

URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

490-508 Walker's Line, Burlington

Zoning By-law Amendment | December 2024

MHBC PLANNING URBAN DESIGN & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited ("MHBC Planning") has been retained by 2381792 Ontario Limited (the "Owner") to prepare an Urban Design Brief in support of a Zoning By-law Amendment application (the "Application") for the lands municipally known as 490, 496 and 508 Walker's Line within the City of Burlington (the "Site"; see Figure 1). The Site is located east of downtown Burlington, along the south-western side of Walker's Line and lies north of New Street and south of the Centennial Bikeway. The Site consists of three parcels consolidated to form a single property.

The application is to facilitate the development of 16 townhouse units and to retain one detached unit, the John Henry Walker Jr. House, a heritage home located at 496 Walker's Line (the "Proposed Development". The total proposed GFA of the development is 3,449.2 square metres which includes 242.6 square metres of GFA for the extension of the heritage house. Additionally, the Proposed Development includes 43 vehicle parking spaces, including one barrier free space.

This Urban Design Brief accompanies a comprehensive application submitted to the City of Burlington, offering a thorough assessment and justification for the proposed redevelopment within the context of the Site's existing conditions, as well as relevant policy, regulations, and design guidelines.

This Urban Design Brief has been prepared and must be read in conjunction with, the following plans and studies supporting the Applications:

- Planning Justification Report, prepared by MHBC Planning (dated December 2024);
- Architectural Drawing Package, prepared by +VG Architects (dated October 2024);
- Conceptual Landscape Plan, prepared by MHBC Planning (dated November 2024);
- Tree Inventory and Preservation Report, prepared by Lakeshore Tree Services Inc. (dated March 2024).
- Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared by +VG Architects (dated November 2024)
- Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines Checklist (dated April 2024)

