

Minor Variance Application – Combined Rationale

Address: 111 Robert Street E, Penetanguishene, ON

Property Owner: Simcoe County Housing Corporation

Zoning: R1 (Residential One)

Proposed Development: Detached Additional Residential Unit (ARU) owned and operated by the Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC). The ARU will be included in the SCHC's affordable housing portfolio.

- 1. Purpose of the application:** *The applicant, on behalf of the Simcoe County Housing Corporation, seeks relief from the following provisions of Zoning By-law 2022-17, to permit the installation of an additional residential unit:*

Variance	By-law Requirement	Proposed	Relief Requested
Accessory Lot Coverage (Section 4.1.2.3)	53.5 m ² (8 % of 669m ² lot)	70.3 m ²	Increase of 16.8 m ²
Side Yard Setback (ARU) (Section 4.1.2.2)	3.0 m	2.22 m	Reduction of 0.78 m
Side Yard Setback (Section 4.2.2.g)ii)	4.5m	2.2m	Reduction of 2.3m
Gross Floor Area (Section 4.2.2.b)	45% of the gross floor area of principal dwelling	51%	Increase to 51%
Gross Floor Area (Section 4.2.2.b)	GFA of the ADU may not exceed 60m ²	61.3m ²	Increase of 1.3m ²

The combined variances will facilitate a functional, fully detached, wheelchair accessible one bedroom ARU on a 669 m² (0.07 acre) property, while maintaining compliance with all other zoning requirements, including building height, interior, front

and rear setbacks from property lines, and spatial separation from neighboring properties.

Planning Act – Four Tests for Minor Variance

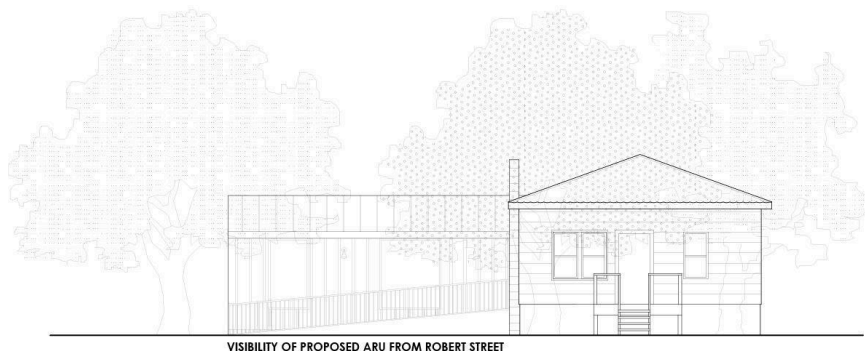
1. The Variances are Minor in Nature

Although the Gross Floor Area variance results in the ARU being approximately 51% of the principal dwelling's GFA (main floor + basement), the variance is minor when evaluated in terms of physical impact, built form, land use compatibility, and overall lot coverage.

The proposed ARU is subordinate to the principal dwelling unit, as it will have a low-profile and no basement, and will be inconspicuously located entirely within the rear yard of the principal dwelling with access through the principal dwelling's side yard. In addition, the ARU is proposed to rely on, and tie into, the principal dwelling's existing water and wastewater connection to the municipal services, as well as electrical services; thus dependent, as the secondary use, to the established principal dwelling.

The proposed ARU:

- Has a total floor area of 61.3 m² and is a single storey - making it modest in absolute terms
- Is 3.5 m in height, approximately 1.2m lower in height than the principal dwelling
- Can accommodate street access and parking requirements
- Has minimal visibility from both the front and exterior side streets
- Is screened by existing mature foliage that is intended to be retained

