
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Hotline

May 7, 1984

Metro

HUMBER RIVER HERITAGE DESIGNATION. York City Council has asked Metro, Etobicoke, and Toronto Councils as well as the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority for comments on the York Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee proposal to designate the Humber as a Canadian Heritage River. The matter cropped up on the Toronto Neighbourhoods Committee agenda on May 3. The text of the proposed submission begins: "The Humber River was the entrance to the heart of America for centuries beyond recorded history. Who controlled the Humber controlled entrance to the west by way of Georgian Bay and south from there to the Mississippi; to the east by Simcoe, the Kawarthas and the Ottawa River". Control will soon pass to the Campeau Corporation, as the Etobicoke Planning staff gave favourable recommendation to Etobicoke's Development Committee on May 2 for Campeau's 781 unit condo development at the mouth of the Humber due west of Humber Bay West Park.

Toronto

CONTROVERSIAL DEVELOPMENT AT WALPOLE AND GREENWOOD RECOMMENDED. While acknowledging implacable opposition on the part of many local residents, the Commissioner of Planning and Development has recommended in favour of the third development proposal designed by Tsow/Pollard Architects for the Greenwood/Walpole site, south of the railroad right-of-way and opposite the Olde Riverdale development. Following an extended series of working committee sessions in 1983, the present proposal for Cityhome has been changed from apartment buildings to townhouses 3 storeys high and containing 120 units. Density has been reduced to 0.98 so that no Official Plan amendment will be required. 50% of the 13 646 m² site will be landscaped open space, and earth berms and roof design techniques will be used to deflect noise. The site is presently zoned for industrial use; the big issue "is the acceptance of assisted rental housing by the neighbourhood". Bicycle parking guidelines call for the provision of 24 spaces "to be located in visible areas near the buildings' entrances".

'CUBE' PARK TO BE SHOWN ON PLAN OF SUBDIVISION. In a brief report to the May 2 meeting of the Land Use Committee, the Commissioner of Planning and Development has recommended that City-owned property be shown on the plan of subdivision application by Olympia and York Developments Ltd. [York, Adelaide West, Bay, King West]. "The City is the owner of a parcel of land known as the "Cube" park within the block to be subdivided and situated between Lots 10 and 11 of the plan of subdivision. The term "Cube" derives from the fact that the ownership is of a "cube" of space, limited in both a horizontal and vertical sense". The subdivision gives the City the chance to confirm title to the 'cube'. The purpose of the subdivision is to eliminate hassles for the owner of First Canadian Place at the Committee of Adjustment.

QUEENS QUAY TRANSIT RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BE 28 M. In a brief report to the May 2 meeting of the Land Use Committee, the Commissioner of Planning and Development has recommended that the Committee not object to an application to the Committee of Adjustment for a variance to the Water's Edge Promenade setback for the Harbour Terrace Ltd. development at 417 Queens Quay West. The southward shift is to accommodate "the possibility of a 28 metre right-of-way along Queens Quay West (as proposed by Metropolitan Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission) should it be approved by Council". The resulting overhang of the building above the Water's Edge Promenade will require installation of 5 columns.

Toronto

END RUN PROPOSED AROUND ASSISTED HOUSING IMPASSE AT HARBOURFRONT. In response to a proposal by Howard Cohen, General Manager of Harbourfront, Planning and Development Commissioner Steve McLaughlin has proposed to the May 2 meeting of the Land Use Committee "That in recognition of Harbourfront's proposal to develop moderately priced private [condominium] apartments, City Council endorse in principle the transfer of assisted housing requirements from John Quay to a reserved site on Bathurst Quay". He further recommended that a further report be made in two years "on the appropriateness of outstanding assisted housing requirements for Harbourfront in relation to the ongoing evolution of assisted housing programs at senior levels of government". The Official Plan now requires that 30% of housing on John Quay to be assisted; these 135 units would be shifted to Bathurst Quay to make way for the moderately priced condos on John Quay.

CITY BUILDING BY-LAW SUPERCEDED. In response to the Committee's request, Toronto's Commissioner of Buildings reported to the May 3 meeting of the Neighbourhoods Committee that the Ontario Building Code "superceded all existing building by-laws respecting the construction and demolition of buildings". The Provincial code came into effect at the end of 1975, and "Accordingly, none of the provisions of the former building by-laws Nos. 300-68 and 9868 are now enforced". The question arose from Committee consideration of the Commissioner of Planning and Development report on the Final Report from the Metropolitan Toronto Task Force on Housing for Low-Income Single People.

