

Outline

Context – Collaborative Relationships between the city and citizens

In 2014, an initiative was launched by the then current council, including one of our current councilors: Andrew Knack. In 2017 a report was published called “ The Council Initiative on Public Engagement”. It boasted that “more than 1000 people participated in over 40 workshops.”

The Population of Edmonton at that time? 928,000 and change.

This is the ‘Promise’ , as written on page 3:

“This is our city.

We value your input on how we maintain, grow and build Edmonton.

We believe engagement leads to better decision making.

We are committed to reaching out to our diverse communities in thoughtful and meaningful ways.

We want to understand your perspectives and build trusting relationships with you.

We will show you how you help influence City decisions. Share your voice with us and shape our city”

Fast forward 4 years to 2021, and the city makes this announcement:



Edmonton City Council's special initiative to review and improve the City's public engagement with Edmontonians.

What was the Council Initiative on Public Engagement?

Launched in 2014 the initiative was led by Councillors Ben Henderson, Michael Walters and Andrew Knack. More than 1000 people from diverse Edmonton communities participated in more than 40 workshops drilling into critical discussions about how public engagement with the City of Edmonton could be done better.

In 2021 City Council agreed that the City had made significant and meaningful progress on the recommendations from the Council Initiative and the initiative was concluded.

City Council agreed with itself that the city had made “significant and meaningful progress” on the recommendations from this “Council Initiative” and thus the initiative was concluded.

Apparently, when the city says ‘ the engagement phase has concluded’, they were not kidding.

As I read through each of the 5 bullet points after ITS OUR CITY, it is apparent that the city council, and by extension city administration, no longer support fully these principles of community engagement.

My discussion points today revolve the engagement aspect of the proposed rezoning of the parcel in question in Dunluce, and how the conclusions being drawn by council and administration that are leading them to support this are not an accurate reflection of our community as a whole.

I will focus my discussion on two main sub topics of the “What We Heard Report” – traffic and community safety.

- Dunluce is a community of roughly 1805 “ Family Households” as identified by the city, using Canada Census data from 2011. The date of the actual report is not mentioned in the report, but it is sourced from Canada Census data from 2011.¹
- Dunluce was largely completed in the 1980’s.

Dunluce is currently facing challenges with the Neighborhood Renewal project, in that we want to see some additional alternatives that invoke a lot less on the ‘tax hike’s side, yet still work towards the identified concerns such as traffic and community safety. Despite an ongoing process of asking questions, and asking for clarifications on positions, we get what are effectively either non-answers to our questions, or we are given the “this is way too complicated for you, so you just have to trust us” kind of answers.

¹ City of Edmonton: Neighborhood Profiles

The Herb Link rezoning public hearing comes in at the same time as the above project , and has activated our community. Many,if not most, of the concerns raised by one project are shared amongst both.

On the first page of the Herb Link “What we Heard” report, the “THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS” is explained. It specifies the length of time for the engagement process was active for. It was 13 days.

From May 13 to 26 2024. That’s it. 13 days.

Here is how Engagement Process Breaksdown

Of the 1805 Family Households, and roughly 4000 people that may have had a valid view on this, the city received back 29 online responses. The page itself had 462 views (10% ?), and no mention if the website traffic counter was filtering duplicate IP’s or not.

Feedback summary from the report:

Number of Responses: 29

In Support: 2

In Opposition: 27

That is a 93% response for “IN OPPOSITION”

However, as part of the AGENDA documents for this public hearing, the administration position on this is “IN FAVOR”. Council is effectively ignoring a massive amount of pushback, simply because they don’t like it.

As I re-read the 5 bullet points regarding community engagement at the beginning of this presentation, I am having a hard time reconciling those two the actions of this council and administration over the last couple of years.

To be clear, our concerns surrounding the proposed rezoning for this area echo our concerns around the renewal project.

Two come immediately to mind:

1. Parking:

How will parking be impacted by this influx of vehicles after this development is completed? At a time when overall parking on the streets of Dunluce & Warwick Roads, along with Warwick Cres are being decreased? The cars in the community are not going anywhere for the foreseeable future. The number will only increase. This will lead to congestion well and beyond what we experience already, and rightly identified as an EXISTING sorepoint.

I have asked this question of planning about parking, and traffic, but have yet to receive any informative answer.

Further, in the Dunluce Renewal “What We Heard” report, parking is identified across multiple sub-headings; DRIVING , BIKING & WALKING categories all mention traffic / parking as being a concern. All indicated that traffic congestion, as already here, is an issue, as identified by citizens living in the area.

