Ottawa city councillor opposes new Larga Baffin facility

Some residents fear impact on their neighbourhood, but facility spokesperson calls traffic concerns unfounded

Madalyn Howitt

An Ottawa city councillor is opposing the proposed construction of a new Larga Baffin facility, citing strong opposition from her constituents.

More than 260 people attended a three-hour virtual public information session April 26 to discuss a proposal to build a new Larga Baffin facility in Ottawa's Hunt Club neighbourhood.

Larga Baffin is a medical boarding facility for Nunavummiut receiving specialized medical care in Ottawa, including cancer treatment, care for high-risk pregnancies or treatment for children's medical conditions that's not easily accessible in Nunavut.

"Medical travel is the only means available by which [Nunavut] residents can access medical services the rest of the country takes for granted," said Harry Flaherty, board chairperson of Larga Baffin Ltd.

Councillor Diane Deans, representing the Gloucester-Southgate ward where the facility would be built, said she does not support the application "in its current form."

"Like many in the community, I believe the building is grossly oversized both in height and in its footprint," she said.

The six-storey building would be 22 metres high, divided into four wings with multiple entry points, according to architect Megan Torza.

The new Larga Baffin centre is being developed by Fotenn Planning + Design in collaboration with DTAH Architects.

It would be the first purpose-built facility for Larga Baffin, which has been housed in three locations around Ottawa since opening its doors in 2000.

The current building, on Richmond Road, can accommodate up to 195 patients, but Flaherty said overflow is common and many visitors are forced to stay in nearby hotels.

The new building would increase the capacity to 350 patients in 220 rooms and be closer to the airport and medical facilities in Ottawa, Torza said.

However, many residents voiced concerns about the impact the facility would have on their neighbourhood.

Traffic congestion and safety was cited as a major concern.

Larga Baffin spokesperson Bill McCurdy said the facility doesn't generate a lot of traffic because it uses its own fleet of eight vehicles to shuttle patients between the airport, hospitals and appointments.

Other concerns from residents included the height and size of the building, public safety in nearby parks from transient residents, and a perceived lack of community consultation between Larga Baffin representatives and residents.

One resident, identified as Madalaine on the Zoom call, said she's concerned about the impact a building of that size would have on water pressure in the neighbourhood.

"I bought this house here and I spent a lot of money on this house. I can't move anywhere else, so I'm just saying it's not fair that the city will amend the zoning without considering the existing residents… We were here first," she said.

Some residents, however, spoke strongly in favour of Larga Baffin being built in the area.

"Larga Baffin is a wonderful established joint venture. They have a long history already of being extremely good at what they do, and I'm very excited that they're going to be in this community," said Janine Flood, who lives in the area.

She said she works as federal lead on the Nanilavut Initiative, which helps Inuit families find information on loved ones sent away during the Nunavut tuberculosis epidemic of the 1940s through the 1960s.

She said a facility like Larga Baffin is needed so Nunavummiut receiving medical treatment can be close to loved ones.

"What I'm asking all of my neighbours to understand is how important and how wonderful Larga Baffin is and how special, what a gift it is, how lucky we are to have them come to our community," Flood said.

"I'm just asking everyone to be reasonable and to be willing to be accommodated."

Deans said after reviewing the application and listening to community feedback, municipal staff will make a recommendation to the city's planning committee which will decide whether to recommend approval of the plan to city council.

No date has been set yet for when the Larga Baffin proposal will go before the planning committee.

An architectural drawing shows the proposed new Larga Baffin facility in Ottawa's Hunt Club neighbourhood. The six storey, 220-room design has elicited strong reactions from community members who oppose construction of the building, and from others who support it. (Photo courtesy of Fotenn Planning + Design) ᑎᑎᕋᐅᔭᕐᑕᐅᓯᒪᔪᖅ ᓴᖅᑭᑎᕐᑎᓯᒪᔪᖅ ᓛᒐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃᓴᐅᓛᕐᑐᒥ ᐊᑐᖅᒥ ᐄᐊᓐ ᑲᓚᑉ ᒥᒃᓵᓂᒃ. ᐅᓇ 6-ᓂ ᓇᑎᕋᓕᒃ, 220-ᓂ ᐃᒡᓗᕈᓯᖅᑲᕐᓗᓂ ᓂᐱᖅᑭᓗᕈᑎᐅᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᓄᓇᖅᑲᖅᑐᓂᒃ ᐃᒡᓗᓕᐅᓇᔭᐅᔪᓕᒃ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐊᓯᖏᓐᓂ ᐃᑲᔪᖅᑐᐃᔪᓂᒃ. (ᐊᔾᔨᖑᐊᖅ ᐅᕙᖓᑦ ᕗᑦᓐ ᐸᕐᓇᐅᑎᓕᓇᔨᑦ ᐊᒻᒪ ᐊᖅᑭᒃᓯᐃᔨᑦ)

