

# Infill Survey #2

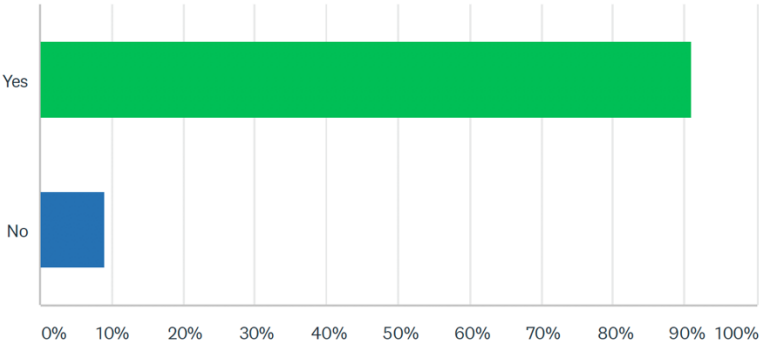
Responses from Grandview Heights Community Residents

Prepared by Margaret Fisher

November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Q1 Did you receive notifications from the city of the new build and any requested variances?

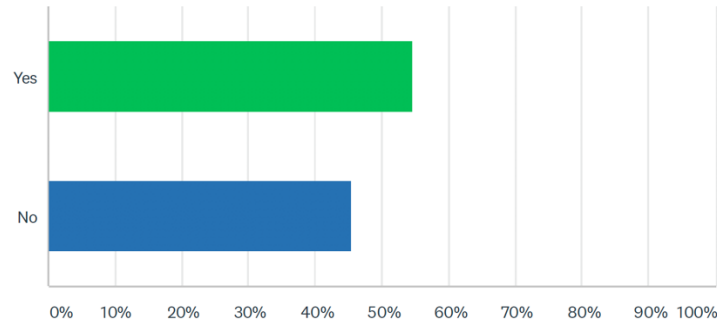
Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		90.91%	20
No		9.09%	2
Total Respondents: 22			

Q2 Was the information you received from the city easy to understand?  
Please explain your answer in the space below.

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.55%	12
No	45.45%	10
Total Respondents: 22		

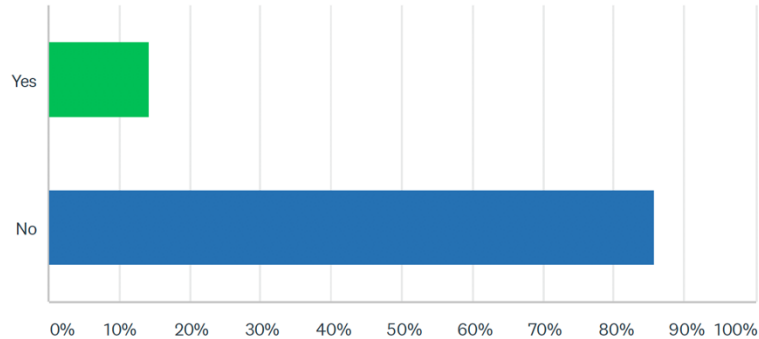
## Question 2 Comments: 12 responses

- “The paperwork we received was full of various information including who to contact at city hall.”
- “We are early in the process of sub-dividing the lot next door. Have only received notice of application to sub-divide. The letter from the city about that was straight forward and easy to understand. “
- “No info received”
- “Variances seemed minor but development was bigger than indicated.”
- “It was not clear from the Notice to Property Owner if the proposed subdivision was in compliance with Zoning Bylaw 12800. This info would have been helpful as it would have helped us determine if there was any worth in submitting neighbour feedback on subdivision. We did submit feedback but I have since learned that if subdivision is compliant, it is approved. submitting neighbour isions that meet guidelines are always approved.”
- “They don’t give you exactly details about the new design “
- “Is not clear how the modifications change house location and hence affects sun and light exposure even more than the size itself”

- “The placement of the house on the lot was not apparent; as it turns out, both houses now have full view of our back entrance and main outside area. No mention was made of a driveway or back yard garage on the lot next to us.”
- “I’m never really certain what they are talking about. A visual would be helpful.”
- “No insight into the process or any indication on what we may do to influence the decisions.”
- “only info received was that approval had been granted for two skinnies to be built - and these have been very poorly constructed!”
- “I’m in the industry so understand most of the definitions, technical jargon, etc. Others don't understand what is being presented.”