16 Residential Units + 1 Retained Heritage Dwelling

3,449.2m² GFA

43 Vehicle Parking Spaces

3 Storey Townhouses

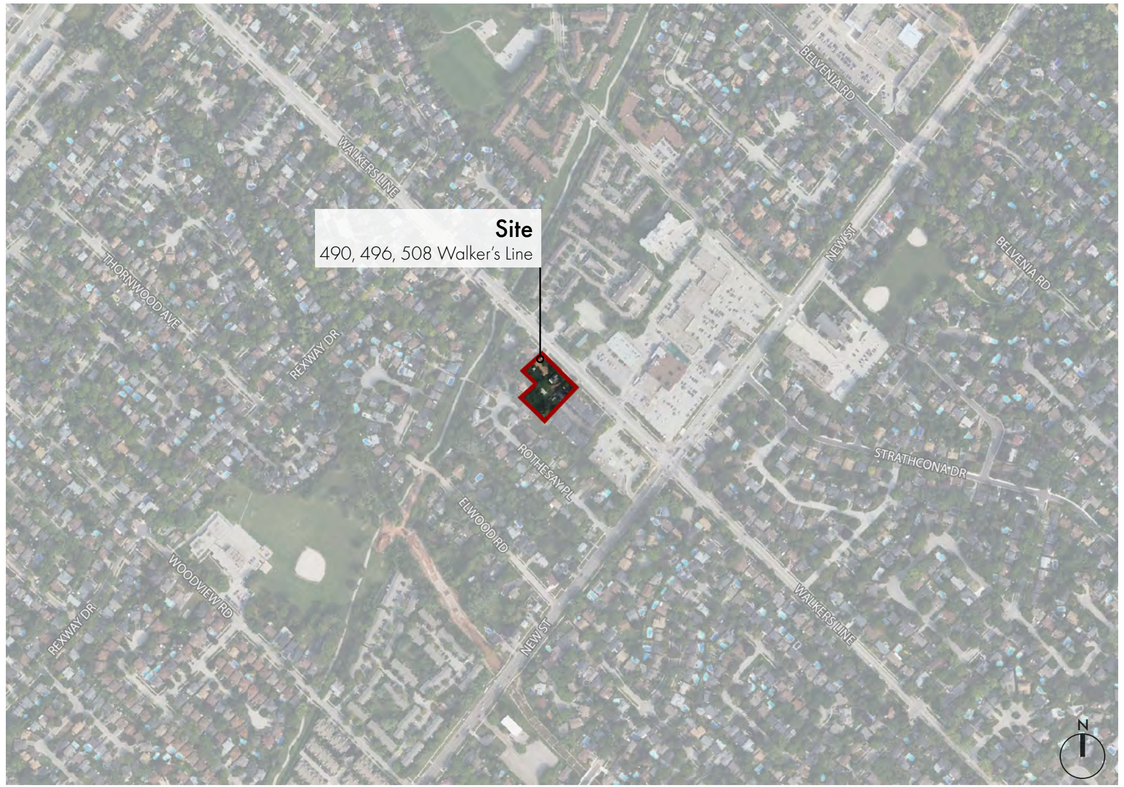


Figure 1 : The Site at 490-508 Walker's Line, Burlington



2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.1 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The Site is located along the south-west side of Walker's Line, and consists of three consolidated parcels with a total frontage of approximately 69.8 metres, and a depth of approximately 67 metres. The Site is L-shaped with a total lot size of approximately 0.4 hectares and is relatively flat. The Site is currently occupied by three single detached dwellings. The two dwellings proposed to be removed are one storey in height. The heritage house is 2.5 storeys tall and is proposed to remain in situ. (Figure 2).

As detailed in the Heritage Impact Analysis, the John Henry Walker Jr. House was built in 1913 in the Edwardian style including some Queen Anne revival features using a red-brick façade, and stands as a landmark in the neighbourhood streetscape (Figure 3).

The Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan identifies 53 mature trees within the Site, and proposes to retain 17 trees through the process of redevelopment.

The Site is currently accessed via Walker's Line through driveways for each parcel.