2. Neighborhood or Community Safety

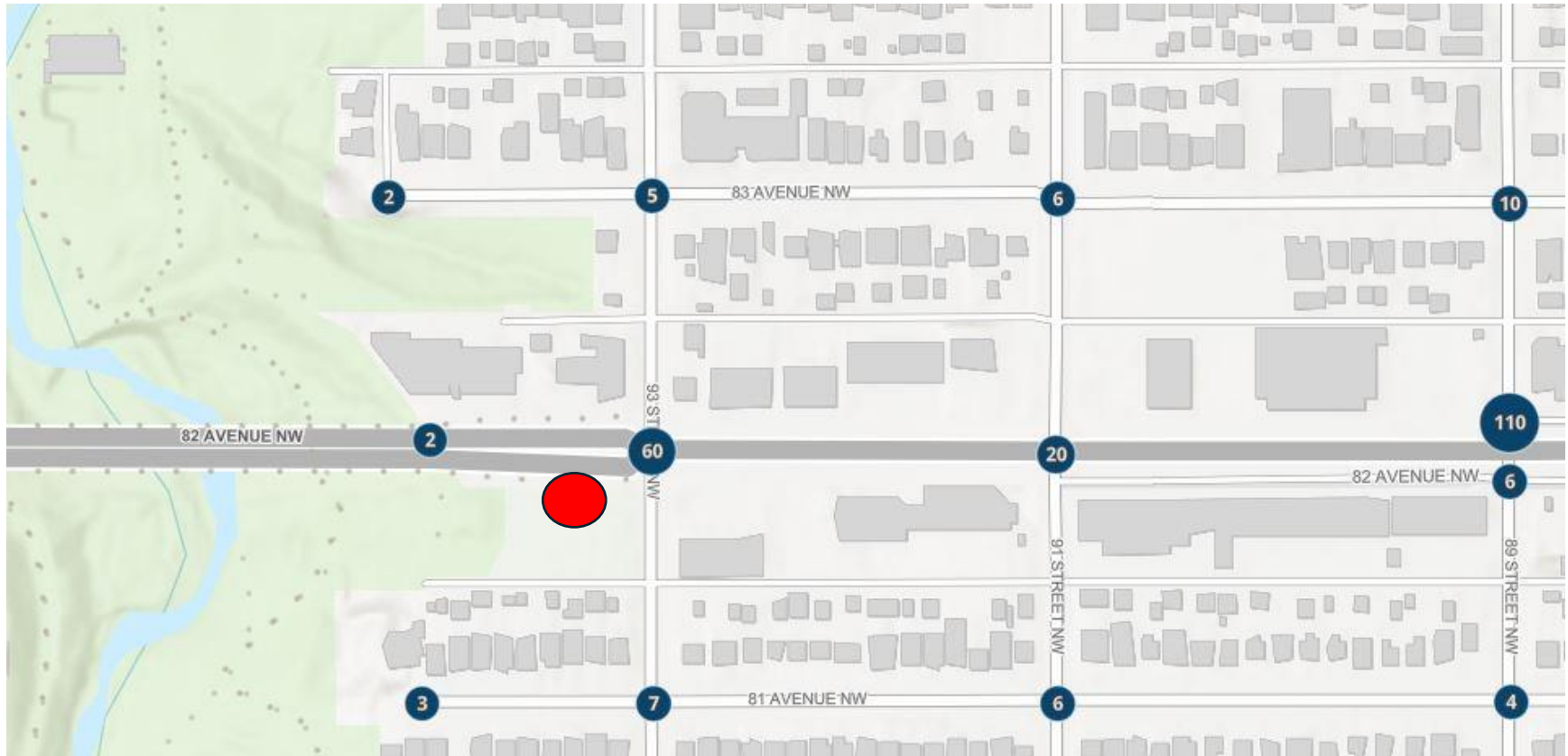
This is a list of completed Affordable Housing projects as indicated on the City of Edmonton Website:

Hope Terrace (King Edward Park)
McArthur Supportive Housing
Tâpwêtamowin wâskahikan – tâpwê (Inglewood)
wâpanAcâhcahk - Morningstar (Terrace Heights)
Westmount
Heritage Flats
Avana Maple Crest
Grace Village
Beacon Heights

