renderings that reflect different architectural styles. The two options are the same buildings with different treatments applied. The first option is more traditional in style while the second is more contemporary. The final treatment will be decided in consultation with the Town of Gananoque.

OPTION 1: TRADITIONAL TREATMENT



Traditional treatment option on South Street

This design option is similar to the initial design proposal with regard to materials and architectural language. While the initial design proposal integrated elements of the Queen Anne architectural era of England, this design displays more similarities with English Tudor styling. Stylistically, the most significant change from the initial design proposal occurs in the roof design. This option introduces a more modest sloped roof with gabled ends in order to decrease the overall height of the building. Furthermore, this design introduces a greater degree of glazing in order to lighten the façade of the building. In certain areas,

the glazing extends as high as the fourth storey in order to tie the building together vertically, while minimizing the stacked look of the design.

With regard to the material palette, the base of the building is clad with a stone finish to visually strengthen the base of the structure. Above this, the building is clad with a red brick which relates to the context of Gananoque. Lastly, the sixth storey of the building is clad with either stucco or masonry and white tudor details at gabled ends of the roof. This gesture helps to signify focal points of the building, such as the entrances. The final result of these features is a design in which the building is perceived as three layers (base, mid, top) which helps to reduce the perceived height of the structure.



Looking east on South Street



Above: Looking south

Below: Looking north from the river



OPTION 2: CONTEMPORARY TREATMENT



Contemporary treatment option on South Street

The concept for this design alternative is to integrate contemporary styling and materials found throughout the context of Gananoque (i.e. stone, block, panels). In some respects, this design could be considered a reinterpretation of prairie style architecture; an approach which tends to exaggerate horizontality and utilizes natural materials as cladding elements. In this treatment, design is again used to reduce the perceived height and mass of the buildings. The use of stone helps to strengthen the base of the buildings while the materials above (stucco or masonry) lighten in colour and physical properties (see image below). In some instances the stone base extends to the roof line signifying entrances and focal points of the buildings.



The impact of the building is further decreased through the use of a flat roof design as opposed to the sloped roof used in the initial design option. With regard to glazing, windows are detailed in such a way as to unify windows among two or three storeys (see below highlighted in red). This reduces the perception of a 6 storey building by connecting glazing elements of adjoining storeys.



DEVELOPMENT PERMIT BY-LAW

The application sought relief from the lot coverage; front, rear and exterior side yards; and, height provisions of the development permit by-law. These reduced provisions are considered included in

Council's approval. The redesign does not violate these already approved building standards. In fact, the changes bring the proposal into greater compliance with the development permit by-law. The following table examines the site provision requirements for the Lowertown Mixed Use area as they relate to the previously proposed residential development and the newly redesigned site.

Site Provisions	Requirements	Original Design		New Design	
		Proposed	Compliance	Proposed	Compliance
Lot Area (min)	930 m ²	7,254.4 m ²	✓	7,254.4 m ²	✓
Lot Coverage (max)	35%	47.7%	12.7% relief required	33.2%	✓
Lot Frontage (min)	24 m	25 m	✓	25 m	✓
Front Yard Setback (min)	6 m	4.0 m	2 m relief required	6.0 m (4.5 m from projected balcony)	✓
Exterior Side Yard Setback (min)	15 m	0.5 m	14.5 m relief required	6.0 m (1 m from projected balcony)	14 m relief required
Interior Side Yard (min)	1.2 m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rear Yard Depth (min)	6.5 m	1.0 m	5.5 m relief required	6.5 m (subject to projection provisions)	✓
Building Height (max)	20.0 m	23.35 m	3.35 m relief required	22.4 m	2.4 m relief required
Flood plan setback	6.0 m	6.0 m	✓	6.0 m	✓
Amenity Space	2,000 m ² (original design) 1,780 m ² (new design)	4,330 m ²	✓	4,335 m ²	✓
Parking	128 spaces (original design) 112 spaces (new design) No parking in exterior side yard	162 spaces N/A	✓ ✓	122 spaces Visitor parking near entrance on South Street	✓ Relief required

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

The following provides an overview of the ways in which the proposed redesign meets the conditions of approval by first, addressing the concerns raised by the public and second, by addressing the architectural character and uniqueness of Lowertown as it relates to the applicable policy and regulatory framework.

PUBLIC OPINION

At the May 6, 2014 regular Council Meeting, Liz Austin gave a presentation on behalf of the Gananoque Neighbourhood Association (GNA) with respect to the proposed development. A number of concerns were raised, which are addressed in the table below.

