

Clause embodied in Report No. 10 of the Administration Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002.

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**Studying the Redevelopment of the  
St. Lawrence Market North Building  
(Ward 28 - Toronto Centre-Rosedale)**

*(City Council at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)*

**The Administration Committee recommends the adoption of the report (June 6, 2002) from the Commissioner of Corporate Services subject to amending Recommendation No. (2) to read as follows:**

**“(2) the Commissioner of Corporate Services be directed to study redevelopment options with due consideration to transitional planning issues that optimize the accommodation of existing tenants for the St. Lawrence Market North Building and, after consultation with affected stakeholders, report back to the Administration Committee in the Spring of 2003 on a preferred redevelopment option;”.**

**The Administration Committee submits the following report (June 6, 2002) from the Commissioner of Corporate Services:**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide information on recent initiatives to study the feasibility of redeveloping the St. Lawrence Market North Building, which is an integral component of the St. Lawrence Market Complex, and to seek City Council's direction to proceed with the examination of redevelopment options for this building.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council approve in principle the concept of redeveloping the St. Lawrence Market North Building;

- (2) the Commissioner of Corporate Services be directed to study redevelopment options for the St. Lawrence Market North Building and, after consultation with affected stakeholders, report back to the Administration Committee in the Spring of 2003 on a preferred redevelopment option; and
- (3) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

History of St. Lawrence Market:

First established in 1803, the St. Lawrence Market is one of Toronto's most valuable historical sites. For almost 200 years, the St. Lawrence Market has remained Toronto's oldest and best-established food market, while simultaneously fostering social and cultural interaction through its history and tradition. Following a recommendation made as early as 1796, Lieutenant Governor Peter Hunter issued a proclamation in 1803, that all land north of Front Street, west of Jarvis Street, south of King Street and east of Church Street be officially designated as the Market Block. Located within the Town of York, the Market Block became the City's first public market used exclusively for market related activities. The Market was initially conducted outdoors with no protective shelter until the construction of a small, primitive wooden structure built on the northern end of the Market Block fronting onto King Street.

In 1831, the municipal government built a more permanent structure designed to incorporate a number of uses, including municipal offices, a grammar school, a mechanics institute, and the Market. When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, the Market was reinvested to the City to hold to and for the public uses of the City. Since then, the St. Lawrence Market has been owned, operated and managed by the City of Toronto.

The wooden Market building was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1849, as was much of the City. Then, plans emerged to rebuild the Market Block area, which was renamed the St. Lawrence Buildings in honour of Canada's patron saint and in reference to the political ward of St. Lawrence where it was located. Construction of the new St. Lawrence Buildings began in 1850, and included the construction of St. Lawrence Hall, which was to serve as the social centre of the City, hosting public meetings, concerts, lectures, and exhibitions. The St. Lawrence Hall was built on the southwest corner of King Street East and Jarvis Street, while a new North Market Building was constructed to the south, on the northwest corner of Front Street East and Jarvis Street.

During the same time, a City Hall was built on the southwest corner of Front Street East and Jarvis Street, which later became known as the South Market Building. The original building accommodated municipal offices, a Council Chamber, a farmers market and a police station. In 1899, when a new City Hall was built at the northeast corner of Queen Street West and Bay Street, the existing City Hall building was renovated to house the much larger market that exists today.

At the turn of the century, the North Market Building was demolished and, in 1904, a new building was constructed, with a canopy connecting the North and South Market Buildings, which allowed shoppers to enter off King Street and proceed sheltered to the South Market. The canopy was later removed in 1954. In 1968, the North Market Building was demolished and replaced with the present building.

Although the St. Lawrence Market has undergone a vast history of change, it has remained a vibrant centre within the city and an essential component of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood. Every week, shoppers from all over the City flock to the Market to purchase farm fresh produce, meats and other goods, and to participate in an historic tradition within the City of Toronto.

#### Existing Composition of St. Lawrence Market Complex:

The St. Lawrence Market Complex is comprised of three structures and is bordered by King Street to the north, Jarvis Street to the east, The Esplanade to the south and Market Street (and Market Lane) to the west. The three structures that make up the St. Lawrence Market Complex, as shown on the Location Map attached (see Appendix A) are:

- (i) St. Lawrence Hall;
- (ii) North Farmers Market Building; and
- (ii) South Market Building.

