



November 2, 2025

Tobi Nussbaum
Chief Executive Officer
National Capital Commission
40 Elgin St., Suite 202
Ottawa, ON K1P 1C7

Dear Mr. Nussbaum

re Implementation of the NCC revised Core Area Plan - The Sussex Blocks

Request for a meeting with NECA and community representatives

New Edinburgh, located in the central part of Ottawa between the Rideau River and Rideau Hall, has a long history of being affected by NCC actions, and working cooperatively with the NCC, including:

- The construction of the Minto Bridges meant that we were on the ceremonial route, designed by the NCC and its predecessors, and taken by the Governor-General when opening Parliament.

- The removal of the railway tracks and the industrial buildings along those tracks, the expropriation of the Sussex Blocks and the razing of many of the buildings on those blocks, in the 1950s. These steps were taken pursuant to the Greber Report.

- More recently, in the 1970s and 80s and since then, NECA lead the battle to prevent the construction of the Vanier Arterial and Bridge through our heritage community, we developed a traffic calming plan, we advocated and won heritage designation for a large part of our community, we worked with neighbourhood community organizations (including one which you led at that time) to enhance Beechwood as a mainstreet, we established and publish a community newspaper, and we and related volunteer organizations work to strengthen and enliven our community in a wide range of ways. The common theme of these efforts is to advance what we might call a "Jane Jacobs vision" of the city: it envisions New Edinburgh as one of many communities in the City that feature lively, densely networked 15 minute neighbourhoods.

- Over the past decades the NCC has worked with us and the City to beautify Stanley Park/New Edinburgh Park and the old railway right-of-way; creating a bus lay-by on Sussex (outside New Edinburgh) was one of the many other ways the NCC has supported our efforts to build and maintain a vibrant inner city community.

We welcome the aspects of your latest plan that reinforce this vision: notably the focus on connecting the City to the waterfront. We congratulate you on the success of the initiatives you have already completed in this respect. Enlivening the waterfronts is fully consistent with NECA's vision of the City. What has not worked as well as intended are parkways, because cars, even when travelling at moderate speeds of 40 km/hr, can create a barrier between people and our beautiful waterfronts. What we see from your core area plan, and the work you have done to date on this theme, is that this reconnection to the waterfront, will take a variety of forms. We think that this diversity underlines the importance of working closely with local communities.

That brings us to the matter of the three Sussex Blocks (which are at the junction of the Rideau and Ottawa rivers); the decision to rezone them to include residential use, and the NCC's plan to issue a request for proposals (RFP) for the development of these blocks.

NECA was consulted rather late in the process, about the NCC's plan to recommend this change in zoning to your Board. We wrote to the NCC listing a series of concerns about the proposal. We also recommended, and NCC planners agreed, that the NCC host a community meeting, and to structure it in such a way that members of the community could hear from each other. At the meeting there was widespread opposition to the proposal, on the one hand, as well as scepticism about whether any eventual development would (or should) have any of the characteristics of the proposed plan. Those concerns remain.

NECA is committed to the proposition that our community should be actively consulted on future planning for the Sussex blocks, more actively and closely than we have been.

The latest letter from your staff suggests to us that this is not what the NCC is planning. Instead of the NCC agreeing to consult us on the framing of the RFP, we were advised that the proponent of the successful proposal would be advised to consult us.

So, we would ask that you meet with us in the coming weeks. We will be seeking assurances from you that the NCC will find ways to engage NECA and the New Edinburgh community more actively, notably by:

- consulting us on the terms of the RFP, including the criteria to be used to evaluate proposals;

and

- addressing the issues raised in the community that focus primarily on a lack of transparency by the NCC, in addition to issues around traffic and safety, environment, heritage and the floodplain – all related to the proposal.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Ray Boomgardt

President, New Edinburgh Community Alliance (NECA)