Figure 2 : The existing building at 508 Walker's Line



Figure 3 : John Walker Jr. House at 496 Walker's Line

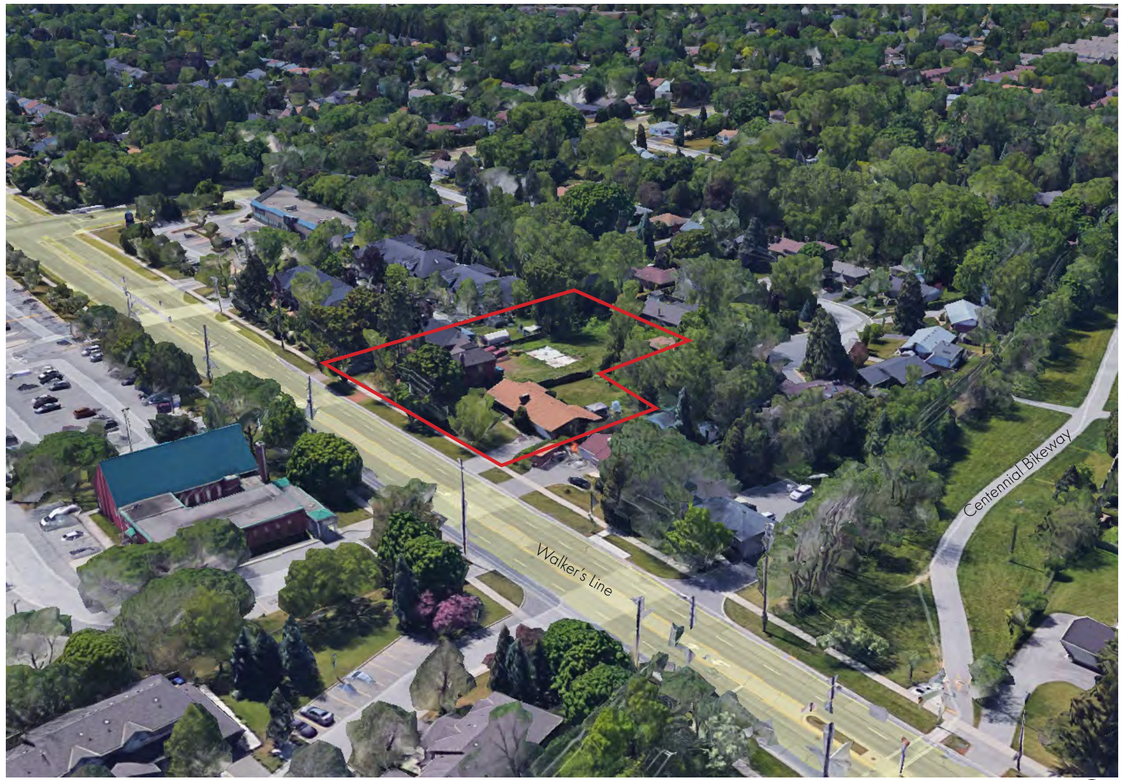


Figure 4 : Aerial view of the Site and immediate surroundings, via Google Earth

2.2 SURROUNDING LAND USES

The Site is situated east of downtown Burlington, along the south-west side of Walker's Line. It is located between New Street to the south and the Centennial Bikeway to the north. The Site is surrounded by a mix of lands uses including low and medium density residential, commercial and institutional uses. .

Uses along the north-eastern side of Walker's Line are the Burlington East Presbyterian Church and a single-storey commercial plaza along the intersection at New Street.

The block surrounding the Site consists of largely single-detached houses, with townhouses immediately south of the Site. Lands directly north of the site are designated Medium Density Residential. At the south-western intersection between New Street and Walker's Line is a single-storey bank building.

There are no significant natural heritage features within the surrounding context.



Figure 5 : Land uses



Figure 6 : Townhouse development north-east of the Site



Figure 7 : Looking north-east at the Burlington East Presbyterian Church



Figure 8 : Commercial Plaza north-east of the Site

2.3 CULTURAL HERITAGE

The John Henry Walker Jr. House (Figure 3) is a heritage home located at 496 Walker's Line. The property was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in July 2023 for its cultural heritage value. This application is accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by +VG Architects that analyses the heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the building that require protection.

The heritage house is proposed to remain as part of the overall development. The proposed townhouse units along Walker's Line have been oriented to ensure that views of the heritage home are not impacted.

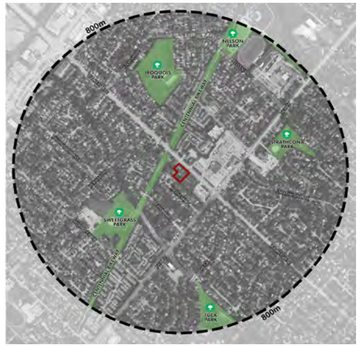


Figure 9 : John Henry Walker Jr House

2.4 CIRCULATION

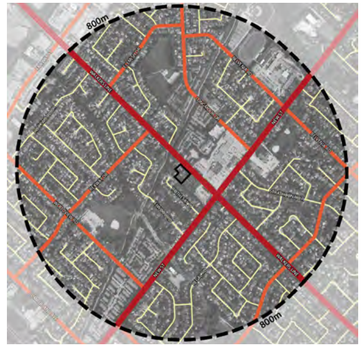
Walker's Line and New Street are designated Minor Arterial Roads. The Site is located on Walker's Line with direct access to transit options connecting to the east and west via New Street and Rexway Drive.

The Site is also well connected to the active transportation network (see Figure 13). The surrounding street network is equipped with multi-use paths and bike lanes providing alternative modes of transport. Additionally, approximately 100 metres north of the Site is the Centennial Bikeway, a multi-purpose trail that spans approximately 4 kilometres and connects neighbourhoods and parks within the city, offering a recreational and active transportation link to residents.



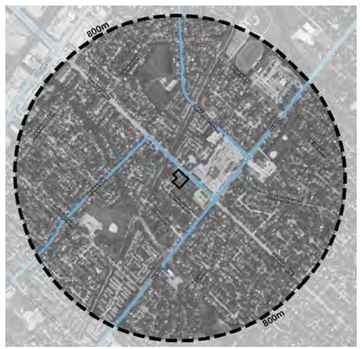
Parks & Open Spaces

Figure 10 : Parks & open spaces



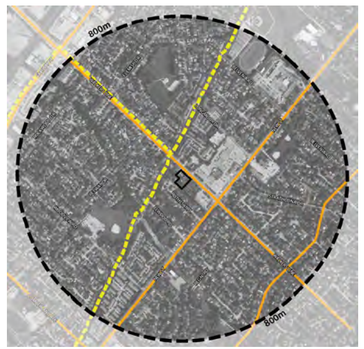
Minor Arterial Collector

Figure 11 : Vehicular circulation



Public Transit

Figure 12 : Public transit



Multi-Use Path Bicycle Lane

Figure 13 : Active transportation routes



3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 THE PROPOSAL

The proposed development aims to create a townhouse development that seamlessly fits into the surrounding neighbourhood context while providing a different housing option and additional units along Walker's Line. A total of sixteen, 3-storey townhouse units are proposed, eight (8) of which are rear-loaded, with primary facades along Walker's Line. The remaining eight (8) units are front-loaded units, facing the internal condominium road . All the townhouses are 3-bedroom units.