### Q3 Did the information from the city help you assess the impact to you of the proposed new development?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	14.29%	3
No	85.71%	18
Total Respondents: 21		

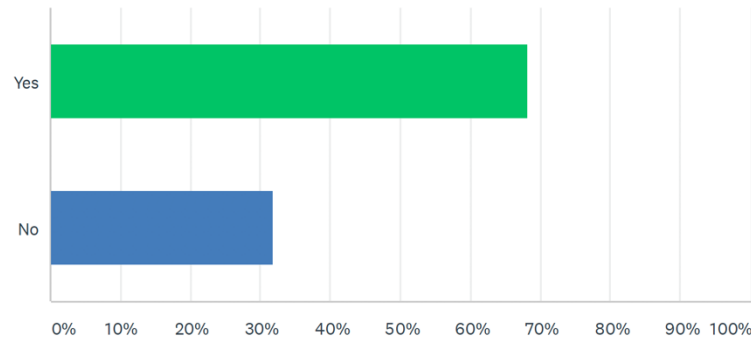
### Question 3 Comments: 6 Responses

- “City TOTALLY IGNORED MY CONCERNS”
- “The only info from the city is notice of a request to subdivide. There were not any attachments regarding the guidelines governing new builds e.g. maximum size of potential new builds, duty to protect trees on neighbouring properties etc.”
- “No info received. Negative effect on land values of infills evident.”
- “The Development Permit Notice did not include a brochure referred to in the notice. I had to contact the City to get one. It did not provide any info re: demolition process, specifically how the City would ensure air quality during demoliton if home contained asbestos.”
- “All trees including older growth were killed”
- “We did provide feedback to the city on the request to subdivide the lot. There aren't any designs yet so no variance requests either.”
- “No opportunity to do so. Not obvious that the three-story infills required variances.”
- “Required to pay a fee to contest any development.”

- “We gave feedback but they didn’t listen, they did the changes anyway”
- “We said NO and they did not care at all”
- “The house next to us requested only a minor variance (about a meter closer to the back border). We were concerned that we might face issues with our own house, which was probably not compliant at the time but had been approved and was completed by the time we purchased it in 1993.”
- “we brought to the attention to the city our concerns regarding the poor quality of the build but were told the city had no control over quality! This is hard to fathom!”
- “Not aware that the older trees would be destroyed “
- “builder did not care to hear feedback”

## Q4 Did you provide feedback to the city or the builder on the requested variances? If not, why not?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	68.18%	15
No	31.82%	7
Total Respondents: 22		

### Question 4 comments: 10 Responses

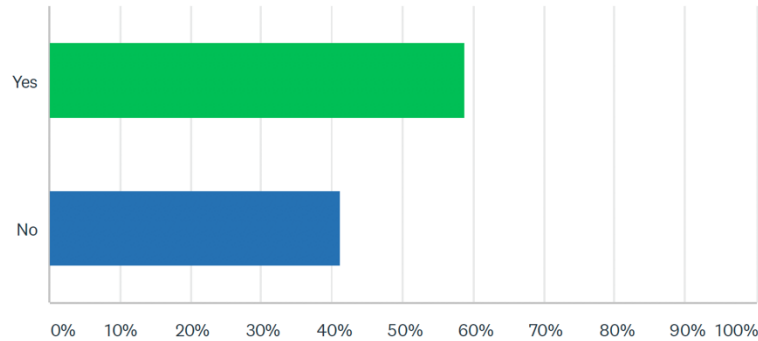
- “YES”
- “We did provide feedback to the city on the request to subdivide the lot. There aren't any designs yet so no variance requests either.”
- “No opportunity to do so. Not obvious that the three-story infills required variances.”
- “Required to pay a fee to contest any development.”
- “We gave feedback but they didn’t listen, they did the changes anyway”
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- “The house next to us requested only a minor variance (about a meter closer to the back border). We were concerned that we might face issues with our own house, which was probably not compliant at the time but had been approved and was completed by the time we purchased it in 1993.”
- “we brought to the attention to the city our concerns regarding the poor quality of the build but were told the city had no control over quality! This is hard to fathom!”
- “Not aware that the older trees would be destroyed”

- “builder did not care to hear feedback”



## Q5 Do you believe the builder was in compliance with existing regulations/granted variances? If not, why not?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.82%	10
No	41.18%	7
Total Respondents: 17		

### Question 5 comments: 14 Responses

- “Builder did what was allowed by City but the City did not follow its guidelines Section 814.3”
- “Does not apply in our case.”
- “Building too tall and grading has changed and mature trees destroyed”
- “No. The person did not have fences up, did not finish the property in a timely manner, did not reduce noise, and worked past/ earlier than hours in the By Laws. Not unusual for this City, even with our unusually lenient by-laws.”
- “Buildings exceeded maximum height allowances and easements were ignored.”
- “However, I have no idea if this is true as City has not provided me with confirmation that permit requirements were met. The City should be required to inform the neighbours if the builder is in compliance with the permit, if in fact they do a final check. I don't know if they do, or where that information is available.”
- “They even dig our lot”
- “Access to parking issue”

- “Have not measured”
- “we saw that the developer and builder did everything in a very slipshod manner”
- “I don’t know”
- “city inspector came to review each phase upon request”
- “The original build was in compliance with the granted variances, but they have since added several variances without applying for development permits.”