CLOCK TOWER TO STAND. Despite a concern raised by the Planning staff that a free standing clock tower to be provided as part of the redevelopment of the southeast corner of Elm and University [525 University Ave.] contravened the University Avenue By-law, the City Solicitor has reported otherwise to the May 2 meeting of the Land Use Committee. The 10 m tower will be located within the street allowance. The City Solicitor concluded "that a structure in the form of a clock tower does not come within the wording in the By-law which prohibits signs, symbols and devices. Nor is the clock tower a building, so as to bring it within the ambit of the portion of the By-law regulating buildings". As University Ave. is a Metro road, Metro approval will be required as well as the City Commissioner of Public Works.

INTERIOR OF UNION STATION TO BE CLEANED. The Managing Director of the Toronto Historical Board has reported to the May 3 meeting of the Neighbourhoods Committee that there is no need to object to the techniques proposed for cleaning the interior of Union Station, a Designated Property. R. Scott James recommended that "City Council consent to the application under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act". No mention was made of the exterior.

CONSULTANT NAMED FOR DEVELOPMENT OPTION STUDY OF CONCORD FARM. The Executive Committee has recommended to the April 30 meeting of City Council that Dillon Consulting Engineers and Planners be retained for a fee "not to exceed \$29,600" "to prepare a comprehensive study of the development potential and marketing approaches for Concord Farm". The City owned property is located in the Town of Vaughan.

BANK OF COMMERCE STAYS ITS HAND - AGAIN. Included in the list of communications before City Council on April 30 was an exchange of letters between Mayor Art Eggleton and J.F. McCallum [Blake Cassels & Graydon], solicitor for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, owner of properties at 36-46 Yonge St. and 5-11 Wellington St. These holdovers from the Great Fire in the early 1900's are under threat of demolition. Under the agreement, which was proposed in March, the Bank will stay its hand for a further 2 months, the deadline now being extended to May 31, 1984. This latest agreement extends the arrangement on the Yonge St. historic buildings to the Wellington St. historic buildings.

NO SETBACKS FOR SWIMMING POOLS. The Commissioner of Planning and Development has recommended to the May 2 meeting of the Land Use Committee an amendment to the Zoning By-law that would exempt privately owned swimming pools from setback requirements from residential buildings, while retaining the setback controls from lot lines. "As privately owned outdoor swimming pools do not involve a loss of light and air or the imposition of overshadowing apart from the necessary enclosing fence, there seems to be no valid purpose to be served in requiring the aforementioned setback in their case".

Scarborough

STUDY APPROACH FOR NORTHEAST SCARBOROUGH LAND STUDY. On May 3, the Planning Committee received a report from the Commissioner of Planning to the effect that the Ontario Land Corporation had agreed to fund the planning study for the northeast corner of the City, the entire 4700 acre area to the north and east of the Rouge River, now in open space, agricultural, and zoo use. "The major issue in this area is the determination of appropriate long term land uses. These land uses could range from the status quo to full urban development". The first open house sessions to present information on the area are scheduled for September 1985. Community liaison groups will be formed at the same time.

HEATHCLIFFE CONSENT APPLICATION RECOMMENDED. The May 3 Planning Committee agenda contained a Planning staff report recommending in favour of a 4 parcel consent application by Heathcliffe Developments Ltd. at the southwest corner of Eglinton and McCowan "for mortgaging and conveyancing purposes". Three parcels will be used for apartment buildings, while the corner parcel will be for office and commercial uses.

MAY 14 HEARING ON APARTMENT DEVELOPMENT, NORTHWEST CORNER OF ELLESMERE AND MORNELLE COURT. City Council will hear plenty of objections to the proposed King County Development Corp. development of 330 units. Nearby residents are concerned about going above the Official Plan development limit for the area (the planners are not), traffic congestion, school overcrowding, and disturbance of a waste disposal site, which could result in methane gas release. The applicant has agreed to "defer a zoning change until further engineering work can identify an acceptable methane gas control system and until the legal means to ensure perpetual operation of such a system have been established". Thus only the Official Plan amendment for Higher Density Residential Uses (Multiple-Family and Apartments) goes ahead.

