

January 2019

Summary

A rezoning application to permit the construction of a second dwelling on the property at 1029 Queens Ave, to increase the number of perpetual below-market rental units from two to four.

Proponents

Jenny Farkas has lived with her family next door at 1033 Queens for 15 years, and has developed her property in the spirit of what is now commonly referred to as “gentle” density. Her father, Ed Farkas, purchased the duplex at 1029 Queens in 2015, and spent close to \$100,000 on structural and earthquake-resistant upgrades to make the house safer and more resilient. Jenny manages the house, which contains two units – one 2-bedroom and one 3-bedroom that operate as perpetual below-market rental housing. We call ourselves “citizen developers” because we feel we have an understanding of and appreciation for the existing social and built fabric of the Queens Avenue neighbourhood. And, because we have the potential of building a reasonable and modest development that can add to the below-market rental housing stock, because we don’t have the burden of integrating the land value into the equation.

Background

Queens Avenue was one of the very first subdivisions built by the Hudson’s Bay Company in the late 1800s. Development over the years has left the street largely intact, with older, well-maintained homes lining both sides of the street as well as around the block to Princess Avenue. The only exception is the apartment building next door to 1029 Queens, that replaced a general store and several residential houses.



Former building at 1027 Queens (grocery store with apartments above)

Proposed development

We want to help with the City's affordable housing crisis by building two more below-market rental units: a 1-bedroom and a studio. We are proposing a second structure on the property - a small, two-storey 'carriage house' – built on the ample driveway so as to preserve the south-facing back yard and retain as many of the large cedar trees on the western boundary as possible.

This change will not change the look and feel that has been established on Queens Avenue, and – in fact - will fill a gap that was created when the general store was demolished. The design of the carriage house mimics some elements of the existing duplex (roof slope and cladding), as well as some of the trim details from the general store. This proposal will also facilitate much needed upgrades to the stormwater management system, the 100-year old sewer line, and provide more secure bike parking for tenants.



Mock-up of proposed Carriage House. (Building appears smaller due to the set back from the street.)

Planning context

The City does not have any zoning provisions that allow a second residential structure to be built on a duplex property. For this reason, we are asking for a site-specific zone.

Currently the property at 1029 Queens is zoned **R-2 (two family residential)**, and our Carriage House proposal complies with every requirement of this zoning (e.g. setback, site coverage, floor space ratio), except for parking. If the property at 1029 Queens was 5.75 feet wider, we could apply to subdivide the lot, and we could build a two-storey dwelling under the **R1-S2 zone (Restricted Small Lot)**. Our Carriage House proposal complies with every requirement of this zoning (e.g. setback, site coverage, floor space ratio), except for parking.

Proposed Carriage House