A driveway access is proposed to be located at the north end of the Site. Each townhouse unit is allocated two parking spots, one in the driveway and one in an attached single-car garage accessed from the internal condo road. Additionally, six visitor surface parking spots, including one barrier-free spot, are located centrally.

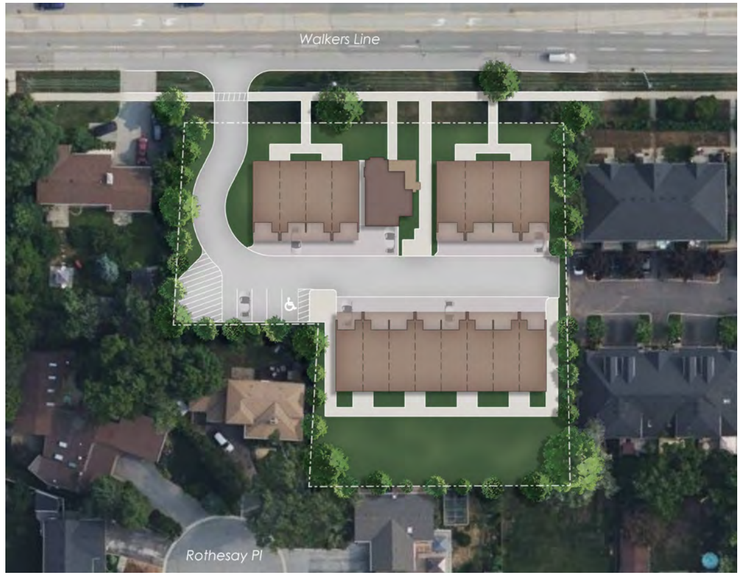


Figure 14 : Proposed site plan rendering prepared by MHBC



4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 OFFICE CONSOLIDATION CITY OF BURLINGTON OFFICIAL PLAN (2019)

The Office Consolidation of The Official Plan (December 2019) incorporates all modifications, approvals since 1994, and amendments to the Plan up to and including the Consolidation Date.

In the Official Plan, the Site is designated as:

- Residential – Medium Density in Schedule B – Comprehensive Land Use Plan – Urban Planning Areas. These areas permit densities ranging between 26 and 50 units per net hectare in the form of semi-detached homes, townhouses of different types, walk-up apartments, etc.

- Walker's Line is designated as Minor Arterial Road in Schedule J – Classification of Transportation Facilities. The road allowance width for Walker's Line is 30 metres

According to Policy 2.2.2 (g), the following building forms for residential development shall be permitted: (ii) detached and semi-detached homes, townhouses, street townhouses and stacked townhouses, back to back townhouses, attached housing and walk-up apartments shall be permitted in Residential-Medium Density areas, provided that these forms meet the density as specified in Part III, Subsection 2.2.2 d), for these areas

Furthermore, Policy 2.2.3 (iv) states that in Residential-Medium Density designations housing forms include townhouses, street townhouses and stacked townhouses, semidetached, duplexes, three-plexes and four-plexes. This designation also permits detached dwelling units up to a maximum of 15 percent of the total housing mix on each property.

Part II of the OP details Functional policies, of which Chapter 6 relating to Design is applicable to the Site. Specifically, section 6.5 details Design Guidelines Policies, such as:

- The density, form, bulk, height, setbacks, spacing and materials of development are to be compatible with its surrounding area

- The compatibility of adjacent residential and non-residential development shall be encouraged through site design and buffering measures, including landscape screening and fencing.

- The design of all buildings must recognize pedestrian scale, safety and the perception of safety and access and the preservation of public vistas and views.

- The creation of a continuous and harmonious streetscape environment shall be encouraged with emphasis on maintaining the continuity of grade-related activity areas, both inside and outside of buildings.

