

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

August 24, 2006

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District

Subject: Preliminary Report
OPA and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications
06 152217 WET 02 OZ and 06 167659 WET 02 OZ
Applicant: Stephen Diamond, McCarthy Tetrault, LLP
555 Rexdale Boulevard
Ward 2 - Etobicoke North

Purpose:

To provide preliminary information on the above-noted application and to seek Community Council's directions on further processing of the application and on the community consultation process.

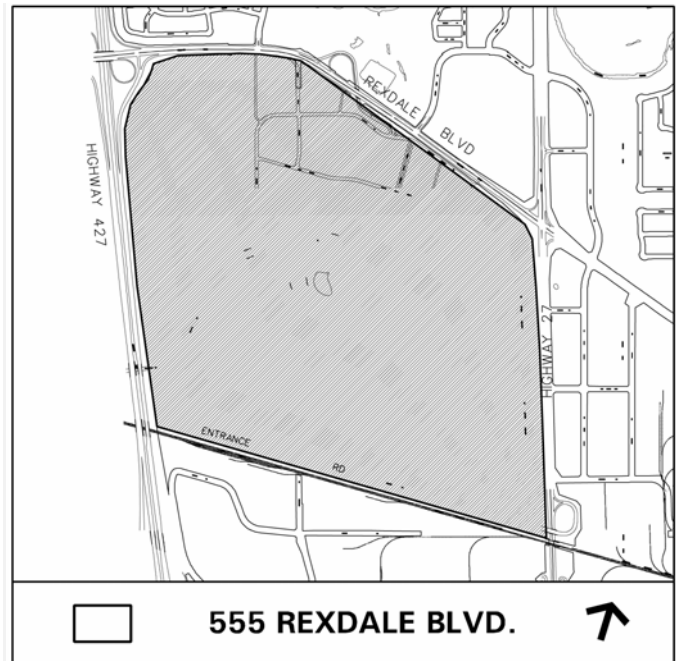
Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) staff be directed to schedule a community consultation meeting /open house together with the Ward Councillor;
- (2) notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within 120 metres of the site; and
- (3) notice for the Public Meeting under the Planning Act be given according to the regulations under the Planning Act.



Background:

The former Ontario Jockey Club, now known as the Woodbine Entertainment Group, has operated a racetrack and associated stables on the site since 1956. The lands have become the hub of the thoroughbred industry in Canada and the home of the Queen's Plate, one of the "triple crown" of the thoroughbred racing circuit. The company is identified as a key economic driver in horse breeding and racing which is the second largest agricultural industry in the Province.

A portion of the original racetrack holdings was conveyed to Cadillac Fairview in 1983 for the Woodbine Shopping Centre, located on the north side of Rexdale Boulevard. A subsequent application for the development of a vacant 23 hectare portion of the racetrack lands for the purposes of retail, hotel, office and prestige industrial uses was submitted to the former City of Etobicoke in October of 1992. However, the proposal did not proceed for economic reasons.

In 1998, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing permitted the operation of slot machines on the lands through Zoning Order 688/98. The slot machines are managed by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, and have coexisted with the racetrack since March of 2000.

The Woodbine Entertainment Group advises that it is a not-for-profit corporation without share capital, operating a multi-dimensional entertainment business focused on horseracing. The company has no shareholders and, therefore, as required under its not-for-profit status, reinvests its cash flow, after debt repayment, towards the facility and product upgrades. It is the largest operator of horse racing in Canada employing 2,700 individuals and is recognized as being one of the most innovative racing companies in North America. The corporation owns and operates Woodbine Racetrack in Toronto, Mohawk Racetrack in Campbellville Ontario, the Champions Off-track Wagering Network, Turf Lounge, WEGZ Stadium Bar, and HorsePlayer Interactive TV.

Recently, Woodbine Entertainment Group advises that it has entered into a joint venture arrangement with the Cordish Company, for the development of an urban entertainment centre on the lands that would ensure the retention of the premier racing facility. The Cordish Company is a major developer of urban entertainment centres in the United States. The company has developed projects in Baltimore, Maryland and Louisville, Kentucky including many joint venture projects with municipal governments. The development team on this project includes Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners; BA Group as Transportation Consultants, and Walker Nott Dragicevic as Planning and Urban Design consultants.

The partnership, known as Woodbine Live GP, submitted an application for an Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment on June 29, 2006 and August 17, 2006 respectively.

Comments:

The applicant is proposing the development of a residential neighbourhood and mixed use urban entertainment district which is intended to be both ancillary and likely supplementary to the existing racetrack and associated facilities.

The applicant has submitted a Master Plan document describing the urban design vision as creating a unique sense of place that will be actively used year round, while building on and being respectful of the existing racing operation. The urban design emphasis proposes to continue the open space, campus-like traditions of the racetrack lands, and to create pedestrian friendly neighbourhoods with a mix of uses, and a variety of architectural styles.

The proposal is organized into a series of districts, oriented to a central spine on which a hotel, live theatre venue, cinemas, open air galleria, skating park, water feature and canal are situated. There are two development zones, a Residential District and a Commercial District which are divided into smaller precincts or neighbourhoods, each with its own distinct design vocabulary. The Commercial District comprises four components, including: a Lifestyle and Entertainment Neighbourhood; a Midtown/Office Neighbourhood; a Retail Neighbourhood; and a Community Neighbourhood.

