

Overbrook seeks 'mature neighbourhood' designation

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Overbrook residents are hoping their community will soon be classified as a "mature neighbourhood," so that development in the neighbourhood will be subject to the city's new infill bylaws.

Residents voted to request city council add Overbrook to a map of mature neighbourhoods at the Overbrook Community Association's annual general meeting on Nov. 19.

The mature neighbourhood label would make development in Overbrook subject to a new infill bylaw that was passed by city council in March and addresses low-rise residential development. The bylaw only applies to a specific central area of the city, made up of older neighbourhoods such as Sandy Hill and Lowertown.

Under the bylaw, infill 1, developers must look at 21 surrounding properties in a streetscape character analysis to determine the area's defining features in the planning stage. These include aspects such as parking, landscaping and the location of front doors.

Overbrook Community Association president Rawlson King said including Overbrook in the map of mature neighbourhoods will help to preserve the area's character.

"It provides us with an additional tool to protect our long history and heritage in terms of the character and design of the neighbourhood," he said.

King said the neighbourhood has seen an increase in infill development recently as builders have bought post war single-family homes and replaced them with multi-unit dwellings.

"The bylaw seeks to ensure some consistency," King said.

"We're not saying we don't want multi-unit dwellings in Overbrook. We have a number of those and we'll continue to see them... we know development is coming, but it should be more consistent with what exists in the neighbourhood."

The community association has asked Rideau-Rockcliffe Coun. Tobi Nussbaum, who was at the AGM, to work with city staff to amend the map of mature neighbourhoods to include Overbrook.

Nussbaum said Overbrook would be a logical extension of the map as many of its older buildings were built in the 1940s and 1950s.

"From the discussion, I had a clear sense that the residents of Overbrook would welcome the added protection of the existing character of the neighbourhood which infill 1 provides," Nussbaum said.

"We're a neighbourhood that's on the cusp of a lot of change."

In order for Overbrook to be included on the map of mature neighbourhoods, city council will need to approve a zoning bylaw amendment to expand its boundaries.

Nussbaum noted that there are a number of older neighbourhoods in his ward, such as Manor Park, that were not included when the original maps were approved. He invited other communities within his ward that have interest in being added to contact his office.

"I would encourage other communities that have an interest in the infill 1 bylaw approach to contact me or their applicable councillor," he said.



Rideau-Rockcliffe Coun. Tobi Nussbaum speaks to residents at the Overbrook Community Association's 2015 annual general meeting on Nov. 19. The community association voted in favour of asking Nussbaum to work towards including Overbrook in the city's list of 'mature neighbourhoods.'