- All developments shall be designed having regard for public transit accessibility in the Urban Planning Area, convenience and comfort, and access and parking for the physically challenged, and to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities and other special needs groups are addressed.

- The location, amount, position and design of parking areas shall be reviewed to minimize their potential to erode the qualities of the public streetscape, and to lessen their visual impact. City Council shall require landscaped islands and screening in the design of large parking lots

- Residential neighbourhoods shall be designed to allow freedom of public access and the development of 'gated' residential communities, which restrict public access and circulation through neighbourhoods by means of security gates, walls or similar barriers, should be avoided.

4.2 THE NEW BURLINGTON OFFICIAL PLAN (BURLINGTON OFFICIAL PLAN 2020)

This document is an interim working version of the new Burlington Official Plan (the "new Official Plan") adopted by City Council on April 26, 2018 and approved, with modifications, by the Region of Halton on November 30, 2020. Most policies in the 2020 Official Plan remain under appeal. As the OLT process continues, the Burlington Official Plan, 2020 may change and need to be updated.

In the new Official Plan, the Site is designated as:

- Urban Area in Schedule A - City System
- Residential Neighbourhood Area in Schedule B - Urban Structure. According to Policy 8.3, these areas are intended to provide housing and other residential supportive land uses that are part of an urban residential environment.
- Established Neighbourhood in Schedule B 1 – Growth Framework. According to Policy 7.3.2(2), development should be designed to enhance the existing physical character of the surrounding area within which it is situated.
- Walker's Line is designated 'Candidate Frequent Transit Corridor' in Schedule B-2 - Growth Framework and Long Term Frequent Transit Corridors. The road allowance width for Walker's Line is 30 metres, according to Table 2, Public Right-of-way Widths.
- Residential – Medium Density in Schedule C - Land Use – Urban Area. Summarized from Policy 8.3.4 (1) these areas permit densities ranging between 26 to 75 units per net hectare in the form of semi-detached homes, townhouses of different types, walk-up apartments, etc. Furthermore, on ground-oriented dwellings, 3-storeyed structures are permitted and on non-ground oriented buildings, 4-storeyed structures are permitted.
- Walker's Line is designated 'Urban Avenue' in Schedule O-1 - Classification of Transportation Facilities – Urban Area. Urban Avenues serve as regional and inter-community corridors, they provide a tree-lined streetscape with landscape and pedestrian amenities. They provide safe transit, walking and cycling facilities and accommodate a moderate to high people-moving capacity, according to Table 1 - Classification of Transportation Facilities, #3.3.
- According to Schedule P - Long Term Cycling Master Plan, and Schedule Q - Trails Strategy, Walker's Line has Bike Lanes as well as Multi-Use Paths

Applicable policies relating to Urban Design are found within Section 7.3 - Urban Design and Built Form, and specifically, sub-section 7.3.2 - Existing Community Areas provide detailed objectives and guidelines, including below:

- Policy 7.3.2 a) (i) ensuring site and building design are compatible with the surrounding area and considering how it contributes to maintaining and enhancing the physical character of the surrounding area;
- (v) providing safe, convenient and barrier-free pedestrian travel within the site, between the site and adjacent uses, between buildings, parking areas and other facilities, to public streets, and to and from transit facilities;
- (vi) providing façade articulation that achieves a scale of development which is attractive to pedestrians and avoiding the use of blank facades facing a public street or public open space;
- (x) promoting pedestrian scale, public safety and the perception of safety and access for all users, through the incorporation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles;
- (xii) considering the needs of persons of all ages and abilities, including new and renovated buildings, parking lots and open spaces through he application of the principles of Universal Design; and
- (xiii) considering cultural heritage resources and natural features.

4.3 THE CITY OF BURLINGTON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The Sustainable Development Guidelines, dated December 2021, provides essential direction for the design and implementation of ecologically sensitive and sustainable developments in the City of Burlington, and is in alignment with Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040. Burlington's Strategic Plan encourages energy efficient buildings and other on-site sustainable features, and sets a net carbon neutral goal for the community.

The Sustainable Development Guidelines are applicable to the proposed development and a detailed response to the guidelines are included in the Planning Justification Report prepared by MHBC.

A detailed discussion and analysis of how the proposal thoroughly addresses the aforementioned policies is provided in Section 5.0 of this Urban Design Brief.