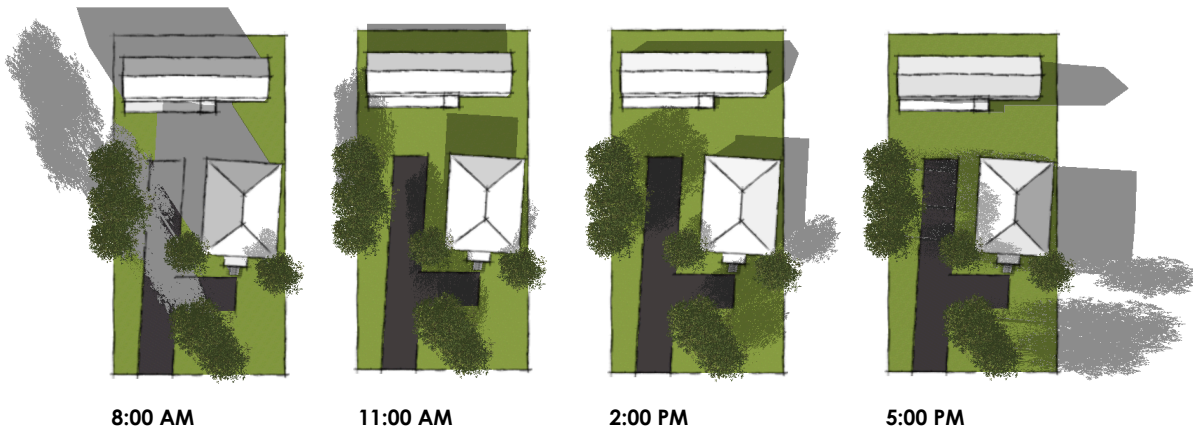


The total lot coverage for the property, including both the principal dwelling and the ARU, is 141.6 m², representing only 21% of the 669 m² lot area. This reflects a low overall coverage consistent with the character of the R1 zone and demonstrates that the proposed ARU maintains sufficient separation between neighbouring property and the primary dwelling unit and that the site remains predominantly open space.

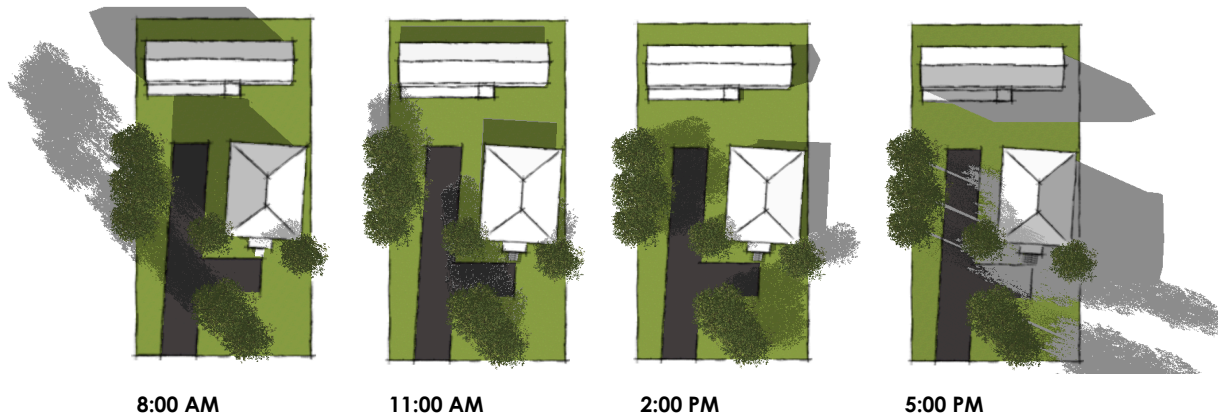
The ARU is positioned approximately 20 feet from the principal dwelling, maintaining clear spatial separation and reinforcing its subordinate character. Shadow and overlook impacts are negligible, with a lot that is oriented north-south:

- To the east is a grassed culvert (road frontage).
- To the south is the existing principal dwelling.
- To the west is a church property set significantly back from the shared boundary.
- To the north is a residential driveway.

PRELIMINARY SITE SHADOW STUDIES - MARCH



PRELIMINARY SITE SHADOW STUDIES - SEPTEMBER



The ARU casts shadow only onto driveway areas and does not create meaningful shadow impacts on neighbouring buildings or amenity areas. The reduced exterior side yard setback (2.2 m) abuts a road and culvert rather than another residential property, resulting in no privacy or built-form conflicts.

The variance is minor in terms of measurable impact on the subject property, adjacent lands, and the public realm.

