Status update to MCA Website-NCC Embassy Site July 2023

In 2022, the City of Ottawa rejected the National Capital Commission’s (NCC zoning bylaw amendment application to rezone Lazy Bay Commons for 6 embassies and a small park, the NCC appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). Mechanicsville Community Association (MCA) retained legal counsel and over the NCC’s objections obtained "Party Status" to the OLT appeal process. The NCC decided to withdraw its OLT appeal if a settlement could be reached which included the City and MCA. MCA negotiated and entered into the Minutes of Settlement Agreement dated May 1, 2023 which led to results that are much better than both the NCC’s initial offer and the requirements in the Zoning bylaw.

The Minutes of Settlement Agreement is a legally binding contract between the NCC, City and MCA for the future of the Lazy Bay Commons. This document specifies changes to the City’s Official Plan, including the Scott Street Secondary Plan and Zoning Bylaws and important binding undertakings for the implementation of the settlement.

Summary of the Minutes of Settlement between the MCA, the NCC and the City of Ottawa provides for:

1. A federal park/environmental preserve of .9 Ha of land at the east end of Lazy Bay Commons. This federal greenspace will be reflected in all NCC planning documents within 2 years;
2. This land to be an enhanced connection between Laroche Park and the NCC Parklands (Ottawa River) as described in the Scott Street Community Design Plan;
3. The NCC, the City and the MCA will work cooperatively to “implement the Agreement in a manner that protects and promotes the public interest and the health and safety of the community” and to respond to all reasonable written requests;
4. Consultation with the MCA on the design of a pathway connecting Forward to Hinchey Avenue and best efforts to retain or replace existing trees adjacent to 89 Forward Avenue;
5. Mature trees should be retained except where removal is unavoidable, best efforts shall be made to replace removed trees on the Lazy Bay Commons;
6. The NCC shall not make any alterations to the Lazy Bay Commons prior to redevelopment that would render it inaccessible or contrary to its current informal use, other than for reasons relating to public health or safety or if preliminary work or studies are required for the purpose of redevelopment or site investigation;
7. Construction of a sidewalk along Burnside to Slidell with an “active transportation connection” along Slidell to the Parkway to be built upon construction of the first embassy;
8. Lands not set aside as a federal park, will be developed for embassies (5), buildings limited to 3 stories tall with either underground or screened parking and no parking, driveways, or waste bins facing the community, and limits on security fencing.