5.0 URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

This section provides a review and assessment of the policy and regulatory framework related to the Site and the proposed redevelopment. Each subsection analyses and identifies how the proposed redevelopment complies with the policies and guidelines and results in good urban design.

5.1 SITE DESIGN & ORIENTATION

Burlington OP 2019 Policy 6.5 a), b), d); Interim Burlington OP 2020 - Policy 7.3.2(2) a (i), (vii)

The proposed development is aligned to face Walker's Line with a 7 metre landscape buffer providing privacy for dwellings at grade. Additionally, the townhouse blocks along Walker's Line are aligned with the John Henry Walker Jr. heritage house as well as the townhouse development to the south, forming a consistent setback creating a uniform and pleasing streetscape along Walker's Line (Figure 18).

The buildings are setback by between 2.5 and 3.7 metres from the southern boundary and 17.4 metres from the rear, giving the residents approximately 485 square metres of private common outdoor amenity space.

The L-shaped driveway provides vehicular access to all the garages and visitor parking spaces internal to the Site, concealed from the public realm. The only access point is situated at the north end of the Site off Walker's Line.

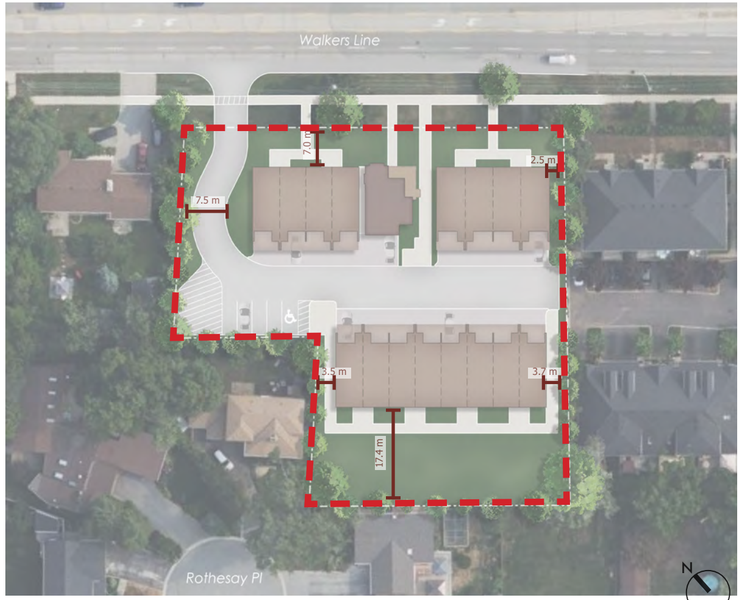


Figure 15 : Building setbacks

5.2 BUILT FORM & MASSING

Burlington OP 2019 Part II Policy 6.2 b), c), d); 6.3 e); 6.5 f), 8.2 b), d), Interim Burlington OP 2020 - Policy 7.3.2 a) i), vi), viii), x), xiii),

The proposed buildings are 3-storey townhouses, designed with a modernist character while using façade materials that tie in with the surrounding neighbourhood character (Figure 19, Figure 20). The retention of the heritage house central to the development poses it as an integrated focal point for the development. This design approach ensures cohesion with the surrounding context while also imparting a distinct identity to the development.

The proposed development uses materials intended to harmonize with the area's aesthetic, while its distinct architectural elements will imbue it with a unique character. The façade of the heritage house uses red brick along with wood and stone detailing, brick lintels, porches and pitched roofs. In keeping with the neighbourhood's and heritage house's architectural character, the proposed buildings feature red brick facades, along with aluminum siding with wood grain and aluminum paneling in a dark charcoal colour as facade materials. Additionally, windows and doors are oriented towards shared spaces and the public street to provide passive surveillance. The balconies on the upper levels are edged with glass guards that visually lighten the building's massing. The proposed buildings incorporate flat roofs, accented with pitched roof details over porches as a subtle homage to the heritage house's architectural style.