2. The Variances are Desirable for the Appropriate Development of the Land

The proposed ARU is a wheelchair accessible, one bedroom unit; and the overall size of the unit is dictated mainly by accessibility requirements, including:

- 1.5 m turning radii
- Barrier-free entry
- Accessible washroom layout
- Appropriate circulation widths
- Functional accessible kitchen configuration

The proposed 61.3 m² unit represents the minimum functional size necessary to meet current accessibility standards and fulfill the Simcoe County Housing Corporations' housing objective to provide affordable and accessible housing in the community.

The development:

- Utilizes existing municipal water and sewer infrastructure
- Requires no additional curb cuts
- Maintains existing parking supply sufficient for both units
- Adds only a modest hard-surfaced pedestrian pathway
- Retains 7 of the 8 existing mature trees on site

The proposal represents efficient and appropriate infill development that enhances housing diversity while preserving site character.

3. The Variances Maintain the Intent and Purpose of the Zoning By-law

The 45% GFA limitation is intended to ensure that any Additional Residential Units remain secondary in nature and do not create built form equivalent to a second principal dwelling. The existing principal dwelling is a modest 2 bedroom unit, constructed in 1954.

The proposal maintains this intent with a design that is physically lower in height than the principal dwelling, located on the rear of the property in order to maintain minimal street exposure, take advantage of visual screening provided by the retained vegetation, and maintain clear separation from the principal dwelling. The ARU does not introduce duplex-style massing, streetscape duplication, or overdevelopment of the lot.



VIEW OF THE EXISTING RESIDENCE FROM ROBERT STREET E

The hierarchy of built form is preserved and the overall lot coverage remains low at 21%. The variance is necessary due to the unusually small size of the principal dwelling - not because the ARU is excessive.

The purpose of the Zoning By-law - to regulate scale, compatibility, and lot utilization - is upheld.

4. The Variances Maintain the Intent and Purpose of the Official Plan

The Town's Official Plan contains a clear policy framework encouraging a range and mix of housing types to respond to local demographic change, population growth, and housing affordability pressures. The Town's Official Plan housing policies reflect a recognized need for diverse housing options - including rental and accessible units - to meet the social, health and well-being of current and future residents, including those with special needs.

The Town's Official Plan specifically addresses the need to prioritize attainable and affordable housing for low and moderate-income households. SCHC, as the property owner, ensures the ARU will be well-managed and rented at an affordable rate. Furthermore, the Official Plan encourages innovative and alternative residential development standards that facilitate affordable housing and more compact development form. The proposed size, design, and built form of the ARU is an innovative development that can be installed on an existing site with minimal impact.

Additionally, municipal and provincial accessibility frameworks emphasize the importance of barrier-free living environments that promote dignity, integration, and equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. The proposed ARU directly aligns with these policy objectives by adding modest, wheelchair-accessible housing within an established settlement area, supporting the efficient use of land and existing services while responding to demonstrated community housing needs.

The proposed ARU:

- Implements a County housing initiative on publicly owned land, offering context-sensitive intensification
- Prioritizes the development of affordable housing
- Provides an innovative and alternative residential development standard
- Provides wheelchair-accessible housing
- Maintains neighbourhood character through compact development, small-scale and limited visibility
- Preserves open space, tree coverage, and exhibits appropriate design characteristics
- Utilizes existing municipal services
- Does not expand servicing demand beyond existing capacity

The development contributes to inclusive and efficient growth while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Conclusion

The proposed detached Additional Residential Unit represents a modest, well-designed, and policy-aligned form of gentle intensification. Although relief is required from the Gross Floor Area provision, the variance arises from the small size of the existing principal dwelling rather than from excessive proposed built form. The ARU remains secondary - lower in height, compact, located in the rear yard, minimally visible from the street, and screened by retained mature trees - while maintaining low overall lot coverage. The unit fulfills a County-identified need for a one-bedroom wheelchair-accessible dwelling and utilizes existing services without altering neighbourhood character or infrastructure demand.

The requested variances are minor in impact, suitable for the appropriate development of the land, and maintain the intent and purpose of both the Zoning By-law and the Official Plan.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the Committee grant the requested relief to permit the proposed ARU at 111 Robert Street East.