



Subject: PEER REVIEW

Date: August 20, 2021

Sent by: EMAIL

To: Attn: Stuart Lazier
Creemore Community Foundation
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Project: 143 & 145 Mill Street, Creemore ON (2021-036-ZB)

ERA Architects Inc. (ERA) has been retained by the Creemore Community Foundation (CCF) to conduct a Peer Review of the Application to Amend Comprehensive Zoning By-law 06-54 (2021-036-ZB), dated April 28, 2021, submitted as part of a proposal to redevelop the properties located at 143 and 145 Mill Street, Creemore (the “Site”).

The applicant is proposing to remove and replace the existing buildings on site. It should be noted that ERA has not evaluated the Site for potential cultural heritage value, and cannot comment on the appropriateness of the approach to remove the existing buildings. The purpose of this Peer Review is to provide recommendations specific to the design of the proposed development as detailed in the applicant’s submission.

Materials Reviewed

The materials reviewed and referenced in this memo include:

- *Planning Justification Report and Site Design Brief 143-145 Mill Street*, dated April 28, 2021
- *Creemore Commercial Residential 143-145, Site Plan Approval, Architectural Drawing Set*
- *Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment*

Site Context

The Site is presently occupied by two mixed-use buildings, 143, and 145 Mill Street.

143 Mill Street is a two storey building, with commercial use at-grade (presently used as a realtor’s office) and residential above. The property is served by four parking spaces at the rear.

145 Mill Street is a two storey building, with commercial use at-grade (presently used as a craft store) and residential above. The property is served by two parking spaces at the rear.

Peer Review

Overall, the proposed development makes a positive contribution to the Mill Street context, and makes a deliberate effort to reference Mill Street’s predominant character. This includes:

1. The overall scale, height, massing, and proposed use;
2. The use of red-brick masonry, arched window profiles, and articulation of at-grade storefronts;
3. Customer access to commercial units is oriented towards Mill Street, encouraging active street presence and contributing to the vibrancy of Mill Street; and
4. Residential amenities located on the rooftop are appropriately stepped back from principal elevations, minimizing the visual impact of increased development height.



In ERA's professional opinion, there are some aspects of the proposed design that could be modified to improve the design's compatibility, and to ensure that this newly constructed building will be legible as a new intervention, and of its time. The *Standards and Guidelines For the Conservation of Historic Places In Canada* (2010) recommends that new development be "compatible in terms of materials and massing with the exterior form of the historic building and its setting" without "Duplicating the exact form, material, style and detailing of the original building in a way that makes the distinction between old and new unclear". ERA recommends the following:

1. Development at-grade should be parallel to Mill Street, and have a zero lot-line condition. This will reinforce the streetwall and promote window shopping and visibility of other commercial programming. Should an arcade be included, the ground floor facade should be parallel to Mill Street.
2. Detailing of the principal facade should be further restrained, to ensure the facade remains referential, but not pastiche.
 - The bevel detail on the brick piers should be simplified or removed;
 - The window arches should be designed in a simple brick pattern, removing the keystone;
 - The decorative cornice should be simplified;
 - Openings on the second storey of the principal elevation should maintain the facade's balanced and symmetrical proportions, with all openings being equal in width. Openings may be configured in series of three single, or two double openings, rather than a combination of both;
 - If included, the Juliet balconies should be inset, with the railing coplanar to the brick facade to reduce visual impact.
3. Signage
 - The vertical scale of the signage band should be reduced to match nearby storefronts. Materiality and font choice should be selected to remain contextual with adjacent existing signs.
 - Where blade signs are used, variation in material, design, and location should be encouraged.

Further Recommendations

The Township of Clearview Official Plan (2001) provides Design Guidelines (Section 8.12) intended to provide high-level direction regarding the municipality's preferred form of future development. While these guidelines provide broad direction, the development of guidelines specific to the Mill Street context should be considered.

Mill Street specific design guidelines would further support direction provided in the Official Plan and could be used as a tool to evaluate proposed developments on Mill Street as well as ensuring that such development is compatible with the existing context. Such guidelines would assist with the implementation of the Official Plan policies, provide an understanding of the area's local character, explain how development will respect and reinforce local character, promote an animated public realm, and preserve existing heritage resources.