Figure 16 : Front elevation of the development facing Walker's Line



Figure 17 : Rear elevation of the buildings along Walker's Line, facing internal laneway



BUILT FORM



FACADE



PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE

5.3 SITE CIRCULATION

Burlington OP 2019- Part II Policy 3.6.2 b), c), d), f)

As previously mentioned, The L-shaped, 7.5 metres wide, driveway provides vehicular access to all the garages and visitor parking spaces internal to the Site, concealed from the public realm. The only vehicular access point is situated at the north end of the Site off Walker's Line, limiting the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

Pedestrian access to units fronting onto Walker's Line is provided via sidewalks that connect the public sidewalk to individual entrances. Additionally, a mid-block pedestrian connection adjacent to the heritage house connects public sidewalk to the interior of the development adding to the porosity of the development.

Units interior to the site will have a pedestrian walkway encircling the rear of the building, also serving as a separator between the common and private outdoor amenity spaces at the rear of the Site.

5.4 PARKING, LOADING & SERVICING

Interim Burlington OP 2020 - Policy 7.3.2 a) ii)

The proposed development provides for one garage and one outdoor parking spot at the rear of each dwelling. The heritage house is equipped with three parking spots at the rear of the house on an abutting driveway. Furthermore, 6 visitor parking spots are provided including one barrier-free space, at a central location, screened from public view, totaling 43 provided parking spaces over the entire site.

Loading, servicing and waste collection will be carried out on each individual unit. The Waste Set Out Plan created by Cini-Little International Inc. (Figure 22) shows the locations for garbage bins at the rear of each individual unit accessed from the condominium road.



Figure 18 : Site Circulation

5.5 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Interim Burlington OP 2020 - Policy 7.3.2 a) (iii), (iv), (ix), (xiii)

A conceptual Landscape Design Layout has been created by MHBC Planning (Figure 23), which shows the private realm features intended for the development. Landscaped buffers with native, drought-resistant planting are contemplated along the property boundaries. Landscaping consisted of large canopy street trees and privacy fencing will be incorporated within the front yard setback, along Walker's Line, enhancing the aesthetics and providing shade to the public realm and privacy to the grade-related residential units. Trees along John Henry Walker Jr. House will be of a sparse-leafed variety to allow for the house to be visible.

Approximately 485 square metres of outdoor amenity space will be provided at the rear of the Site. The shared amenity area includes seating, planting beds, a shade structure/pergola and shade trees.



Figure 19 : Waste Set Out Plan prepared by Cini-Little



Figure 20 : Landscape Concept Plan prepared by MHBC











The landscape concept shown is preliminary and does not necessarily reflect the final design vision for the site. A detailed landscape plan will be prepared through a future Site Plan Approval application.

5.6 SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

The Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 5.1; Interim Burlington OP 2020- Policy 4.1.2 a) iii); 7.4.1 a) (i), (v) & (vi);

The proposed redevelopment intensifies an underused parcel by adding an appropriate density for this neighbourhood. As per the OP Long Term Cycling Master Plan and the Trails Strategy, trails and bike paths have been planned to run along Walker's Line, New Street and Rexway Drive, ensuring adequate active connections to the Site. These roads have been identified as transit support corridors, and have transit stops close to the Site, thus easing the dependency on personal vehicular transportation.

Adequate pedestrian and bicycle connections are provided at grade to the public sidewalks to ensure the development is well integrated into the network, with a focus on accessibility and barrier-free connections.

The landscape design strategy includes maintaining 17 of the 53 existing trees within the property. The landscape planting palette includes native and non-invasive species that ensure the longevity of the landscape design. Vegetated areas are provided as much as possible to prevent Urban Heat Island effect.

Other measures such as high quality and energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, smart hydro metres for each unit, tri-sorter for waste management, low flow bathroom fixtures, rainwater harvesting measures, electric vehicle charging spaces, etc. will be contemplated and detailed at the development approval stage.

As previously noted, the Planning Justification Report provides a detailed response to the Sustainability Guidelines that apply to Zoning By-law Amendments.

The Owner is also reviewing the City's recommended sustainable initiatives for the Site Plan and construction phases of development.



NATIVE PLANTING



SUSTAINABILITY



PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED



6.0 CONCLUSION

Based on MHBC's review of the City of Burlington Official Plans and the Sustainable Development Guidelines, it is our opinion that the proposal adheres to the vision and design direction for the neighbourhood.

Overall, the proposal promotes intensification and provides a sensitive transition to the surrounding neighbourhoods while contributing to placemaking in the community.

The proposal replaces single-family homes over vast lots to form a development that aligns with the transit-supportive goals.