Comment	Response
Density: The proposed density is too high for the neighbourhood.	The DPS does not provide a maximum permitted density for residential uses. Instead, it uses a combination of other provisions to dictate the scale and intensity of a development. The Development Permit By-law contemplates intensification in Lowertown, including a six storey residential building.
Lot Coverage: A lot coverage of >90% reflects overdevelopment.	Based on the redesign, the proposed development now conforms to the coverage requirement in the DPS (<35%). Note: the coverage presented by the GNA removed landscaped areas from the total land area used in the calculation.
Setbacks: The setbacks are too small and will result in the building being too close to the lot lines. This presents a liability to the public as a projectile from any balcony could be blown onto the street by river winds.	The proposed buildings will be constructed to meet the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.
Breaks: The proposed uninterrupted façade does not allow for views of the water.	The redesign proposes two new buildings on the site that provide direct river views from South Street and a break in the building façade.
Fit: The DPS directs higher density residential buildings away from low density residential development in Lowertown.	All of the Lowertown designation is considered to be a mixed use development area. Permitted uses include low, medium and high density residential. The south side of South Street is currently characterized by a mix of uses, including taller multi-unit residential buildings, low density residential and commercial uses. The proposed development will contribute to this mixed and vibrant neighbourhood.
Off-street Parking: The locations of the	A Transportation Impact Study was prepared by

<p>underground parking garage entrances will impact park accessibility at the end of Stone Street and will create congestion and unsafe conditions at nearby intersections.</p>	<p>MMM Group in the fall of 2013. An update was completed in April 2014 after receiving comments about the use of “seasonal variation curves” for traffic counts to account for summer/tourism traffic. The study underwent a peer reviews by both the Public Works Department and AECOM with positive results.</p> <p>The traffic study found that the available roadway capacity is anticipated to be adequate to support the projected trips generated by this site. The proposed redesign has resulted in a reduction in dwelling units which means fewer trips will be generated by the proposed development than was considered in the study.</p>
<p>Traffic: The locations of the parking garage entrances will cause gridlock on South Street and will impact residents trying to access their driveways, Gananoque Inn patrons accessing the parking lots, buses accessing the theatre and theatre patrons. Tourists from the Inn will no longer be able to access the little berm at the end of Stone Street.</p>	<p>The Transportation Impact Study prepared found that the trips generated by the proposed development will result in minor increases in delays; however, the overall level of service (LOS) of the study area intersections will remain good to excellent.</p> <p>There is now one underground parking garage entrance provided and the ramp is accessed from Stone Street. This will help reduce the flow of traffic entering and exiting the site from South Street.</p>
<p>Vegetation: The GNA had a sun/shadow study prepared which showed significant shadow issues which will in turn impact vegetation, in particular species at risk including a Butternut Tree located between Stone and Charles Street.</p>	<p>The proposed development is not expected to produce shadows significant enough to impact existing vegetation along South Street. The buildings are less than 20 metres in height on the north side (i.e. facing South Street), which is within the DPS requirement.</p>
<p>Town Services: The proposed development will be a tax burden on Town residents due to the required infrastructure upgrades.</p>	<p>All costs to upgrade the infrastructure would be required by the developer.</p>
<p>Access to a Condominium Development: The proposed development will not provide adequate access for emergency vehicles.</p>	<p>The buildings will be required to meet all requirements of both the Ontario Building Code and Fire Code.</p>
<p>Noise and Vibration: Blasting and other activities associated with the construction of the development may damage adjacent homes.</p>	<p>Protective measures will be initiated before construction to prevent damage to adjacent buildings. This will include standard pre-inspections of the surrounding properties prior to any site works.</p>

Comments were also provided from the public at the July 2, 2014 Planning Advisory Committee meeting and were summarized in the meeting minutes as follows:

“Committee members requested clarification with regard to numerous items on the variance list: viewscape to the water; variances; street setbacks; size of the building; historical and architectural uniqueness of the area; barrier free parking; all single family homes with the exception of the playhouse and the two smaller condo units at the far end of the street.

Members also noted that there were also some good points regarding the development; limited historical attributes such as the brick were picked up; assist with improving the economic climate in the Town. Modification was made to the design by the developer to put a breezeway in the middle of the building which provides limited viewscape of the St Lawrence River.”

