

### **An Ill-conceived Design**

**Submitted by David Hopkins**

Though I feel that the location of the proposed building is more suited to residential use, I would like to go on record for specifically for my objection to the design being proposed for the building. I feel strongly that the proposed institutional looking “skin” for the building is a mistake. Rather, if it does become institutional in use, every effort should be made to harmonize the building’s architectural design with its residential neighbours instead of imposing an institutional-looking building westward on Cedar that is in sharp contrast to the residential surrounding buildings and the Mountain.

### **In Relationship to the History of the Building**

I feel strongly that the proposed design will reflect the ad hoc history of this building. It is evident from the structure that this building was initially conceived to be residential and now suddenly it is proposed that it be institutional. The proposed institutional looking “skin” will be a poor disguise and speak to the lack of coherent city planning associated with this building. Why make the lack of planning visually obvious with such a design. At least, make the building harmonize with its neighbours.

### **In Relationship to the Future**

I worry that this ill-conceived and self-conscious design will quickly look dated on the flanks of Mount Royal. By contrast, the surrounding residential architecture on Cedar Avenue, for the most part, are classic and harmonious and they continue to pass the test of time. I doubt the proposed “institutional skin” would fare as well.

### **In Relationship to its Neighbours & Mount Royal**

The height, the placement of the building relative to residential buildings to the west and to the three residential buildings facing it (and the fact that it shares a common Eastern line with the residential building at 1725 Cedar across the street) calls for a more suitable and integrated design. I can understand that, conceptually, “on paper”, the designer’s idea is to visually link the building with the hospital architecture off to the East, but it reflects a misdirected hospital-centric perspective. The promoters fail to recognize the need for a harmonious architectural design, especially so close to Mount Royal Park.

The stylized institutional look will be too abrupt a contrast to its neighbours and will be very discordant with the nearby Mount Royal Park. This is a potential “What were they thinking?” situation in the making.

Ask yourself – when given the opportunity and the choice, when would one choose a self-conscious, soon-to-be-dated looking institutional architecture design over a people-friendly design more in keeping with the residential buildings around it? Consider also that the proposed design is being pasted on to a frame originally conceived as a residential building. Consider also that it is being imposed into an otherwise residential environment west of the hospital.

### **In Conclusion**

I feel that the proposed institutional look for the building shows ill-conceived planning, and reflects a superficial and hastily conceived hospital-centric approach to the design. It lacks consideration of the building’s proximity to Mount Royal Park and visually displays a lack of planning and a lack of visual consideration of the architecture on three sides.

**I Propose**

I propose that, no matter the final function of the building, the architectural design of the building must reference Mount Royal and its residential neighbours rather than have such a discordant institutional look.