

Cronkhite, Amy

From: The Merlini Family
Sent: Saturday, November 25, 2023 1:30 PM
To: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
Subject: Re: Manhattan Drive Extension

External email:

Do not follow instructions, click links, open attachments, forward or respond to the email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings!

Somehow, my email did not make it to the public package for Monday night's meeting. Perhaps my affirmative answer to your asking me whether I would like my email to be included in the public package for Monday night's meeting did not reach you.

Here it is again: Yes, I would like my email to be included in the public package for Monday night's meeting please.

Thank you.

Giovanni A. Merlini

On Friday, November 24, 2023 at 08:12:26 AM AST, CITY CLERK'S OFFICE <cityclerk@fredericton.ca> wrote:

Mr. Merlini,

Would you like your email to be included in the public package for Monday night's meeting?

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lawson

City Clerk/Assistant Director Legal, City Clerk & Human Resources

Secrétaire Municipale/ Directrice Adjointe Juridiques, Secrétaire, Ressources Humaines

The City of Fredericton / La ville de Fredericton

397 Queen Street / 397, rue Queen

Fredericton, NB E3B 1B5

Jennifer.Lawson@Fredericton.ca

(506) 460-2020

From: The Merlini Family

Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2023 10:59 PM

To: Mayor's Office <mayor@fredericton.ca>; Grandy, Bruce <bruce.grandy@fredericton.ca>; Pike, Jocelyn <jocelyn.pike@fredericton.ca>; Darrah, Kevin <kevin.darrah@fredericton.ca>; Ericson, Gregory <greg.ericson@fredericton.ca>; Megarity, Eric <eric.megarity@fredericton.ca>; Hicks, Steven <steven.hicks@fredericton.ca>; LeJeune, Jason <jason.lejeune@fredericton.ca>; Mallet, Henri <henri.mallet@fredericton.ca>; Peters, Mark <mark.peters@fredericton.ca>; Sheppard, Margo <margo.sheppard@fredericton.ca>; LeBlanc, Cassandra <cassandra.blackmore@fredericton.ca>; Breen, Ruth <ruth.breen@fredericton.ca>; CITY CLERK'S OFFICE <cityclerk@fredericton.ca>

Subject: Manhattan Drive Extension

You don't often get email from

[Learn why this is important](#)

External email:

Do not follow instructions, click links, open attachments, forward or respond to the email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings!

I have some concerns arising from the Planning Report with respect to this application for development.

1 - Sense of community and neighbourhood, focal point.

Section 2.2.1(24) of the Municipal Plan states, in part:

"Council shall seek to ensure that the design of New Neighbourhoods:

i. Fosters a sense of community and neighbourhood;...

v. Provides for parks, schools, and other community uses in central, convenient locations;..."

Section 2.2.1(27)(iii) provides to ensure that parks "[s]erve as a focal point for neighbourhood residents;..."

(Underlining is mine.)

At p. 4, the Planning Report says that "[t]he proposal meets the intent of this policy by providing:... A sense of community and a focal point for the neighbourhood through the park dedication.", and at p. 1: "At the end of the Manhattan Drive Extension, the development includes parkland that would be a focal point for the neighbourhood and fosters a sense of place."

At p. 7, the Planning Report describes the efforts made to ensure proper building design, including entrances on the street for the buildings perpendicular to the street.

I have no problem with what the Planning Report says about the park, but, with respect, we do not know whether building design and placement "Foster[...] a sense of community and neighbourhood." After all, the "design of New Neighbourhoods" includes not only parks but also the buildings. As it stands now, only three of the proposed nine buildings are parallel to and have eyes on the street (an idea I get from Jane Jacobs in her book, *The Death and Life of Great American cities.*) To me, eyes on the street enhance the sense of community and neighbourhood in that people can see each other, meet in a spontaneous manner and get to know each other. While I realize that there are geographical factors involved and applaud the efforts made to have the perpendicular buildings have eyes on the street via an entrance, it would be great if as many buildings as possible have eyes on the street (not just the buildings located on Manhattan Drive but also the ones located on any street that could come with the proposed development.)

2 - Access to an arterial road, proximity to services and employment zones, urban form.

Section 2.2.1(25) states, in part, that proposals "shall:"

i. Have direct access to an Arterial or Collector Road...

