



INGLEWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
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June 2, 2020

Calgary Planning Commission (CPC)

Dear Commissioners:

Re: LOC2019-0188/CPC2020-0587, 1230 & 1234 – 9 Avenue SE

The Inglewood Community Association (ICA) would like to provide some additional correspondence concerning agenda item 7.2.1 – Land Use Amendment in Inglewood (Ward 9) at the above noted address.

A survey concerning RNDSQR Block was distributed electronically through the ICA's E-Blast and the Inglewood Neighbours Facebook page on May 14, 2020. The survey, which will remain open for completion until June 5, has **received 173 responses** as of June 1, 2020 with over 90% of the respondents identified as living in Inglewood.

Individual question summaries were generated on May 31, 2020 to provide evidence of a lack of community support for the RNDSQR Block project. Survey respondents were particularly opposed to the building's location, the building's massing/height, and how the proposed building relates to and will impact the other properties, buildings, and amenities in the surrounding area – which appeared in questions specific to those topics and bled into questions on different topics.

Respondents were extremely concerned about the building's massing, scale, and height and how approving a building of this nature would set a dangerous precedent in a key area of Inglewood's historical main street. Respondents felt the building being proposed is completely out of context with the area and does not fit in with the overall community.

Summary feedback concerning specific topics/themes has been provided below and includes actual responses from survey respondents.

Building Massing

- When asked for comments on the overall massing of the building, only 15/140 respondents (who answered this question) were supportive of the building's shape, its height and width on the site. Most of those who were not supportive of the building's massing as it has been presented commented the project is too high (and inappropriate) for this location (this is not downtown or the East Village), the number of stories being proposed (12) is excessive (would support 6-8 storeys), the Lawn Bowling Club will suffer from the shadow created, that it does not fit the streetscape and is incongruent with the heritage of Inglewood.
- One respondent commented they "believe the height of the building will open the door to boxing in the accompanying streets as other builders clamour to go ever higher and the City desires ever tighter density. I believe the building is overly imposing and will devalue the structure of our lives today. Another commented the building was "too tall and far exceeds the limit allowable in Inglewood. I would really like to know why the people at city hall are so intent on destroying our little town inside of this city."

Integration with the CIBC Building

- Most of the respondents indicated they did not feel the building related, integrated, or deferred to the CIBC building. Some commenting the new building alienates it, the CIBC building is completely dwarfed by it, it's a misfit, and that it is trying to marry modern contemporary with historical architecture (which) is a difficult task but this effort is too huge of a departure from an inviting street scape.
- One respondent commented "if this were a street with all modern buildings with only one heritage building, no issue. In this case with mostly heritage buildings and features I feel it is setting a precedent to do more of the same and add more modern buildings so there will be no historic neighbourhood left." Another commented "the building's modern design here does not integrate. There have been plenty of excellent examples in the inner-city — the Biscuit Block, Snowdon Block, even the LocalMotive is a better example. This addition does not relate to the existing heritage building and does not speak to the material or design."

Building Relating to Surrounding Area

- Most of the survey respondents did not feel the new building related well to the other buildings in the surrounding area (e.g. Spolumbo's, Stash, Iron Wood, Lawn Bowling Club). Respondents commented that it did not relate (rather) it bullied, that it does not relate in a coherent way, that it only related to money, that its modern design will create a dynamic lack of unity, by relates you mean destroys, that it doesn't blend in at all and would be a big eyesore, it sticks out like a nail in a 2x4, it is out of scale and out of character, it doesn't fit in with the neighbourhood, and that it detracts from the surrounding character buildings.
- One respondent commented that it was "not ok to dwarf other buildings especially when they are relatively newly built and were held to a different building height restriction. If they had built to their allowable maximum at the time, they would still be half the height of the proposed building which is unacceptable."

Building Height

- Survey respondents were generally not supportive of the 45 metre height being proposed, many commenting it was over height, that they would support the maximum 20 metre height/6 storeys along 9th Avenue, that it doubles the height of Inglewood's ARP, and that it sets a bad precedent.
- One respondent commented that “allowing this 45 metre monstrosity opens us up to future developments that will do further harm to the heart and soul of this neighbourhood. I understand this particular company is trying to respect that by maintaining the CIBC facade, but saying yes to them doing the bare minimum (protecting a historical building but building a skyscraper next door), it allows even bigger and uglier to come in.”

Building Height (Specific to 9th Avenue SE)

- Respondents were asked to comment on the height of the structure specifically in reference to 9th Avenue – most commented the 4-6 storey range and 20 metre maximum height is what would be supported. Respondents identified concerns related to contributing to the “wind tunnel”, that it's overwhelming, that it does not tie in with the scale of existing buildings, and primarily – that it is out of place and not an appropriate height for 9th Avenue.
- One respondent indicated they “can't even begin to understand how a building of this height has made it this far in the development process. It completely dominates and overtakes the surrounding buildings and will have a permanent effect on our heritage streetscape.”
- In terms of how respondents felt about how pedestrians will relate to the new structure (related to its massing and height), comments included: it appears overpowering, pedestrians might feel covered or boxed in, it kills Inglewood's main street walkability, and multiple respondents indicated concerns related to the impacts of shadowing on the pedestrian experience.