## Q6 Please provide comments on whether you feel the process of providing feedback on variance requests was acceptable or not.

Answered: 16   Skipped: 6

### Question 6 Comments: 19 Responses

- “Different topic, as the house next door totally blocks our sunlight so the house should not have been approved in the first place”
- “We provided valid feedback on why the lot should not be split. It is a small lot with no backyard. Once a second house is built there will be very little access for these people to add or subtract things from their yards. We felt in the end the city did not look hard enough or even come out and assess the matter with their own eyes. Some times you need to physically come out and check the lay of the land with your own eyes against the list of items to see if they would be valid. I felt we were ignored and not taken seriously. All the immediate neighbours filed official paperwork on why it should not be lot split.”
- “Going back to the initial notice of a request for subdividing a lot. It would be helpful if the city included a process map of the next steps e.g. if yes this is what happens next. If no, this is what happens next. Approximate time frames would be helpful as well as information on how / when neighbouring property owners would be updated.”
- “Variances and rezoning in this city are part of the total "zoning game." Just zone to re-zone and rollover. Prior residences, land values, and quality building receive little respect.”
- “Not acceptable. City is only interested in a tax grab.”
- “The process re: variances was acceptable although very time consuming. I would advise that one should not assume that information previously submitted to the Development Officer will be shared by him/her with the Sub-division Appeal Board, so there is value in restating it in the submission. Due to Covid 19, there were no in person hearings, but when they resume, I would advise it would be best to attend as many developers have lawyers representing them and they do attend. I would also recommend providing as much detail as possible as to the potential impacts of the variances requested.”
- “Not acceptable”
- “acceptable”
- “Not given sufficient time to reply”

- “I often don't understand what the variance is changing. I've had three come to my home, and I only understood one. Additionally - where my frustration typically comes into play is with builders who disrespect the neighbourhood - messy sites, parking anywhere they like, etc.”
- “we felt lip service only was given to concerns we raised”
- “Older neighborhoods need to keep some of the older trees to keep character.”
- “nobody cared about feedback or was willing to make changes.”
- “We were told by builder that it was a 2 storey- the houses are three stories high. We we also told by builder that the houses would be different from each other. Except for a few embellishments, they are identical. We were “ambushed” about removing part of a large elm tree. They also cut roots without any consultation.”
- “It ended up being a huge waste of time, because the owners took it to the SDAB hearing, and they were granted ALL variances”
- “Opportunity came too late, not enough time to respond...”

## Q7 In what ways has your household been impacted (positively and/or negatively) by the adjacent new build?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 1

### Question 7 Comments: 21 Responses

- "Negatively as house blocks sunlight"
- "A huge house on a tiny piece of land. Their house is taller and parts of it look into our bedroom, so we have had to make so additional efforts to make sure they don't see us in the bedroom. A second house built similar would invade our upstairs bedroom privacy some more."
- "N/A in our case as it hasn't happened yet."
- "New neighbours can easily stalk my every move"
- "Noise, dust, line-of-sight, neighbors who are poor community citizens, parking... all the usual."
- "Privacy was invaded. House exceeded height allowance."
- "Loss of privacy- we now have two windows that look directly into our home. The new home sits higher on the lot than the previous one, which means that the allowed 6 ft. fence will provide insufficient privacy on our back deck. Loss of sunlight - the height of the new home blocks of sunlight from the west where previously the sun shone on our home all day. Our home is noticeable darker and colder and we will have to cut down at least two mature spruce trees to increase sunlight to the parts of our home that can still get it. Property Value - previously we had a completely private backyard which contributed to the value of our home. Now we do not."
- "They cut down all the trees except for three , they built the house way back taking all the sun and green space, we are very dissatisfied. They took our fence off and digging in our property without our permission and when we where away on vacation. They also built the house way to the front limit ( that violate two rules: more house to the back taking back yard space, and front garage taking more space to the front yard"
- "They moved the property line, they put a wire fence in our lot during construction, they took our fence down without consent and they are building very close to our house a huge building blocking all the sun and light in our yard. Also they left no trees and almost no backyard ruining the neighborhood"