ᐊᑐᖅᒥ ᓄᓇᓕᐸᐅᔭᓄᑦ ᑲᑎᒪᔨ ᓈᒻᒪᒃᓴᙱᑦᑐᖅ ᓄᑖᒥ ᓛᒐ ᐸᕕᓐᓴᕐᒥ

ᐃᓚᖏ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᑦ ᐊᒃᑐᐃᓂᖃᓗᐊᕐᓂᐊᕋᓱᒋᔪᑦ ᖃᓂᒋᔭᖏᓐᓃᑦᑐᓄᑦ ᑭᓯᐊᓂᓕ ᐅᖃᕐᑎᒋᔭᐅᔪᖅ ᐃᓱᒫᓗᑎᖃᓚᐅᕐᒥᔪᖅ ᐃᓄᖃᐅᓗᐊᓕᕐᓂᐊᕐᓂᖓ ᐃᓱᒪᓐᓇᙱᓐᓂᖓᓂᒃ

ᒫᑦᓕ ᕿᐊᐅᕕᑦ

ᐊᑐᖅᓂ ᓄᓇᓕᐸᐅᔭᓄᑦ ᑲᑎᒪᔨ ᓈᒻᒪᒃᓴᙱᑦᑐᖅ ᓴᓇᔭᐅᔪᒪᔪᒥᒃ ᓄᑖᒥ ᓛᒐ ᐸᕕᓐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃᓴᒥ, ᐅᖃᐅᓯᖃᖅᓗᓂ ᑭᒡᒐᖅᑐᖅᑕᖏᑦ ᓈᒻᒪᒃᓴᙱᓐᓂᖏᓐᓄᑦ.

260 ᐅᖓᑖᓂ ᐅᐸᒍᑎᔪᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᓴᖅᑭᔾᒐᒃᓴᖅ ᑭᒃᑯᓕᒫᓂᒃ ᑐᓴᖅᑎᑦᑎᔾᔪᑎᓕᕆᓂᕐᒥᒃ ᐃᐳᕈᑦ 26-ᖑᑎᑦᓗᒍ ᐅᖃᐅᓯᖃᕐᑐᓂᒃ ᓄᑖᒥ ᓛᒐ ᐸᕕᓐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᓕᐅᕈᒪᓂᕐᒥᒃ ᐊᑐᖅᒥ ᒫᓂ ᐊᐅᓐ ᑲᐸᑉ ᒥᒃᓵᓂᒃ.

ᓛᒐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃ ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕕᓕᐊᖅᑐᓄᑦ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᐅᖃᑦᑕᕐᑐᖅ ᓄᓇᕗᒻᒥᐅᓄᑦ ᑲᒪᒋᔭᐅᔭᕆᐊᓕᖕᓂᒃ ᐊᑐᖅᒥ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᑲᒃᒍᑎᖃᕐᑐᓄᑦ (ᑳᓐᓯ), ᐅᓗᐊᓇᖅᑐᒦᑦᑕᓄᑦ ᓯᖓᐃᔪᓄᑦ ᓱᕈᓯᕐᓄᑦᓘᓐᓂᑦ ᑲᒪᒋᔭᐅᔭᕆᐊᖃᕐᑐᓄᑦ ᓄᓇᕗᒥᑦ ᐊᑐᐃᓐᓇᐅᔪᓐᓇᙱᑦᑐᓄᑦ.

"ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕕᒃᒧᑦ ᐊᐅᓪᓚᕆᐊᖃᖃᑦᑕᕐᒪᑕ ᓄᓇᕗᒻᒥᐅᑕ ᐱᔨᑦᑎᕋᖅᑕᐅᑦᑎᐊᕈᓐᓇᕐᓂᐊᕐᒪᑕ ᐊᓯᖏᑦᑎᑐᑦ ᑲᓇᑕᒥᐅᑕᓂ ᐊᑐᐃᓐᓇᕆᔭᐅᔪᓂᒃ," ᐅᖃᕐᑐᖅ ᐄᐃᐅᕆ ᕕᓕᐅᕋᑎ, ᑲᑎᒪᔨᓄᑦ ᐃᒃᓯᕙᐅᑕᖅ ᓛᒐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃᒧᑦ.

ᑲᑎᒪᔨ ᑕᐃᓐᓇ ᑏᓐᓇ, ᑭᒡᒐᖅᑐᐃᔨ ᒐᓛᔅᑐᓴᐅᑦᑭᑦᒧᑦ ᑕᒫᓂᓗ ᐃᒡᓗᓕᐅᕐᒪᑦᓗᑎᒃ ᐅᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᐃᑲᔪᖅᑐᐃᖏᓐᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᑐᒃᓯᕋᐅᑎᒥᒃ "ᒫᓐᓇ ᐋᖅᑭᒃᑕᐅᓯᒪᓂᖓᒍᑦ."

"ᐃᓱᒪᒋᔭᐅᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᑕᒫᓂ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᓂᒃ ᐃᓱᒪᖓᒪ ᐃᒡᓗ ᐊᖏᓗᐊᖅᑐᐊᓘᓂᖓᓂᑦ ᖁᑦᑎᖕᓂᖅᑐᓂᖅᑐᒍᑦ," ᐅᖃᕐᑐᖅ.

ᐅᓇ 6-ᓂ ᓇᑎᕋᖃᕐᑐᒃᓴᖅ ᐃᒡᓗ 22 ᒦᑕᓂ ᖁᑦᑎᖕᓂᖃᕋᔭᕐᑐᖅ ᐊᕕᒃᑐᕐᓯᒪᓗᓂ ᑎᓴᒪᐅᓕᖓᓗᓂ ᐊᔾᔨᒌᙱᑦᑐᓂ ᐃᓱᓇᐊᕕᖃᕐᓗᓂ, ᑎᑎᕋᐅᔭᕐᓯᒪᔪᖅ ᒦᒐᓐ ᑑᔭ ᐋᕿᒃᓯᒪᔭᖓᒍᑦ.

ᐅᓇ ᓄᑖᖅ ᓛᒐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃ ᐋᖅᑭᒃᓱᖅᑕᐅᓇᔭᕐᑐᖅ ᕗᑦᓐ ᐸᕐᓇᐅᑎᓕᓇᔨᑦ ᐊᒻᒪ ᐋᖅᑭᒃᓱᐃᔨᓄᑦ ᐱᓕᓇᖃᑎᖃᕐᓂᒃᑯᑦ DTAH ᑎᑎᕋᐅᔭᖓᖅᑎᓂᒃ ᐃᒡᓗᒃᓴᓂᒃ.

ᐅᓇ ᓱᕗᓪᓕᕐᐸᐅᓇᔭᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᐃᒡᓗᓕᐊᓇᔭᐅᓗᓂ ᓛᒐ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃᒧᑦ ᑖᓐᓇᓗ ᐱᖓᓱᐃᖅᓗᓂ ᓄᒃᑎᕈᑎᐅᖃᑦᑕᕐᓯᒪᓪᓗᓂ ᑕᐃᒪᙱᑦ ᒪᑐᐃᓚᐅᕐᓯᒪᑎᓪᓗᒍ 2000-ᒥ.

ᒫᓐᓇᓕ ᐃᒡᓗᖁᑎᒋᔭᐅᔪᖅ ᐅᓇᑦᓴᓐ ᕈᑦᒥ ᐃᓄᖃᕈᓐᓇᕐᒪᑦ 195-ᓂ ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕕᓕᐊᕐᑐᓂᒃ ᑭᓯᐊᓂᓕ ᕕᓕᐅᕋᑎ ᐅᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᐃᓄᒋᐊᓗᐊᓕᔭᓐᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᖅᑕᐅᔭᕐᑐᖅᑐᑦ ᐊᓯᖏᓐᓄᑦ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᖕᓄᐊᖅᑕᐅᔭᓇᐊᖃᖅᐸᓐᓗᑎᒃ.