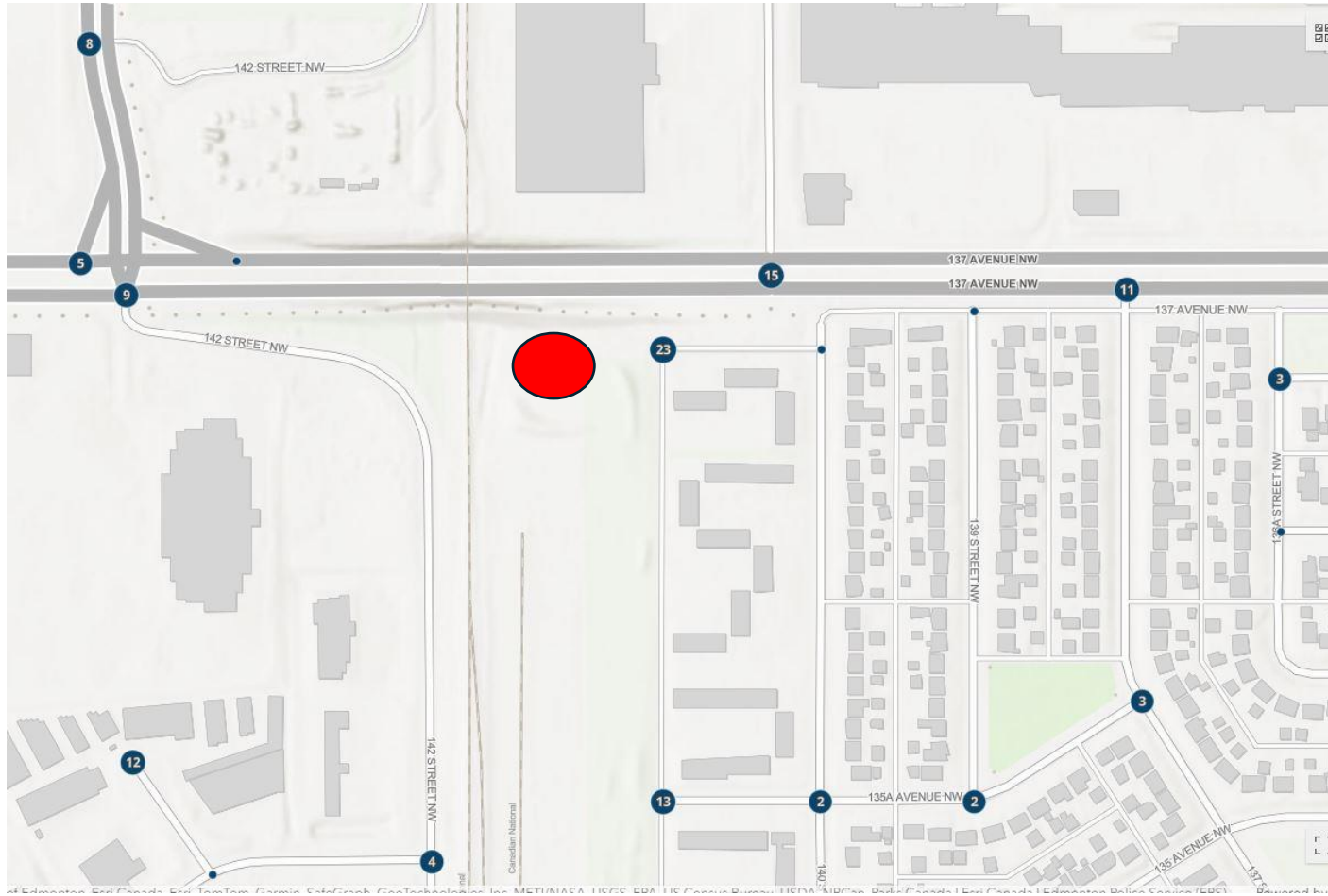
I have taken screenshots from the Edmonton Community Safety Map of these locations, showing the tracked community safety information.

These captures show from a day or two ago, back one year to the same date in 2023. The time frame reflects only the limit of the online tool look back in time.

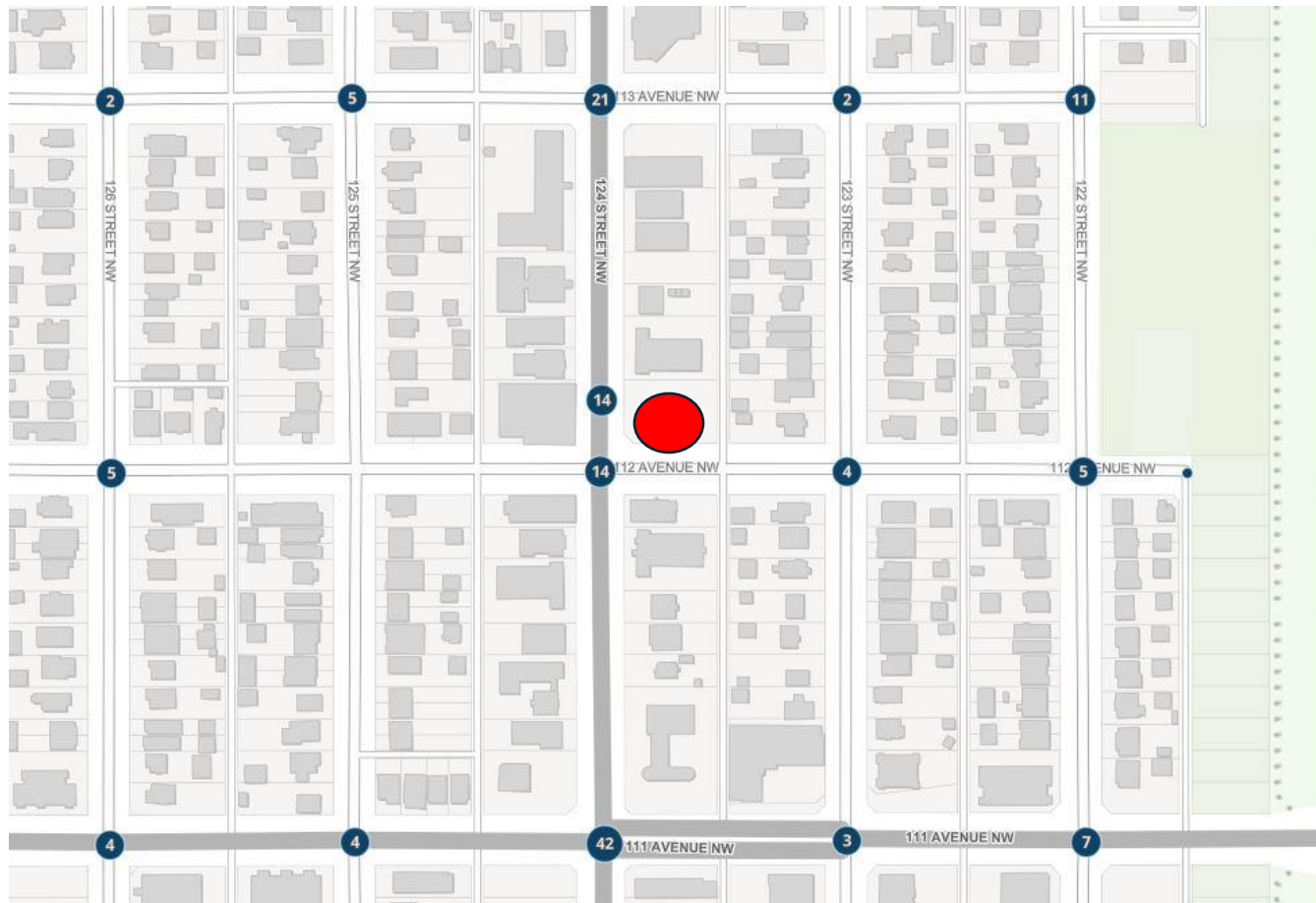
Hope Terrace (King Edward Park)