- “Sunlight”
- “Close proximity to my dwelling.”
- “As stated above, both levels of both infill houses look upon our back entry and main outdoor living area as well as into our dining room. The removal of all the trees in the back yard eliminated what privacy there was from the neighbours and the back alley. Wildlife, mainly birds, have been impacted and therefore our enjoyment of their presence. Increased wind and lack of shade are also factors. In the process of demolition of the existing house and building of these infill houses, we've experienced increased noise, dust, building material scrap finding its way into our yard, styrofoam scrapings everywhere in our back yard and carport, constant comings and goings of workers (often long into the evenings and starting earlier in the mornings than normal work hours), water run off from the roof of the new build prior to eavestrough installation which just happened a couple of weeks ago, constant dirt and concrete on the sidewalk in front of the builds as well as in front of our house, a porta-potty right along our property line. Positively, we now have grass growing on the east side of the house where before the large spruce and pine trees on the neighbour's lot prevented it. However, we anticipate the new neighbour requesting a fence be built between us and them on the front yard space, which we will not be in favour of.”
- “In fairness, it is typically through the construction phase. unsafe sites (I've called the city several times about open pits with no fencing), parking in the middle of roadways blocking traffic, not picking up litter and finding it in my yard, etc.”
- “We'll need to wait to see.”
- “because of the height of the new build, we now will never again see a sunrise, our streetscape view is also very restricted; because of the placement of venting we hear the whoosh of the neighbour's heating system. Had this been placed between the two skinnies, where there are no windows, this could have been avoided - just another example of poor planning from start to finish.”
- “Too crowded, lack of privacy, loss of appeal of the neighbourhood”
- “Huge change in temperature of house in evening and decrease in birds”
- “privacy, noise, damage to property, trespassing by builders, caused landscaping and drainage problems to our property”
- “Our house is dwarfed by the 3 stories built beside us. We lost our west light entirely.”
- “All rest were clear cut on the property, plus the new house is 4' from our fence which resulted in them being at waist-height looking over into our patio. We ended up applying for and

building a 9'-4" high privacy wall/ pergola to get our privacy back. Sun on the south side of our home is gone. There was no thought given to the surrounding neighbours who have lived here and paid taxes for many years."

- "Increased noise, increased traffic"

## Q8 What information/communication would have been helpful to have had with the purchaser / developer before any deconstruction or construction started?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 3

### Question 8 Comments: 21 Responses

- “Nothing as it would not have made a difference”
- “We were totally ignored by the city. The builder followed the rules. The city totally favoured the builder without considering the valid points that the neighbours had put forward. It made us feel like we have no say and that 'lot splits'. Please take into consideration and physically check out what points us neighbours are making. We live in the neighbourhood and can visually see what is happening.”
- “An opportunity to meet in person before the final design is approved. It would be nice to be able to share concerns, what is valued and to be preserved. The opportunity to ask questions proactively rather than reactively, after the fact. The one by one approach taken by the city does not take in the neighbourhood as a whole. It would be helpful if the community league had an official position, shared that with the community and the city. It would also be helpful if the city sent notices to the Community League as well as the directly impacted properties. Because GH is a small community we are all impacted by these changes, some more directly than others.”
- “Tree preservation, millions of tiny foam pieces drifting in the wind from insulation, noise from generators all winter long during build, nails left on road to puncture tires, lack of aesthetics”
- “The option to have others buy the lot at a fair price, rather than have developers pump up the price (or do shady deals) to then get the lot and draw down its real value out of the community.”
- “Issue of privacy should have been addressed. House towers over my backyard.”
- “I had to ask the City about asbestos compliance. It would have been better if developer could have addressed it. Knowong demoliton date and construction timelines would have been helpful. The best case scenario would be for the City to make is mandatory for developers to share building plans, construction timelines, fencing plans, etc.”
- “The information was provided but they don’t care if you disagree with the project”
- “They should listen to neighbours “



- “email or paper notice”
- “with the bylaws for infill houses in this location, do not see communication is effective.”
- “Advance notification of the demo would have been helpful. It would have been nice to know in advance that dividing the lot had been approved by the city.”
- “A visual so we can see the impact on the lot and proximity to adjacent lots.”
- “Any communication would have been welcome - in this case the developer seemed to just want to maximize her profits. In fact, she lied to us, stating she would be moving into one of the two dwellings, each of which is now on the market. These changes to Grandview so strongly impact on the pre-existing tenor of community mindedness, neighbourly respect and camaraderie - not a good way to introduce oneself to the neighbourhood - but then this developer didn't have such an interest.”
- “A map of important trees in the neighborhood”
- “the truth about what the build plan was and a plan on how they would protect our privacy and property from damage”
- “Truthful information. Also, contractors blocked our driveway many times.”
- “I talked to the developer (who lives in the house) prior to the home being designed and asked for us to work together. He never consulted me once. In the end, it has resulted in bad feelings with all the adjacent neighbours, and we have never spoken since they've moved in. I don't have anything to say, so we just mind our own business.”
- “A calendar of what work was going to happen when. A plan to reduce negative impact on trees, drainage. Drawings of proposed design. List of names and contact information”