ᐅᓇ ᓄᑖᖅ ᐃᒡᓗ ᐃᓄᒋᐊᖕᓂᕐᓴᐅᔪᓐᓇᓕᕋᔭᕐᑐᖅ 350-ᓄ ᐃᒡᓗᕈᓯᖃᕐᓗᓂ 220-ᓂ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᖃᓂᒃᓴᕐᓂᕐᓴᐅᓗᓂ ᒥᑦᑕᕐᕕᒃᒥ ᐊᒻᒪ ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕕᒐᓚᖕᓂ ᐋᑐᖅᒥ, ᑑᔭ ᐅᖃᕐᑐᖅ.

ᑭᓯᐊᓂᓕ ᐅᓄᕐᑐᑦ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᐃᑦ ᐃᓱᒫᓗᑎᖏᓐᓂᒃ ᐅᖃᑲᑕᓚᐅᕐᒪᑕ ᐊᒃᑐᐃᔾᔪᑎᐅᓇᔭᕐᑐᓂᒃ ᖃᓂᒋᔭᖏᓐᓃᑦᑐᓂᒃ.

ᓄᓇᓯᐅᑎᓄ ᐃᖏᕐᕋᕝᕕᐅᓗᐊᓕᕋᔭᕐᓂᖓ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐱᕐᓗᐊᕐᑭᑎᑦᑎᑦᑕᐃᓕᓂ ᐃᓱᒫᓗᑎᒋᔭᐅᓗᐊᓚᐅᕐᑐᑦ.

ᓈᒻᒪᒃᓴᙱᑦᑐᓂᒃ ᐃᒡᓗᓕᐅᓇᔭᐅᔪᓚᔪᒃ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐊᓯᖏᓐᓂ ᐃᑲᔪᖅᑐᐃᓐᓇᕐᒪᑦ. "ᓈᒻᒪ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃᒥ ᐅᖃᑦᓚᒃᑎ ᐱᐊᑦ ᒪᒃᑯᑎ ᐅᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᐃᒡᓗ ᓄᓇᓯᐅᑎᓂᒃ ᐱᑕᖃᖅᑎᑦᑎᓂᕐᓴᐅᓇᔭᖏᓐᓂᖓᓂ ᓱᖃᐃᒻᒪ ᓇᒥᓂᖅ 8-ᓂ ᓄᓇᓯᐅᑎᖃᕐᒪᑕ ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕕᓕᐊᖅᑐᓂᒃ ᐊᒃᔭᖅᓯᒃᑕᒍᑎᓂᒃ ᒥᑦᑕᕐᕕᖕᒧᑦ, ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕕᖕᓄᑦ ᐊᒻᒪ ᑕᑯᔭᐅᕝᕕᒃᓴᖏᓐᓄᑦ.

ᐊᓯᖏᑦ ᐃᓱᒫᓗᑎᒋᔭᐅᓚᐅᕐᑐᑦ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᓂ ᖁᑦᑎᖕᓂᓇᓂᐊᕐᑕᖓ ᐊᒻᒪ ᐊᖏᑎᒋᓂᖓ ᐃᒡᓗᑉ, ᐊᑦᑕᓇᖅᑐᒦᑦᑕᐃᓕᑎᑦᑎᓂᕐᒥᒃ ᐅᐸᒐᐅᕙᒃᑐᓂᒃ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᔪᓄᑦ, ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᓄᓇᖕᓂ ᑐᓴᕋᓯᖏᓗᐊᖏᓐᓂᖏᓐᓂᒃ ᐅᑯᐊ ᓈᒻᒪ ᐸᕕ ᑭᒡᒐᖅᑐᐃᔨᖏᑦ ᐊᒻᒪ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᓂᒃ.

ᐊᑕᐅᓯᖅ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᖅ ᐊᑎᓕ ᒪᑕᓕᓐ ᔫᒻᑯ ᐅᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᐃᓱᒫᓗᑎᖃᕐᓂᕋᖅᓗᓂ ᐊᒃᑐᐃᒍᑎᐅᓇᔭᕐᑐᓂᒃ ᐃᒡᓗ ᓴᓇᔭᐅᒃᐸᑦ ᑕᐃᒪᓐᓇ ᐊᖏᑎᒋᓗᓂ ᐆᒧᖓ ᐃᑲᖃᐅᑎᓄᑦ ᐊᒃᓯᕈᕈᑎᐅᓗᐊᓕᕋᔭᕐᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᑕᒫᓃᑦᑐᓄᑦ.