#### (a) St. Lawrence Hall:

Built in 1850 and restored in 1967 as the former City of Toronto's Centennial Project, the St. Lawrence Hall is a 4-storey brick and stone structure fronting on King Street East. Today, the St. Lawrence Hall houses retail businesses on the ground floor, including a high-end restaurant and a home decor shop. Various City offices are located on the second floor. The third floor contains the Great Hall. This elaborately and elegantly designed room, together with the East Room and VIP lounge, which are available on a rental basis, continue to serve as popular locations for an array of social and business functions.

#### (b) North Farmers Market Building:

The St. Lawrence North Farmers Market Building constructed in 1968 is described as a "blockhouse" style building, a style that was popular at the time of construction. The building is a one storey brick building with arcades on the east and west sides of the building. The west facade of the building has retail space facing Market Lane. There is no physical connection between St. Lawrence Hall and this building, except for a common mechanical room located at the rear of these buildings.

The North Farmers Market Building is home to the weekly farmers market on Saturdays and the antique market on Sundays. During the week, the North Building is available for rental for a variety of functions.

(c) South Market Building:

The original 19 century, three-storey South Market Building was built in 1845 to serve as Toronto's first City Hall and is located on the site bounded by Front Street to the north, Jarvis Street to the east, The Esplanade to the south and Market Street to the west, with the main entrance fronting on Front Street. The food market is open daily from Tuesdays to Saturdays and is located on the main floor and basement level. The second and third floors are occupied by the Market Gallery, the official exhibition centre for the City of Toronto Archives, which features changing exhibitions on Toronto's art, culture and history.

Past Redevelopment Efforts:

In the mid 1980s, the former City of Toronto reviewed the operation of the St. Lawrence Market Complex to strengthen its functionality as a business unit within the City Property Department. A strategic vision was developed to guide the future of the Market Complex. One of the essential components of this vision was the redevelopment of the North Building to maximize the site's full potential and introduce new uses that would benefit the St. Lawrence Market complex as a whole.

A comprehensive redevelopment study for the North Market Building was completed in 1987. However, a lack of consultation with various stakeholders led to significant opposition by the public and market vendors and the eventual withdrawal of all redevelopment plans.

Comments:

1.0 Current Issues for North Market Building:

Many of the issues identified in the late 1980s concerning the North Market Building are still valid today. Regardless of its important location and its close proximity to other major facilities and amenities, the North Market Building is greatly underutilized and is used primarily only on Saturdays and Sundays for the Farmers and Antique Markets, although the building is available for rental throughout the balance of the week.

The building, which is considered to be cheaply constructed and not built for a "market" style use, is plagued by an array of operational issues resulting from the lack of on-site parking and loading facilities and the fact the building does not meet current health and safety requirements. As such, the poor design of the building has resulted in its operational inefficiencies for market and other activities and has significantly contributed to its underutilization. Another ongoing concern is the incompatibility of the building with the heritage character of the other buildings in the complex and in the area.

1.1 Parking Concerns:

The lack of convenient parking on site and in the area is perhaps the most critical issue affecting the St. Lawrence Market Complex. Over the last few decades, development within the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood has flourished at an unprecedented rate. While

the need for additional parking in the area has increased over the years, many of the existing surface parking lot sites have been eliminated, replaced by new building development. As such, increased development has occurred with a decrease in the availability of convenient parking.

The largest parking facility in the vicinity is a municipal parking garage located southwest of the South Market Building. While this garage can accommodate up to 2,000 cars, it is extensively utilized for commuter parking during the week, leaving few spaces for visitors and shoppers to the area.

The lack of parking has contributed to the underutilization of the North Market Building. The parking shortage has limited the City's ability to rent out the building for various functions during the week such as trade shows, which generate a high demand for parking for out-of-town visitors.

The Farmers Market held on Saturdays is also negatively impacted by this lack of parking. While public transit is available, many shoppers arrive at the market by car and parking, is, therefore, in high demand. In addition, there is the issue of convenience for families with children and customers loaded down with purchases.

## 1.2 Lack of Loading Facilities:

One of the greatest challenges faced by the North Market Building vendors is the lack of loading facilities to serve the building. Most of the loading and unloading of market goods and supplies is carried out along Jarvis and Front Streets, causing great inconvenience for merchants, vendors and other users of the building, as well as pedestrians. Noise generated during loading and unloading activities is also a significant concern for nearby residents.

## 1.3 Building Health and Safety Issues:

The North Building constructed close to 35 years ago is outdated, in poor condition, and in need of extensive repairs and upgrades to address numerous health and safety requirements. For example, current health regulations require that certain products sold at the market be refrigerated. As the building is not fitted with appropriate power outlets and drain systems, an array of overhanging extension cords is strung to provide power for portable refrigeration units. The building also lacks proper hand and utensil washing facilities for vendors. While creative methods have been used to meet this demand through the use of portable coolers, water jugs and buckets, permanent facilities with running water are needed.

