



To: Véronique de Passillé, Vice President, Public, Legal and Corporate Affairs,
National Capital Commission
Émilie Girard-Ruel, Director, Public and Corporate Affairs, NCC

From: Sarah Anson-Cartwright, Chair, Sussex Blocks Task Team,
New Edinburgh Community Alliance

Date: March 9, 2026

Subject: Requests and questions regarding the NCC's proposal for Sussex Blocks

Given the interest and concern that the NCC's proposal for Sussex Blocks has generated in the community, the board of the New Edinburgh Community Alliance (NECA) established the **Sussex Blocks Task Team** at its meeting on November 18, 2025. There are currently 10 members from the community on the task team, including myself.

At the meeting of NECA board members with you and Tobi Nussbaum (CEO of the NCC) on January 12, 2026, I mentioned in that meeting that the task team would seek a dialogue with you on the proposal. Thank you for agreeing to be our key contacts.

The task team's mandate is intended to **facilitate a flow of information that supports factual and constructive discussion within the community and with the NCC** on possible future uses of the Sussex Blocks site. The hope is that this engagement with the NCC will **contribute to the achievement of a high-quality outcome for the site** that is consistent with its central location in the context of an historic part of Ottawa, the NCC's mandate, and our collective desire for a better capital city for future generations.

We recognize that the NCC told the NECA board that the **Sussex Blocks is not a current project** for the NCC, and that the NCC does not yet have a procurement process in mind.

That said, the **Sussex Blocks Task Team makes the following requests:**

- **Will the NCC commit to consulting with NECA and its task team in the definition of the project?** We feel that it is particularly important that we are engaged in the drafting of the procurement documents for the prime design consultant to ensure that the guiding principles for the design are identified appropriately.
- Realizing that some of the following questions may be premature at this stage, we would **appreciate the NCC's responses as and when feasible** now and moving forward.

The following are **questions from the Sussex Blocks Task Team for response by the NCC:**

Floodplain

1. What are the NCC's specific plans to address the portion of the Sussex Blocks that falls within a floodplain and is subject to the City's zoning by-law and to provincial regulations with respect to development in a floodplain?
2. Would the NCC explore flood mitigation measures – if it were permitted to develop this project on the floodplain – that could be extended to reduce the risk to New Edinburgh as a whole?

Heritage Conservation District guidelines

In advance of the NCC establishing the requirements for the project and seeking a proponent, it would be helpful for NECA's Heritage and Development Committee to assess the impact of this development on the existing Heritage Conservation District in New Edinburgh. There has never been a project of the scale of the Sussex Blocks proposal in the HCD portion of the neighbourhood.

Note that the NCC's initial conceptual renderings for the proposed development do not meet the principal objectives regarding new developments as set out in the [New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District Plan](#).

3. To be helpful and ensure transparency, would the NCC meet with members of NECA's Heritage & Development Committee and the Sussex Blocks Task Team at any future discussion regarding the NCC's conceptual vision of this development proposal and its adherence to the guidelines and policies of the New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District Plan?

Design process and procurement process

It is widely understood that structuring projects using a design-bid-build approach puts more emphasis on the design quality than happens when it is subsumed into a design-build structure.

4. Has tendering a separate design process – perhaps including a competition – been considered to ensure the quality and appropriateness of the proposal given the significance of the site? If not, why not?

The NCC stated that its approach to design would involve its Federal Land Use, Design and Transaction Approval (FLUDTA) process.

5. If the project were to go to a design-build approach, what obligations will be built into the tender to ensure the use of high quality, and appropriate, planning, design and materials for the project? Will landscaping and flood mitigation be integrated into the design and development requirements?
6. Since a procurement process has not been determined yet, what are the different options the NCC may use?

7. What discussions, even if preliminary, has the NCC had to date with possible proponents?
8. In choosing a developer to realize the project, how does the NCC plan to ensure that quality of work is the top priority rather than some other criterion, such as lowest cost?
9. In overseeing compliance with the design guidelines, is the NCC prepared to enforce provisions with fines and stop-work orders?
10. Prior to development, will the NCC undertake a thorough archeological investigation of the area to identify remnants of the ancient Indigenous portage trail, the early 1829 industrial settlement and stables belonging to the Ottawa City Passenger Railway (1870, first public transit in Ottawa)?
11. Is the NCC prepared to include interpretive elements in its project funding (i.e., outdoor panels and displays of artefacts) to tell the story of New Edinburgh's industrial past (1829), the commercial past of this particular block and the story of Ottawa's first public transit?

Treatment of the PM's residence

12. Will the NCC's decisions, next steps and/or timing with regard to the Sussex Blocks be based on or affected by the government's decision on the future of the PM's official residence? If so, how?

City process relative to the NCC

13. At what stage would the NCC or the proponent submit its plan to the City for review, if the NCC were to follow the "good neighbour policy" to allow City review of its plans for the Sussex Blocks?
14. Would NECA be invited to a pre-consultation regarding the plan?

The task team looks forward to receiving your responses to these questions, and appreciates your offer to be the key contacts for this exchange between the NCC and the New Edinburgh community.

Regards,

Sarah Anson-Cartwright

cc. Sussex Blocks Task Team, NECA