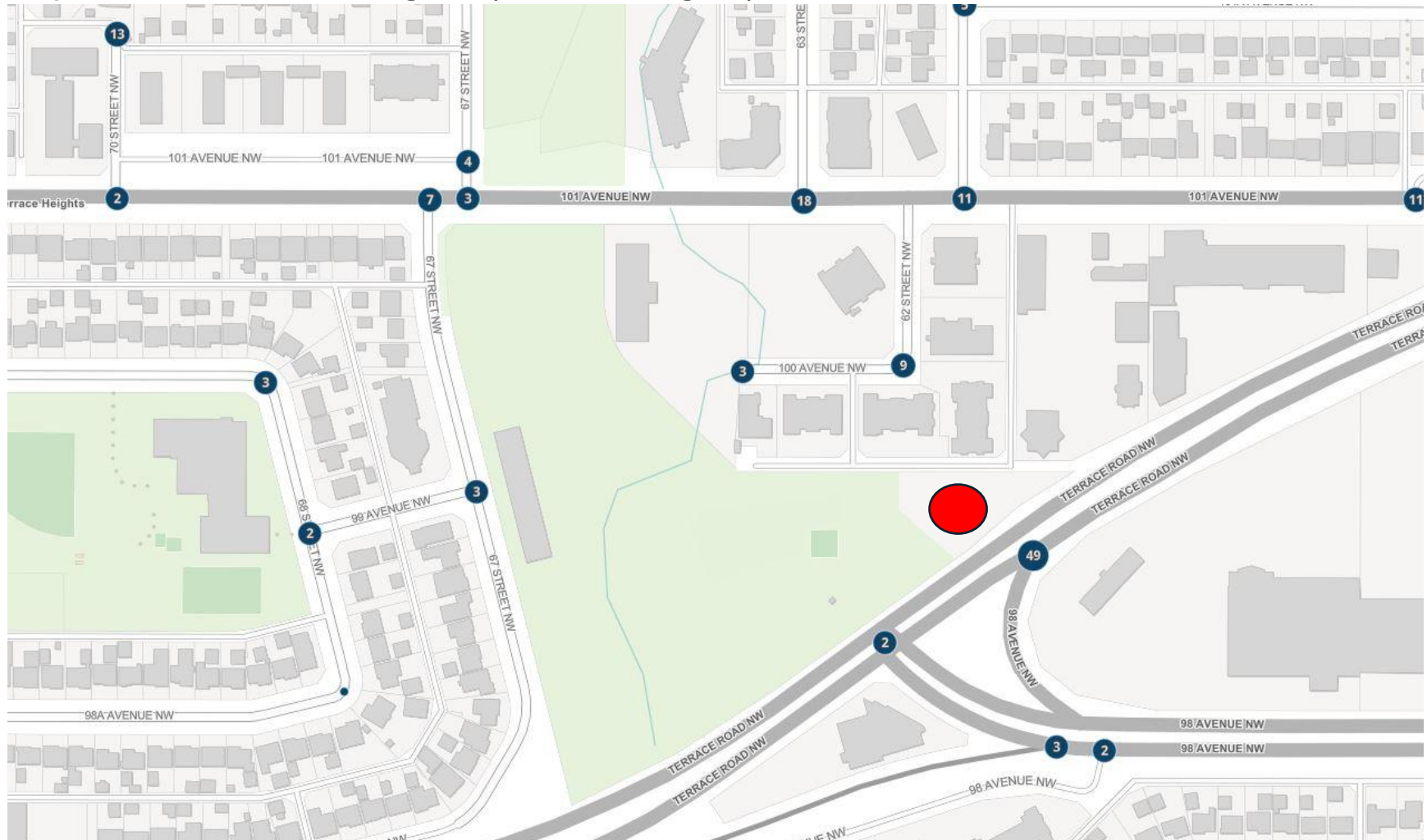
McArthur Supportive Housing



Tâpwêhtamowin wâskahikan – tâpwê (Inglewood)