The light fixtures throughout the building are outdated and in poor condition and require replacement. The doors are also outdated and require repair or replacement. The roof of the building also needs replacement in the near future.

#### 1.4 Heritage Character of the Area:

Another important consideration is the heritage character of the area. The 1960's design of the North Building is incompatible with the heritage character of the existing South Market Building, St. Lawrence Hall and the surrounding historic Market Area. The north-south streetscape is disrupted by the presence of the North Market Building. The North Building structure does not blend with the visual historic character of the neighbourhood. Although attempts have been made to enhance the appearance of the North Building, such as painting a mural depicting market activities on the south facade, the building fails to reflect the heritage character of the neighbourhood as a whole.

Historically, the entire Market Complex was linked and accessible from King Street to The Esplanade. With construction of the existing North Building in 1968, this traditional link and the visual flow in the Market Complex were destroyed.

#### 2.0 Recent Community Sponsored Initiatives for Redeveloping the North Market Building:

In January of 1999, the issue of the underutilization of the North Market Building was again raised. In view of the failed initiative in the mid-1980s resulting from the lack of communication, it was considered prudent to recruit the assistance of the neighbourhood representatives to secure preliminary input from appropriate stakeholders. The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA) began to look at various options for redeveloping the North Building in order to determine the best possible utilization of the site. The SLNA elected a subcommittee known as the St. Lawrence Community and Farmers (North) Market Redevelopment Initiative, the main goal of which was to lead the initiative for the redevelopment of the North Market as a multipurpose facility for farmers, the community, general commerce and other users. It should be noted that staff provided support and direction to the SLNA, but at the same time, made it clear that any decisions with respect to proceeding with redevelopment of the North Market would require strong stakeholders support and a supportable business case.

Then, the Subcommittee established the Ambassadors, a steering committee made up of representatives from an array of stakeholders, including the St. Lawrence BIA, St. Lawrence Market Complex, North Market Farmers Association, York Heritage Properties, St. Lawrence Works, South Market Merchants, Citizens for the Olde Town, St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association, and other residents and interest groups. The St. Lawrence Community and Farmers (North) Market Redevelopment Initiative and its steering committee began to hold a series of meetings with various community groups and made a series of presentations to local residents, condo associations, neighbourhood associations, business associations and others groups to keep stakeholders informed and to receive feedback on every step of the initiative.

Another important participant in this process has been the South East Downtown Economic Redevelopment Initiative (SEDERI), which includes a member of the St. Lawrence Community and Farmers (North) Market Redevelopment Initiative. In November 2000, SEDERI, which is funded by Human Resources Development Canada, provided the St. Lawrence Community and Farmers (North) Market Redevelopment

Initiative with funding for a feasibility study and a design concept report on redeveloping the North Market Building. In November 2001, Spears and Associates Inc. completed the feasibility study, which was followed in April 2002 by the St. Lawrence Market North Redevelopment Concept Design Report prepared by Bregman + Hamann Architects. Currently, both of these reports are being discussed with various community representatives, including the North Market Farmers Association.

### 3.0 Moving Forward:

The representatives of SLNA and SEDERI have done an admirable job in flushing out the general viability of alternative redevelopment options. In order for the City to proceed with any redevelopment plans for the North Market Building, it is now necessary to undertake a more comprehensive review of the possible redevelopment scenarios or options, including undertaking a financial analysis to support a preferred option for the project. The redevelopment options for the North Market Building discussed in the recently completed feasibility study and design concept report commissioned by the St. Lawrence Community and Farmers (North) Market Redevelopment Initiative will provide a good starting point to determine the most viable redevelopment scheme for this site.

Staff from Corporate Services Department, Facilities and Real Estate Division will undertake this more comprehensive review and will consult extensively with staff from other City departments such as Finance, Urban Development Services, Works and Emergency Services and Economic Development, Culture and Tourism and also the Toronto Parking Authority on issues relevant to the project.

During the past two years, extensive communication and co-operation have been established with the vast majority of stakeholders in the community, including residents and neighbourhood associations, condominium associations, local merchants and business groups and the various market groups. As a result, much more community support now surrounds the potential redevelopment of the St. Lawrence Market North Building than existed in the late 1980s.