...

v. Be adjacent to or in close proximity to parks, open spaces and/or other community facilities, services and amenities, and employment zones; and,

vi. Provide high-quality building design that contribute positively to the City's urban form."

(Underlining is mine.)

The Planning Report says, at pp. 4 and 5, that: "The proposal meets the intent of this policy by providing:

- A directly connected [sic] to Cliffe Street, which is a major arterial road...

- A location in proximity to existing and planned community amenities and services including commercial amenities at the Cliffe street and Two Nations Crossing intersection, Willie O'Ree Sports Complex, a new elementary school on Cuffman Street currently under construction abutting the subject property, and other nearby schools including Gibson-Neill Memorial Elementary School, École Les Éclaireurs and Leo Hayes High school;..."

(Underlining is mine.)

A - To begin, I am pleased that the Report included "commercial amenities" as part of "community amenities and services." This interpretation is a step in the right direction with respect to having mixed-use neighbourhoods which contribute to make up an urban form, and not a suburban one (which I define basically as being a bedroom community.)

However, the Report is silent respecting the proximity of employment zones. Section 2.2.1(25) provides a list of things to consider, including proximity of employment zones, all connected by the conjunction "and." This means that all items have to be considered. Also, proposals have to comply with the letter of every item, not just the intent of the policy. The failure to meet one requirement on the list could mean that the proposal is not compliant. In addition, and in my humble opinion, if the employment zone requirement is not met, not only is the proposal not compliant, you also might not have an urban form. It could become suburban with the consequence that building design would be unable to contribute to the City's urban form.

(I have no opinion as to whether the proposal here complies with the employment zone requirement. I can only refer the reader to what the Municipal Plan states about employment at p. 14:

3. "(7) Encourage the efficient and appropriate development of land by:...
- iv. Concentrating residential growth within the Urban Core, New Neighbourhoods and Mixed-Use nodes;
- v. Directing employment growth to the Urban Core and existing commercial, institutional and industrial areas;
- vi. Supporting the expansion of business and industrial areas;"

Question: Do we need to amend the Plan to provide for employment in complete neighbourhoods, mixed-use areas, etc.?)

B - Now we get to Cliffe Street being a "major arterial road."

Section 2.2.1(28)(ii) of the Municipal Plan, which I find to be instructive as to how Cliffe Street might have come to be a "major arterial road", provides as follows with respect to Mixed-Use Nodes such as the Cliffe-Two Nations area:

"(28) Council shall seek to ensure that the design of Mixed-Use Nodes;

(ii) Is centred on a pedestrian-oriented "main street" and/or major intersection designed to a high standard with durable materials and landscaping;"

Given the wording "and/or", was a choice made that Cliffe Street was not to be a "pedestrian oriented 'main street'" but a "major arterial road" with the consequence that the Cliffe-Two Nations Mixed-Use Node was to be centred on a "major intersection?" Whatever happened, given that Cliffe Street is a "major arterial road" as described in the Planning Report, we now have a car centric neighbourhood with the car informing every aspect of development including connectivity of streets, traffic management, parking requirements, traffic-handling capacity of streets, making sure that a new development has direct access to a "major arterial road", etc. And now, there is a proposal to add 1,203 extra cars to the area because 1,203 parking spaces will be provided for 824 units. Not exactly what the Growth Strategy calls for at p. 42:

"Future neighbourhoods will have a variety of housing and be less car-oriented."

I wonder what the neighbourhood would have looked like if Cliffe Street had been a "pedestrian oriented 'main street'" instead of a "major arterial road". Would we have seen a 15-minute city in which every one could live, work and thrive within a 15-minute walk of every residential door? We will never know but we can still attempt to have that 15-minute city.

Can Cliffe Street still be a "pedestrian oriented 'main street'?" I do not know, especially since it would cease to be the "major arterial road" to which new developments have to have direct access to as provided by s. 2.2.1(25)(i) of the Municipal Plan quoted above. Developments could become non-compliant because of a contradiction in purposes found right in the Municipal Plan! Perhaps the Municipal Plan could be amended to resolve that contradiction. In the meantime, the 50 km/hr speed limit on Cliffe Street could be strictly enforced with the help of electronic signs telling you what your speed is.

3 - The Planning Report is silent respecting green construction materials, solar panels, plugs for electric cars, etc.

Respectfully submitted.

Giovanni A. Merlini