It is our opinion that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application reflects the intent, policies, and guidelines of the City of Burlington's Official Plans and represents good urban design.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss the brief in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Sinclair, MUDS, MCIP, RPP
Partner



7.0 KEY TERMS



ACCESSIBILITY
Providing for ease, safety, and choice when moving to and through places



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
The use of human-powered transportation as alternative to motorized-transportation



ADAPTIVE REUSE
Converting an existing building uses into a new use



ANGULAR PLANE
A geometric measurement that maintains solar access and height transition



ANIMATION
Support sustained activity on the street through visual details, engaging uses, and amenities



ARTICULATION
The layout or pattern of building elements (e.g. windows, roofs) that defines space and effects the facade



BARRIER FREE
Public and private places and spaces, designed to accommodate persons of all ages and abilities



BUILT FORM
The physical shape of developments including buildings and structures



CHARACTER
The look and feel of an area, including activities that occur there



CIRCULATION
The movement patterns of people and vehicles through a site or community



COMPATIBILITY
Ensuring the size, form and character of a building fits relative to others around it



CONNECTIVITY
The ease of movement and access between a network of places and spaces



DESIRE LINE
Shortest or most easily navigated route marked by the erosion of the ground caused by human traffic



ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION
Strategies to enhance existing natural heritage systems for environmental benefits



FACADE
The exterior wall of a building exposed to public view



FIGURE GROUND
The visual relationship between built and unbuilt space



FINE GRAIN
A pattern of street blocks and building footprints that characterize an urban environment



FOCAL POINT
A prominent feature or area of interest that can serve as a visual marker



GATEWAY
A signature building or landscape to mark an entrance or arrival to an area



HEAT ISLAND EFFECT
Buildings and paved surfaces that retain and re-emit the sun's heat, resulting in higher temperatures in urban environments



HEIGHT TRANSITION
The gradual change in height between buildings within a community



INFILL DEVELOPMENT
Development of underused lands within existing built communities to complete or densify those communities



LANDMARK
Highly distinctive buildings, structures or landscapes that provide a sense of place and orientation



LANDSCAPE BUFFER
Enhanced landscaping along property perimeters that protect privacy and promote compatibility



MASSING
The effect of modifying the height and bulk of the form of a building or group of buildings



MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREA
Areas within walking distance of an existing or planned higher order transit station



MICROCLIMATE DESIGN
Design strategies that create comfortable outdoor conditions for year-round use



NATIVE PLANTING
Plants from the same local ecology, used to improve biodiversity, reduce levels of maintenance and conserve water



NODE
A place where activity and circulation are concentrated



PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN
Building design and orientation that utilizes the sun to promote greater use of renewable energy and building comfort



PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE
Design techniques to enhance visibility and safety of public areas



PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED
An environment designed to ensure pedestrian safety and comfort for all ages and abilities



PUBLIC REALM
Public spaces between buildings including boulevards and parks; where pedestrian activities occurs



RHYTHM AND PATTERN
The repetition of elements such as materials, details, styles, and shapes that provide visual interest



SETBACK
The orientation of a building in relation to a property line, intended to maintain continuity along a streetscape



STEP BACK
A recess of taller elements of a building in order to ensure an appropriate built form presence on the street edge



STREET ENCLOSURE
The ideal ratio of street to building wall that promotes a walkable and comfortable pedestrian realm



STREET FURNITURE
Municipal equipment placed on streets, including light fixtures, fire hydrants, trash receptacles, signs, benches, mailboxes, newspaper boxes and kiosks



STREETWALL
The consistent edge formed by buildings fronting on a street



SUSTAINABILITY
Developing with the goal of maintaining natural resources and reducing human impact on ecosystems

TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITY
Compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly developments near public transit

TREE CANOPY
Cover and shade created by the layering of deciduous tree branches and foliage

URBAN FABRIC
The pattern of lots and blocks in a place

VIEW TERMINUS
The end point of a view corridor, often accentuated by landmarks

VISTA
Direct and continuous views along straight streets or open spaces

WAYFINDING
Design elements that help people to navigate through an area (e.g. signs, spatial markers)

URBAN INTENSIFICATION
Increasing urban density and land use efficiency through re-development

WATER MANAGEMENT
Management of available water resources to promote water quantity, and its efficient use and reuse

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