### Conclusions:

The St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood is one of the most historic neighbourhoods within the City of Toronto. For almost 200 hundred years, farmers, merchants and shoppers alike have participated in the long held tradition of a farmers market in the area. The North Farmers Market Building, while being an essential component of the St. Lawrence Market Complex, does not “fit” the neighbourhood, has significant deferred capital maintenance, and is a greatly underutilized City asset. This report recommends that the Commissioner of Corporate Services investigate redevelopment options for this site, and after consultation with affected internal and external stakeholders, report on a preferred redevelopment option in Spring 2003.

Contact:

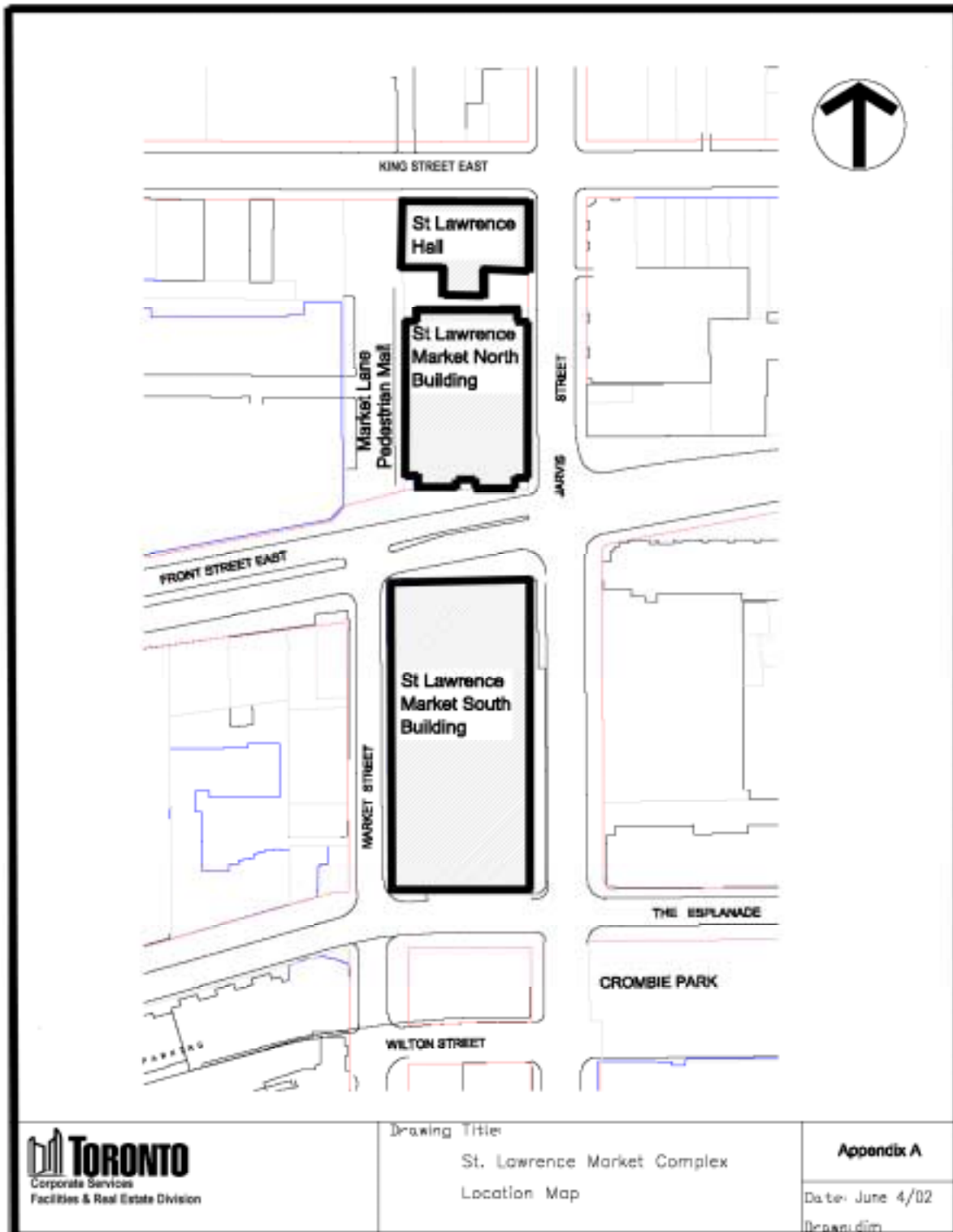
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List of Attachments:

Appendix A - Location Map - St. Lawrence Market Complex.



Ms. Marlene Cook appeared before the Administration Committee in connection with the foregoing matter.