

## Next steps approved for 114 stacked townhouses on Wellington Street

Plans for 114 new townhouses on Wellington Street West moved forward to the next level at Council this month as lawmakers approved Zoning and Official Plan amendments for 511, 521, 531, and 543 Wellington Street West.

The housing units, once built, will be back-to-back stacked townhomes divided over four blocks. Initially planned to be a 116-unit development when it first came before Council in January, the plans had been somewhat reduced by the time a revised proposal was submitted at Town Hall in October.

A total of 166 parking spaces – 137 for residents and 23 for visitors – are proposed to be underground, noted staff in the report before Council. Access to the underground parking area is proposed at the southerly boundary of the development limits.

Proposed setback adjustments put forward are designed to balance a compact, pedestrian-friendly townhouse form with adequate privacy, landscaping, and functional space. The front yard setback is reduced from 7.5 metres to 2.2 metres along Wellington Street West. This creates a more engaging streetscape, encouraging walking and active transportation, while still providing space for landscaping.

While Council ultimately approved the Zoning and Official Plan amendments, Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner stated that while the developer had made changes for the good since they were last before Council, it didn't quite hit the mark.

I think this is just too dense, she said. There's no affordable housing included in this. Maybe that would be a saving grace. It says in the report that the applicant will work with staff through the Site Plan process to explore options and strategies to support the Town's affordable housing goals. That's never worked in the past. We've had lots of opportunities with developers. We [even] had incentives at one point in the planning act.

It's too dense with respect to what their neighbours are. I think it's too dense for the [Oak Ridges Moraine]. The Moraine is precious, and I think we have to err on the side of what would be best for it, and I don't think a housing development this dense is appropriate, and I don't think it's appropriate for what we see in the neighbourhood at the moment.

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