OFFICES CRITICIZED IN INDUSTRIAL AREA. On May 14, City Council will hear objections to the Turbine Investments Ltd. proposal for an office/commercial development at the southwest corner of Finch and Tapscott. Nearby residents prefer a straightforward industrial development, in hopes that noise and traffic will be limited to daytime hours. The site is in the Marshalling Yard Industrial District. Despite the objections, Planning staff have continued to support the proposal. "Having considered the concerns of both the residents and the industrial property owners in the vicinity, we continue to endorse that an office use development has considerable merit at this location". Staff endorsed the retail commercial component as well in terms of improving project viability and attracting jobs to the area.

Etobicoke

TRIDEL DEVELOPMENT AND WOODLOT RECOMMENDED. Following "the culmination of a collaborative effort by the developer, the City and area residents", Planning staff recommended approval of a "2-tower, 280-unit apartment complex linked at grade by a single storey recreation complex" by Tridel Construction Ltd. on the south side of Humberline Drive to the May 2 meeting of the Development Committee. The 18 and 11 storey apartment buildings have been sited to minimize their effects on nearby single family dwellings as well as to protect the Woodbine Downs maple and beech woodlot. Prior subdivision approval by Metro requires that the woodlot be secured to the City as public open space. As a condition of approval, an environmental impact study must be submitted by the applicant "to recommend measures satisfactory to the City to preserve as many trees as possible on the lands".

WESTWOOD THEATRE STORAGE AREA FOR WATERFRONT AND DOWNTOWN "RELIEF" RAPID TRANSIT LINES. In a report to the May 2 Development Committee, Planning staff pointed out that while the development of the Westwood Theatre property "is essential to the realization of a [Kipling/Islington] centre in the area", its potential is academic until another rail storage yard is secured. "T.T.C. staff have recently completed a rail yard needs study which recommends that a site owned by the City of Toronto be secured for the future waterfront and relief rapid transit lines".

EDITOR Alan Demb

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Etobicoke

COMMUNITY SERVICES STUDY TAKES DIG AT PLANNING ACT. The executive summary of 'The Kipling/Islington Community Services Study' contained in the May 2 Development Committee agenda was not very kind to the new Planning Act: "Finally, it should be noted that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing does not consider social planning policies, under which community services fall, to be appropriate for inclusion in a land use plan. It is therefore thought advisable that the recommendations contained in this report be adopted as guidelines, to be used in conjunction with the Secondary Plan to be developed for the area". The study found that facilities should cater to the needs of the elderly and young adults, in terms of the the expected redevelopment of the area "as a downtown core for Etobicoke". Needed facilities included "an Arts and Culture centre, a storefront library and a multi-service facility", also "a mental health clinic, senior and youth drop-in centres".

BINGO AT SIX POINTS PLAZA. In a report to the May 2 Development Committee meeting, Planning staff have recommended a change in the zoning code to allow a seven day per week bingo within the Six Points Plaza. "Six Points Plaza was built in the early 1950's and in the absence of any local, major competition, it performed the function of an almost regional-type facility. Since then, the plaza has evolved to a discount-type centre....It is somewhat of an anomaly, inasmuch as it is a mall in transition". The license to operate will limit the bingo to 300 persons capacity in deference to a perceived parking shortage, a matter of no great concern to the plaza merchants , who strongly supported the application.

THE TOYS 'R' COMING. In a report to the May 2 meeting of the Development Committee, Planning staff gave support to an application by Sheridan Nurseries Ltd. to amend the Official Plan and the Zoning Code to permit a Toys 'R' Us toy supermarket-like facility south of Sherway Gardens on the northeast corner of Evans Ave. and Sherway Gate, abutting the Queen Elizabeth Way. The site had previously been approved for two 7 storey office buildings, but Council's conditional approval has long since lapsed. The report used the Larry Smith and Associates Market Demand Study for the Campeau lands as the basis to admit "that while office uses would be desirable at this location, the market demand is limited at this time". The market study projected the continued decline of Etobicoke office space growth rate to the turn of the century [23 225 m² in 1971; 15 793 m² to 1991; 11 148 m² afterward].

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