

McKernan-Belgravia Station Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)

Education Information Drop-In Session Comments (December 4th, 2014).

Background

On June 9th, 2014 Edmonton City Council directed Administration to consult with the Belgravia and McKernan communities to clarify the understanding of section 4.4.6 of the McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP regarding neighbourhood infill, including when RF1 (Single Detached Residential Zone) to RF3 (Small Scale Infill Development Zone) should be considered and provide a report to Committee on the results of the consultation.

Prior to meeting with residents, Administration met with Belgravia and McKernan Community League representatives to discuss the motion and other information residents would find helpful regarding the Plan and its policies. The intent was to raise awareness and understanding of the approved McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP, policy related to neighbourhood infill, rezoning from RF1 to RF3 within 400 metres of the LRT station, planning process and consultation.

Drop-In Session

An Education Information Drop-In Session was hosted by the City of Edmonton on Thursday December 4th at McKernan Community Hall from 6 to 9pm. Notification letters were mailed out to approximately 1750 property owners in McKernan and Belgravia. In addition, Belgravia and McKernan Community Leagues were notified and advertised the event with their membership.

At the event, residents were asked to review the information boards provided, ask any questions they may have, and provide their input on section 4.4.6 of the plan regarding neighbourhood infill. City staff from Sustainable Development and Transportation Services Department were in attendance to answer citizen questions regarding the McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP, Neighbourhood Infill policy section 4.4.6, potential rezoning from RF1 to RF3 within 400 metres of the McKernan/Belgravia LRT station, City policy and planning processes.

Comments

Approximately 71 people attended the event (46 from Belgravia, 18 from McKernan and 7 undeclared). In addition to residents reviewing the materials presented and conversations with City staff, written comments were provided by 44 people. Of these, a number of people stated general support for neighbourhood infill and infill near LRT (e.g. row housing, small commercial retail) under the plan. However, some also noted concern over infill pressure on existing infrastructure (e.g. roads, parking, servicing) and contribution to traffic congestion.

A few residents expressed frustration with neighbourhood infill in relation to the recent rezoning in Belgravia from RF1 to RA7 (Low Rise Apartment Zone), current city-wide planning process (e.g. notification and consultation), approval of the ARP, loss of neighbourhood character, and traffic. Conversely, a few residents stated that opportunity for infill near LRT proposed under the ARP was modest and that greater density (i.e. residential development greater than 4 to 6 stories) should have been approved. Approximately half (24) of written responses indicated the session was generally informative, 19 did not comment, and 1 person stated the session was not informative.

In designing the drop-in session, additional information was provided by Administration to help build further awareness about the McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP and its policies including:

- City of Edmonton's long-term strategic vision (The Way Ahead);
- Transit Oriented Development Policy C565 and Guidelines;

- McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP Vision, Guiding Principles, Development Concept, and Land Use Precincts;
- Neighbourhood demographic and development statistics;
- Transportation in relation to City vision (The Way We Move) and summary of the Transportation Overview Assessment prepared for the McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP;
- Common planning definitions;
- Visual examples of housing types (i.e. Built Form) according to zoning examples proposed under the McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP;
- City-wide rezoning, subdivision and development permit process;
- City of Edmonton Infill Roadmap; and
- City Department contacts for further information or questions

Additional comments received from the information session are summarized below according to theme and ordered by frequency of mention.

Additional Comments

THEME	WHAT WE HEARD
Transportation	A number of residents stated that current vehicle congestion within Belgravia at rush hour was an issue and or future development would add to this. Some reported significant delays in exiting the neighbourhood by car, traffic short-cutting from University Avenue at Saskatchewan Drive and 115 Street onto 76 Avenue, and sometimes full LRT cars during rush hour. Some residents expressed concern over low frequency bus service, reduced bus service during rush hour, and concern over existing and future parking. A few residents suggested additional access be provided somewhere along 114 Street or 71 Avenue, an examination of how 76 Avenue-114 Street intersection could be further improved, and how the impact of cars should be minimized (i.e. park in back yards / garages; build near LRT).
McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP	A number of residents stated support for the plan and development concept. Some expressed desire for commercial development, small retail stores and services. A few residents criticized the ARP development concept and potential for 4 storey development along the edge of the neighbourhood, near LRT, and that the plan was too dense and/or out of scale with existing single-family housing and overall neighbourhood character.
Education Information Drop-In Session	A number of residents described the drop-in session as informative, well organized, productive and helpful. City staff discussed neighbourhood infill and rezoning from RF1 to RF3 within 400 metres of the McKernan-Belgravia LRT station in addition to a number of other topics raised by citizens and summarized here.
City Planning Consultation Process	A few people commented on the City's existing planning processes as being insufficient, that the planning process should be more collaborative, communities should have greater input over the type of small scale development proposed by applicants, and that education or information sharing is not as good as involvement in planning and designing for change.
Infill Quality	A few people expressed concern over the quality of neighbourhood infill. Comments included concern over the attractiveness of infill, surrounding impact (e.g. compatibility, privacy, shadowing, property value), and enforcement (e.g. post-construction height and lot coverage).

For more information

If you have questions or comments concerning policy section 4.4.6 of the McKernan-Belgravia Station ARP regarding neighbourhood infill, rezoning from RF1 to RF3 within 400 metres of the McKernan-Belgravia LRT station, or education information drop-in session, please contact Michael Strong (Principal Planner, Transit Oriented Planning Unit) at michael.strong@edmonton.ca or by phone at 780-496-1909.

These comments will be shared with McKernan and Belgravia Community Leagues and at Executive Committee February 3, 2015 in response to City Council's June 9th, 2014 motion.

Prepared by City of Edmonton Sustainable Development Department (2015)