Building Setbacks

- Concerning the building's setbacks, which are outlined in the draft Direct Control District (DC), respondents had mixed opinions concerning the setbacks collectively and individually. Some respondents felt the setbacks seemed appropriate or were acceptable. A greater number of respondents were not supportive of the setbacks, particularly the setbacks proposed along 9th Avenue in terms of how it will impact walkability in an area where the sidewalks are extremely narrow (as it is).
- One respondent commented “it needs to be set back from both more than 3.0 metres to accommodate some graceful transition from the quaint, shopping district to the grotesque mother ship.” Another commented “these setbacks will be a drop in the bucket to mitigating the monster footprint created.”

Impacts to Surrounding Neighbours

- Respondents spoke to impacts to residents along 8th Avenue who will also be significantly impacted by the building's shadowing and are extremely concerned about the parking pressures associated with this building (given the massive parking relaxation being pursued at the Development Permit (DP) stage which is in process). It was mentioned by some respondents the impacts to the residents on 8th Avenue have been overlooked.
- One respondent indicated "it will also be awful for the residents on 8 Avenue that it towers over. Creating shadow on veggie gardens and an eyesore to wake up to every day."
- Impacts to the adjacent neighbour to the north (just across the lane) – the Calgary Lawn Bowling Club – did not go unnoticed by survey respondents.
- One respondent indicated "Shadowing of the Bowling Club is a huge concern to me. We have played at the club many times over the years with friends and neighbours and it is such a pleasure to be out in the sun on the beautiful green grass on a summer evening. The Lawn Bowling Club has become very popular in recent years with corporate groups and others for team-building events and is a fun, easy recreational bonding activity. Having a huge tower like this built and blotting out the sun is a tragedy." Another indicated the "Lawn Bowling Club just rebuilt their clubhouse. It was a big investment of time and money. The club is also an institution here and I'm not happy it's going to be swept aside for this structure to ruin its history here and the community building that happens on the green."

Benefits Associated with Additional Density

- Respondents recognized there are benefits associated with adding additional density along 9th Avenue – such as supporting 9th Avenue businesses, increased vibrancy, more people in the community, increase the sustainability of the community, create a more lively street scape, additional tax revenue for the City, it might attract a grocery store to the community, increased visitors to the area, etc. Others felt the structure would have an extremely negative impact on the community, some commenting Calgary does not need more condos, that densification is unnecessary at this time (post COVID-19), and there is no benefit as the East Village is overcrowded and it should not bleed into Inglewood.
- One respondent commented "there are no benefits unless you are trying to permanently alter and destroy the very reason people live, visit and love Inglewood. Try to visualize 100 years from now - it is conceivable that this end of 9th Avenue could look like 9th Avenue between Centre street and 10th street SW, just a little less tall. That density is ridiculous considering all the towers that sit half empty the core and will likely never fill with business again after this COVID-19 shift."

Public Benefits & Public Realm Improvements

- The public “benefits” being offered, in the opinion of many respondents, do not off-set a building of this size in a historical community. One respondent commented “there is no public benefit large enough to make this proposed development acceptable to build in Inglewood.” Another indicated “If they could only reduce the height and stay coherent with the existing character. It seems like if we're asking for something in return it's because we know we're getting a raw deal.” Another commented they “don't think that developers should be allowed to buy-off the community to make-up for developments that don't fit or enhance the neighbourhood.”
- The public realm improvements (publicly accessible private open space and integrated transit waiting area) being offered to gain an additional 2.0 FAR are not congruent with most of the public realm improvements desired, needed, or suggested by residents. In speaking with residents (outside the survey) who take public transportation in the neighbourhood, the usefulness of the transit waiting area is being questioned and many are unsure why this is being put forward as a “public benefit” that may have limited utility in that most public transit drivers do not stop unless passengers are active and present at the transit stop as the bus is approaching.
- When asked about what types of public benefits/public realm improvements they would like to see, given the community was not provided with an opportunity to give feedback on the public realm improvements (outlined in the Draft DC), respondents had a wide range of ideas.
- Respondents mentioned improvements such as: parking structures (due to the massive parking relaxation being requested), funding for the Main Street Master Plan, a small public library, investment into local public parks and recreation sites, and public art.

In summary, Inglewood is Calgary’s oldest neighbourhood and 9th Avenue is Calgary’s original main street. This development, as proposed, does not respect the community’s historical context, unique character, or the height supported by residents (along 9th Avenue) – a maximum height of 20 metres and ~6 storeys.

Inglewoodians (and the Inglewood Community Association) support development on this site. We encourage thoughtful, creative, high-quality development that enhances Inglewood’s rich character and reflects its values. Values that include walkability, heritage, liveability, arts & culture, and community. However, most of Inglewood is opposed to this out-of-place development that does not align with its character or reflect its values nor provide any commensurate community benefit in terms of what Inglewood will be losing.

The proposed site of this development is in the heart of Inglewood. A building of this height, density, and scale would be a dagger into the heart of the community.

Kind regards,

INGLEWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Phil Levson, President



Erin Standen, Planning Committee Chair