

August 20, 2020

Dear Neighbors,

My name is Kim Colpman and I represent Large and Co. in their application to subdivide the property at 1737 Rockland Ave. In this letter I summarize our vision for the property and why we have chosen this direction.

Unfortunately, current COVID restrictions do not allow us to meet in person, which in my opinion is always more effective for communicating and fielding questions and comments. As you read through I am sure questions will come to mind and I am more than happy for you to call me so we can discuss them. My contact information is:

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## 1 Description of Proposal

1737 Rockland is a large 2,713 m<sup>2</sup> (29,202 ft<sup>2</sup>) R1-A zoned property with a historically significant Samuel McClure home built in 1899. Its original character has been well maintained and it remains a single family residence - probably one of the few in Rockland that has not been broken into smaller units.

The existing home sits up high in the top SW corner right at Rockland Avenue leaving a large amount of land in the rear undeveloped. Our proposal is to seek site specific zoning that results in retaining this home; designating the exterior and interior foyer; making some necessary repairs and upgrades to the exterior as per a Conservation Plan prepared by a Heritage Consultant; preserving the historic rock wall along Rockland Avenue; and adding an accessory building at the rear of the home. The property would then be subdivided to create two additional, two storey homes behind the principle residence.

The objective of our application is to honour the beauty and importance of this home by designing them to compliment its heritage style, character and scale and not detract from its significance. The slope of the land allows the principal residence to be a focal point at Rockland Avenue, with the 2 new houses sited unobtrusively below.



## 2 Building Design

We chose single family homes as an in-fill solution because Rockland is primarily a neighbourhood with ground oriented housing. We are also trying to balance the need for new housing and the retention of heritage assets.

The existing home will remain on 921m<sup>2</sup> of land. The two new homes will have 628m<sup>2</sup> and 660m<sup>2</sup>, respectively. We have worked with the topography and followed the natural grade of the land, with the principal residence being the focal point at the top by Rockland Avenue. Zebra Design Group has extensive experience in heritage design and have designed the exteriors of the new homes to compliment the existing home's style and character.

Each new family home will be 2 storeys with 4 bedrooms and 3.5 baths and ample, private outdoor recreation space. Floor plans have been designed for flexible living and aging in place (master on main). There is main floor access to outdoor spaces and privacy has been considered for all neighbours. There are double car garages for ample parking.

## 3 Landscape Design

The current driveway will serve as site access to the two new lots so the heritage house and current streetscape character can be preserved. Rock wall features will be included around the existing home to replicate designs of the period.

Neighbouring trees will be preserved, and a conscious effort was made to save the existing conifer located near the northeast property line since we recognize its ability for wildlife habitat and carbon absorption for the surrounding environment. There are 19 bylaw protected trees on the property, 13 are being preserved and 6 are recommended for removal by the Arborist. We are proposing 21 new trees for a net increase of 15 trees.

The site slopes down dramatically from Rockland Avenue with a grade difference of approximately 9m running west to east across the site. The site is broken up with intermittent bedrock outcrops. The intent is to source rock from the site as building materials for the proposed garden walls, sloped plant areas, and rain gardens.

Approximately a third of the site is currently designated to a combination of softscape areas (30%) and Riverstone paving (6%), which will provide valuable on-site water absorption and infiltration. The driveways and patio areas will be sloped towards low spots within each lot where rain gardens will be located for the function of bioretention.

Plant selections will reflect a commitment to native and adaptive species. Furthermore, species will be placed in the best suitable microclimates within the site where they will flourish. Ferns and shade-tolerant species will be placed in north-facing yards, while drought-resistant species in the south-facing yards which receives the most sunlight, and species located near low points will have an emphasis placed on moisture tolerance. And, by introducing a variety of resilient low maintenance native and adaptive species will increase the biodiversity and wildlife habitat on site.

#### **4 Our Rationale**

Rockland is primarily a residential neighbourhood - a special place with larger historic homes and landscapes. Because of the need for housing, it is tempting to use some of these larger properties to accommodate denser, multifamily developments. However, this type of housing is already been provided in other areas of the City. Here, we can preserve the single family nature of the community, provide a beautiful surrounding landscape AND preserve one of Rocklands' historic gems.

We have a built out city and it is indeed a challenge to balance the accommodation of any type of new housing with our values of retaining heritage buildings. I hope you will agree our proposal finds this delicate balance.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and again, please contact me directly with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Kim Colpman