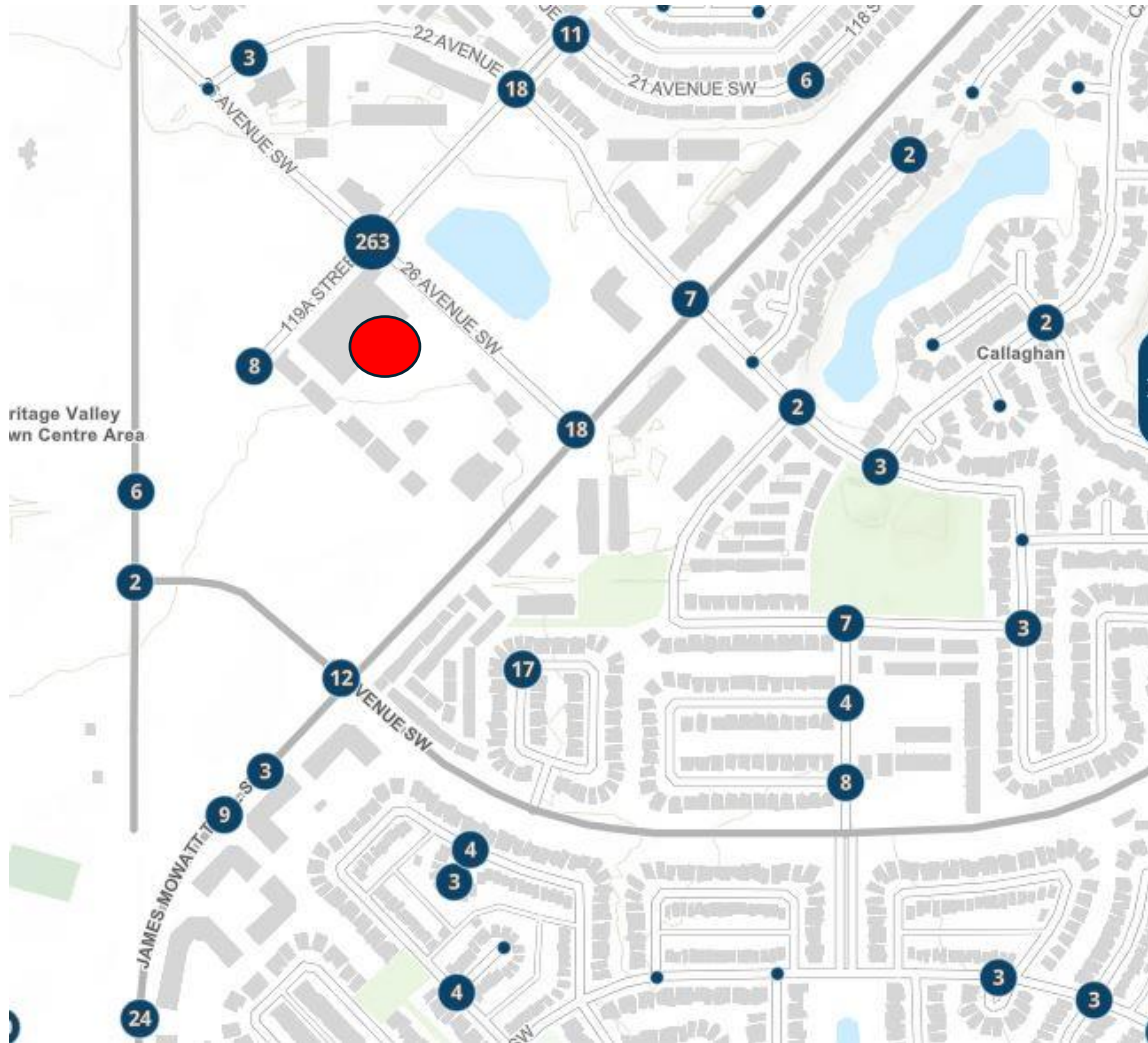
wâpanAcâhcahk - Morningstar (Terrace Heights)