With regard to the clarification sought by the committee, reference should be made to the June 25, 2014 letter to the Town of Gananoque from FOTENN. To summarize:

- Viewscape to the water: There is currently not public access to the water. The development will create access to 100 per cent of the view of the river through a new public waterway. The redesign improves the viewscape from South Street (from the previous design) by dividing the development into two separate buildings.
- Variances and street setbacks: relief is no longer required from the lot coverage, front yard and rear yard setbacks (although the relief has been granted by Council). The yard setback relief was requested because, for the purposes of the by-law, the yards are defined based on the lot frontage being located on Stone Street, despite the physical orientation of the development towards South Street
- Size of the building: The proposal has been changed to reduce the overall development size and the number of units. Two separate buildings are now proposed, as opposed to one large building.
- Historical and architectural uniqueness of the area: As described in this letter, the design of the buildings has been adjusted with an effort to create buildings that are sympathetic to the area.
- Barrier free parking: Parking is in accordance with the by-law.
- All single family homes with the exception of the playhouse and the two smaller condo units at the far end of the street: The single family homes are located on the north side of South Street. On the south side of the street, where the proposed development will be located, the street consists of a four and five storey condominium and the Thousand Islands Playhouse interspersed with single detached dwellings. The Gananoque Inn is located on Stone Street. The illustration above shows the traditional style building in a view looking east along South Street.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

As a condition of approval, the redesign is to address the architectural character and uniqueness of the Lowertown, in particular with respect to viewscales; long uninterrupted facades; the Town’s relevant By-laws, the Lowertown Study and the Official Plan.

The built form of the proposed development has been revised in a manner that largely maintains the approved by-law provisions while addressing concerns related to viewscales and building façade. A significant viewscape has been introduced into the new site design by dividing the originally proposed

single building into two structures. This will provide a new visual connection through the centre of the site to the river from South Street. This change will also assist with avoiding a long uninterrupted building façade. Providing a variety in massing, articulation, materials and colours will also help to break up the streetwall.

The development permit by-law provides a number of design criteria for development in the Lowertown Mixed-Use area which have been considered.

“Attention should be paid to façade details that provide for varied materials and details that add to the pedestrian and public experience. Where a building elevation is adjacent to a roadway, elevations will be required to have an appropriate number of projections and recessed areas and a variety of cladding types in order to ensure that a monotonous building façade is not created”.

Additional projections and recessed areas have been added to the development. A large portion of the east building’s north wall has been setback from the road in order to create interest and avoid monotony. The building is clad in a number of building materials and colours which will further help to break up the streetwall and will add to the pedestrian and public experience.

The Town of Gananoque Official Plan (2009) sets out the land use planning goals and policies that guide the physical development of the Town over the next 20 years. Section 3.1.2.3 of the Official Plan states that Council will apply the Urban Design Guidelines as described in the Lowertown Master Plan for all proposed development or re-development in Lowertown. All development is to be compatible with the Lowertown Master Plan and consistent with the existing character and approved themes for Lowertown. Any high density residential development will be directed away from existing low density residential areas within Lowertown.

The Lowertown Study was prepared in 2005. It includes a Master Plan concept and design criteria which were intended to be implemented through updating municipal planning documents including the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. Guidelines related to urban design and built form include:

- Locate buildings at “build-to-line” along property boundary where possible
- 2-3 storey maximum height
- Locate off-street parking lots at rear of buildings
- Maintain/enhance views to waterfront where possible
- Avoid long uninterrupted facades
- Break up building foot print into two or more blocks per municipal block
- Locate small public forecourts periodically (one per block) along streetscape
- Provide awnings along street frontage where possible
- Signs to conform to Town of Gananoque Sign and Merchandise Display By-law

The proposed development generally conforms to these guidelines. The buildings are located close to the property line in order to frame the street. While the development will be taller than the guideline height recommended in the Lowertown Study, it meets the height requirement of the development permit by-law which allows a six storey residential building, which supersedes the Lowertown Study. Off-street parking is concentrated almost entirely underground in order to create a more cohesive feel to the streetscape and to optimize outdoor areas for landscaping and amenity space. The only surface parking is located near the front door to accommodate drop-offs and visitor parking. Views to the river have been improved by

breaking up the building footprint into two blocks and, overall, views and access to the river is increased through the provision of a public walkway along the waterfront. The walkway also provides public space that is not currently available in this area. Providing a variety in massing, articulation, materials and colours will help to avoid a long uninterrupted building facade. Signs will conform to the Town's sign by-law.

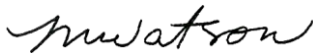
CONCLUSIONS

At the regular Council Meeting for July 8, 2014, Council approved the proposed development subject to a redesign which addresses public opinion and the architectural character and uniqueness of the Lowertown. The applicant has made significant alterations to the buildings' footprint, size and layout in order to satisfy these conditions. Two options for the exterior design which also address this condition have been prepared, with the intent that the final design will be decided in consultation with the Town.

It is our opinion that the applicant has satisfied the condition to redesign the structure to address the architectural character and uniqueness of the Lowertown in particular with respect to viewscales and long uninterrupted facades, and that the Town is now in a position to issue a Development Permit with the additional conditions contained in the July 8 decision.

Thank you for your ongoing attention to this matter.

Yours truly,



Margo Watson, MCIP RPP
Director, Planning and Development