"ᐅᓇ ᐃᒡᓗ ᓂᐅᕕᓚᐅᕐᓯᒪᒐᒃᑯ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᑮᓇᐅᔭᑲᓪᓚᒻᒪᓇᖕᓂ ᐊᑐᖅᑕᓕᓗᒍ. ᐊᓯᐊᓄᓪᓗ ᓄᒃᑎᕈᓐᓇᕋᔭᖏᓗᖓ, ᑕᐃᒪᓗ ᐅᖃᕈᓐᓇᕐᑐᖓ ᓈᒻᒪᖏᓗᐊᖅᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᓄᓇᖃᐸᐅᔭᐃᑦ ᐋᖅᑭᒋᐊᓚᐅᕐᓂᖏᓐᓂᒃ ᓄᓇᐅᑉ ᖃᓄᐃᓚᖕᓂᒃᓴᖓᓂ ᐃᓱᒪᒋᔭᐅᖕᖏᓗᑎᒃ ᑕᒫᓂᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᑦ. ᑕᒫᓃᖅᑕᐅᕐᓇᕐᑐᑦᑕᕐᒪᑦ," ᐅᖃᕐᑐᖅ.

ᐅᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᒐᕙᒪᑐᖃᑯᑦ ᐱᓚᓇᐊᖃᕐᓂᖓᓂᒃ 'ᓇᓂᓚᕗᑦ ᐱᓚᓇᐊᒃᓴᒥᒃ', ᐃᑲᔪᖃᑦᑕᖅᑐᑦ ᐃᓄᖕᓂ ᐃᓚᖏᓐᓂᒃ ᓇᓂᓯᔪᓐᓇᐃᓪᓕᓯᒪᔪᓂᒃ ᑕᒪᐅᖓ ᐳᕙᒃᓗᒋᐊᖅᑐᕕᓂᕐᓂᒃ 1940-ᖏᓐᓂᒃ ᑎᑭᕈᒍ 1960-ᖏᑦ.

ᐅᖃᓚᐅᕐᑐᖅ ᐱᓚᓇᕝᕕᒃᑕᖃᕐᓗᓂ ᓈᒻᒪ ᑐᔪᕐᒥᕕᒃᑐᑦ ᐱᑕᖃᓇᐊᖃᕐᒪ ᓄᓇᕗᒻᒥᐅᑦ ᐋᓐᓂᐊᕈᑎᖏᓐᓄᑦ ᑲᒪᒋᔭᐅᔭᓐᓇᕐᓂᐊᕐᒪᑕ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐃᓚᖏᓐᓂᒃ ᐅᖓᓯᒃᓴᓗᐊᖏᑦᓗᑎᒃ.

"ᐅᖃᕈᒪᑐᐃᓐᓇᖅᓗᖓ ᖃᓂᒋᔭᑎᓐᓃᑦᑐᓄᑦ ᑐᑭᓯᖁᓪᓗᒋᑦ ᐱᒻᒪᓇᐊᓘᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᐊᒻᒪ ᐱᐅᔪᐊᓘᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᓈᒻᒪ ᐱᖁᑎᑦᑎᐊᕐᓂᖓᓂᒃ ᐊᒻᒪ ᐱᖁᑎᑦᑎᐊᕐᓂᖓᓂᒃ, ᑕᐃᒪᓗ ᓄᓇᖃᕐᑐᑎᒍᑦ ᑕᒪᒻᒪᓇᐅᔪᒍᑦ ᑕᒫᓃᑦᑐᓐᓇᖅᓗᖓ ᐊᒃᑐᖅᑕᓕᓗᒍ."

ᐅᖃᕈᒪᑐᐃᓐᓇᖅᓗᖓ ᐃᓱᒪᒃᓴᖅᓯᐅᕈᓐᓇᖅᑐᓂᒃ ᐃᓱᒪᓕᐅᓇᔭᐅᔪᖅ ᐊᖏᖅᑕᐅᒪᖕᓗᑦ ᐸᕐᓇᐅᑎ.