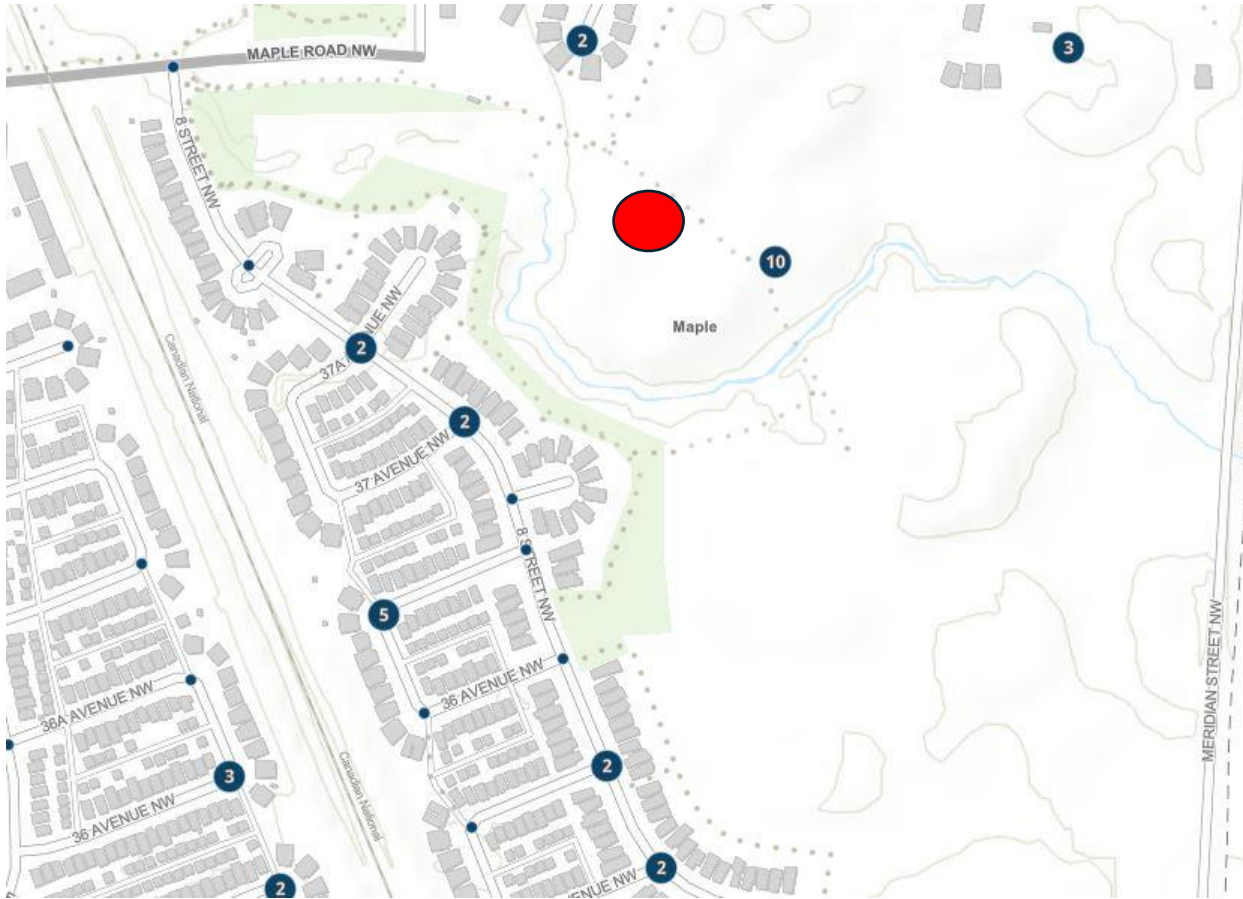
Westmount



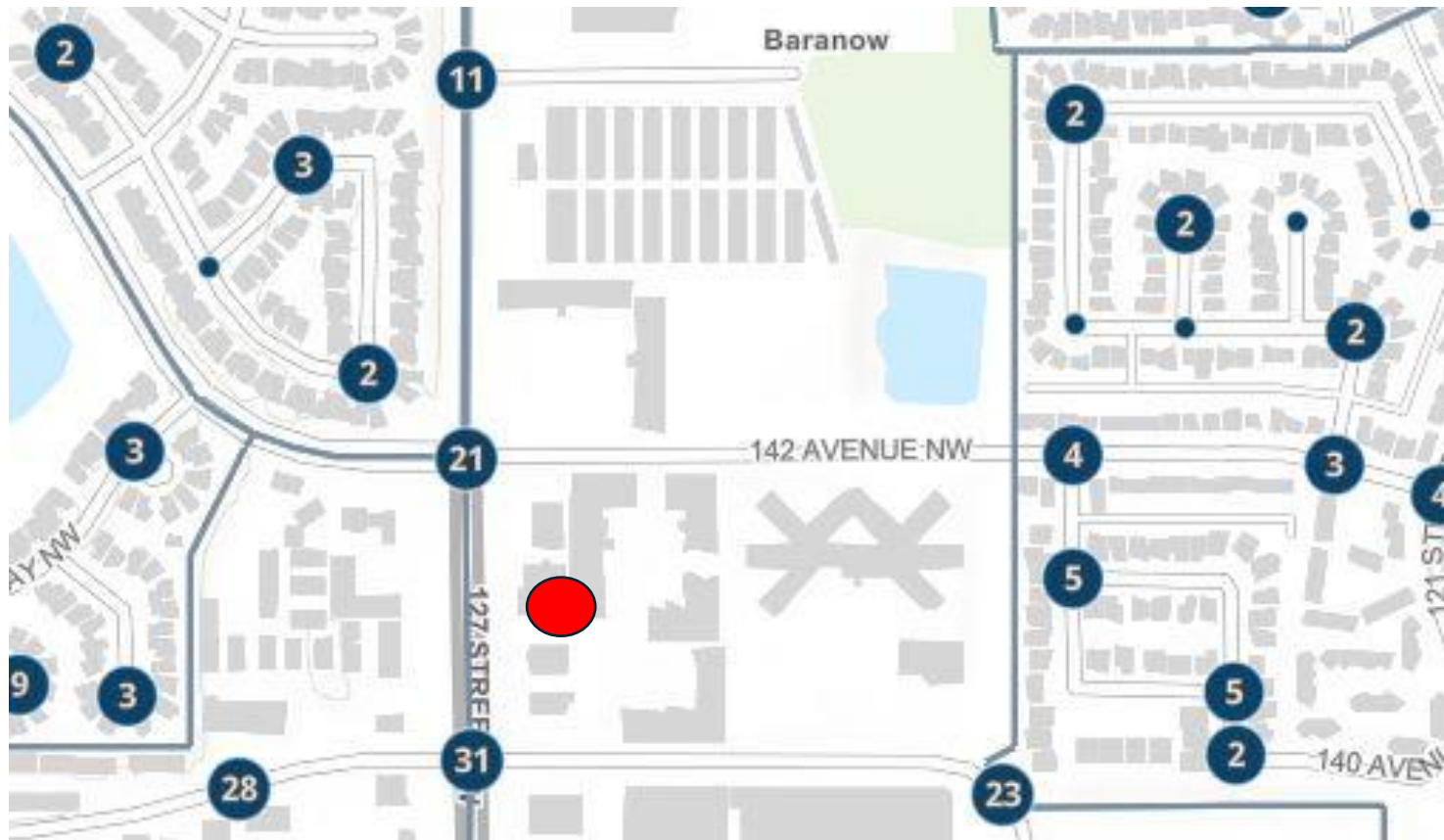
Heritage Flats



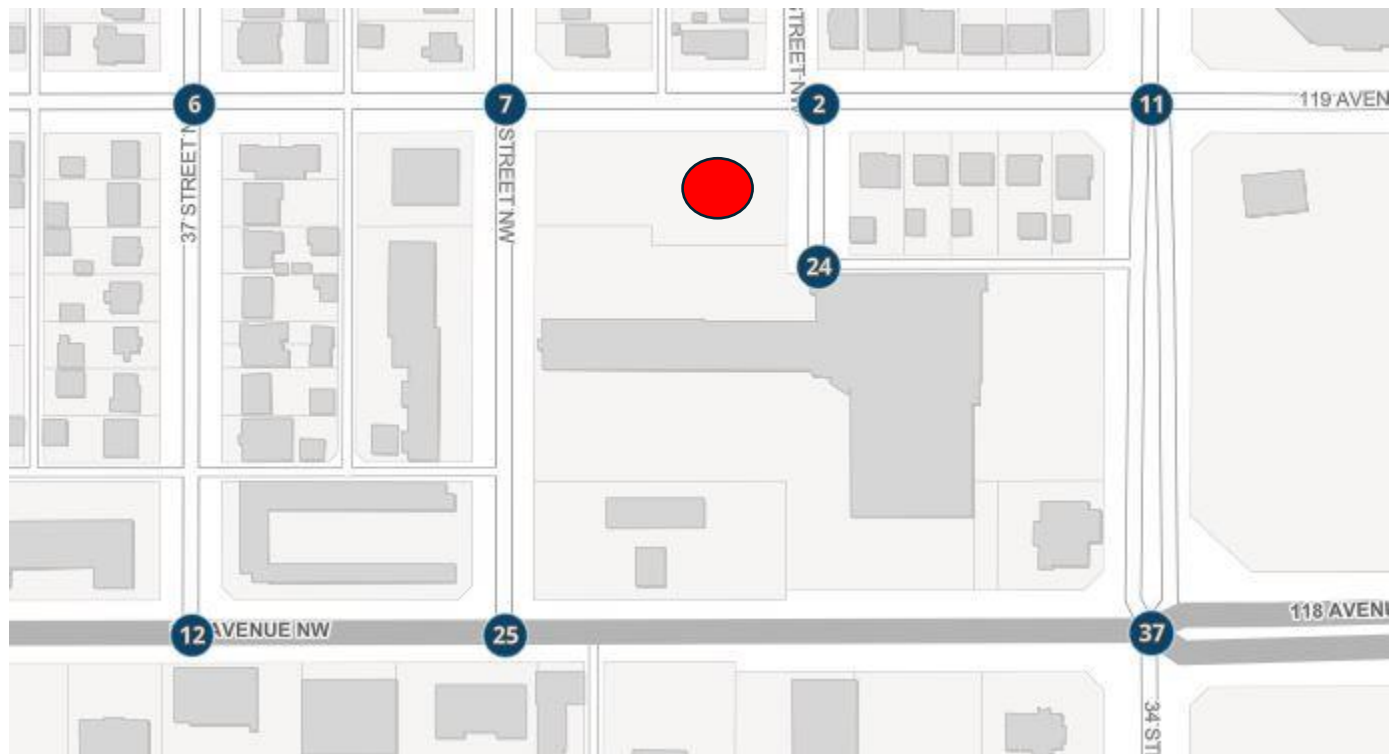
Avana Maple Crest



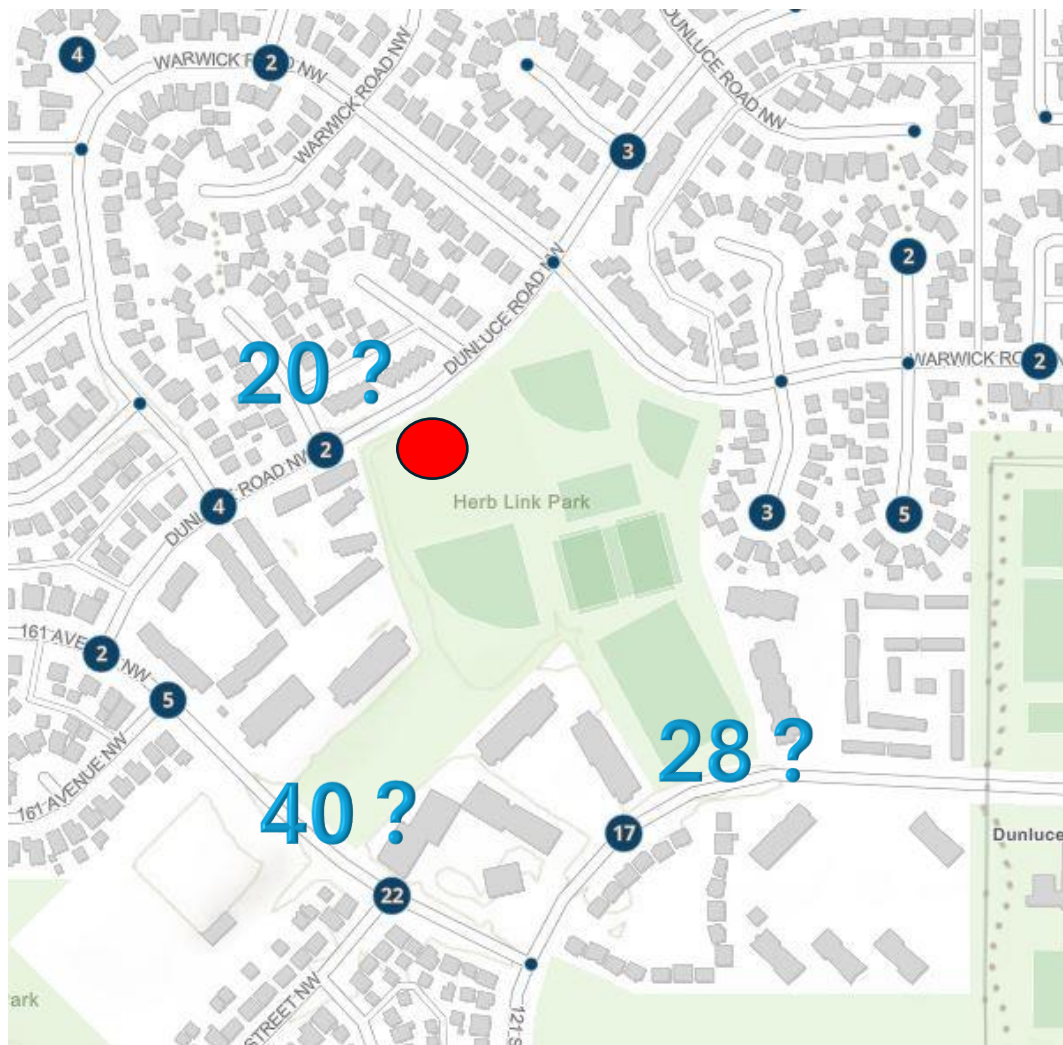
Grace Village



Beacon Heights



Dunluce – NOW



Takeaways:

- A more collaborative approach is desired, if not required, for this rezoning application.
- We as a community wants a DIRECT say in who develops here, what is developed specifically, and a firm accountable definition of ongoing expectations and responsibilities with the ongoing management of the units.
- We want the spirit and intent of the Engagement Process as writte to be re-established.
- We want to see immediate amendments to the original re-zoning before is is even considered for approval. As it stands now, our community does not agree with the blanket rezoning independent of what the community wants.

Silence from the majority means nothing more than the people with whom you need to engage with are busy with their lives. The city needs to develop and implement different strategies for COMPLETE engagement.

It is the responsibility of council to PROTECT our neighborhoods.

It is not unreasonable for a community to expect that no matter what the city does, the community will not be negatively impacted long term

We are not convinced the city has done enough diligence in this matter. We encourage council to say NO this rezoning application as written, and work with us on good sold amendments that makes sense and address our concerns.