The development will be phased over a number of years. The site will continue to be served by the existing road network with the provision of additional public and private roads to serve the new development blocks as development proceeds. Parking for the proposed commercial development will be provided in the surface parking lots that serve the existing Woodbine racetrack with additional parking proposed within certain neighbourhoods, where appropriate.

The Official Plan application proposes a total gross floor area of 502 500 square metres. This includes 209 000 square metres residential and 293 500 square metres office/retail/entertainment uses (all figures rounded). It is anticipated that the actual floor area allocations will be refined through submission of supporting material and refinement of the development concept. A summary table outlining the proposed development is included as Attachment No. 9 to this report.

Site Description

The property consists of an undeveloped 81 hectare portion of the existing 266 hectare Woodbine racetrack lands located to the north and west of the racetrack. The racetrack and associated grandstand are centrally located on the property and are not affected by the proposal. The majority of the parking spaces serving the racetrack are located to the north and east of the grandstand. A number of ancillary buildings are located south of the racetrack, including stables, and dormitories for jockeys.

The lands surrounding the property include low and high-density residential development to the north; the Woodbine Shopping Centre to the northeast; surface parking lots, Highway No. 27 and a range of commercial and industrial uses on the east side of Highway No. 27 to the east; the Woodbine racetrack, gaming and associated facilities and industrial uses to the south; and, Highway No. 427 and industrial uses to the west. With the exception of the residential lands to the north, the context is characterized by large-scale buildings with expansive surface parking lots.

The property is located approximately four kilometers from Lester B. Pearson International Airport and connected via the regional road network to Highway No. 407 to the north, Highway No. 401 to the south, Highway No. 427 to the west and Highway No. 27 to the east. Transit is available via a number of surface bus routes with an opportunity for a future GO station. Current direct access is provided via Highway No. 27 and existing private and public roads.

Toronto Official Plan

The lands are identified in the Toronto Official Plan as an Employment District on Map 2 Urban Structure, and designated as an Employment Area on Map 13 Land Use Plan. The site is also subject to Special Site Policy 29.

Employment Districts permit a broad array of economic activities. Employment Districts offer locations for a variety of employment opportunities including key clusters and activities that benefit from strategic locations. In order to promote expansion of employment activities in Employment Districts, incompatible uses are discouraged.

The Employment Area policies provide for a range of uses including offices, manufacturing, warehousing, hotels, research and development facilities, media facilities, parks, retail outlets ancillary to the permitted uses, restaurants, and small-scale stores and services that serve area businesses and workers. Recreation and entertainment facilities are permitted on major streets. In addition, large-scale stand-alone power centres are permitted on major streets through a rezoning provided they are on the boundary of the Employment Area designation and certain impacts are addressed.

The Woodbine lands are subject to Special Site Policy No. 29 which provides that “new residential and other sensitive land uses may be permitted on the Woodbine Racetrack lands provided at the time of rezoning no new residential uses are located within the Transport Canada approved 30 NEF/NEP Composite Noise Contour”. The northwest portion of the lands, shown as the proposed residential neighbourhood, would not appear to be within this noise contour. Residential development is prohibited on the balance of the Woodbine Racetrack lands.

The application proposes an expansion of the retail/entertainment uses presently on the site, and the addition of residential uses consistent with Special Site Policy 29. Given the scale and potential phasing of the retail and residential components, the master plan for the entire site will be reviewed in the context of the Official Plan policies and requirements related to large sites and community building, including the need for overall urban design guidelines, the provision of infrastructure such as public streets and the creation of parks and recreational facilities, among other issues outlined in this report.

Former Etobicoke Official Plan

On July 6, 2006 the Ontario Municipal Board issued Order No. 1928 bringing the majority of the new Official Plan into full force and effect. The Order also repealed most of the policies of the City of Etobicoke Official Plan and Metro Plan that were previously in effect. However, the Order did not bring into force the new Plan policies related to Section 37, Housing and the flood

plain "Special Policy Areas". Policies in the City of Etobicoke Official Plan and Metro Plan respecting these three policy areas remain in effect.

Zoning

The site is zoned Class Two Industrial (I.C2) and subject to the Minister's Zoning Order filed as Ontario Regulation 688/98, which permits slot machines at racetracks. The Etobicoke Zoning By-law permits restaurants, administrative offices, banquet halls, entertainment facilities, cinemas, bowling alleys, amusement arcades, hotels and retail sales of products manufactured or stored on site subject to certain performance standards. An amendment to the Zoning By-law is required to accommodate the full range of uses including the residential uses requested by the applicant and to implement the appropriate development standards.

Site Plan Control

The property is subject to Site Plan Control. A Site Plan application will be filed in the future when the details of the project are resolved through the Official Plan and zoning submissions.

Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (the "PPS"), issued pursuant to Section 3 of the Planning Act, came into effect on March 1, 2005. The primary goals of the PPS are to promote strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy. The PPS provides for growth primarily through intensification and redevelopment. Land use patterns are to be based on densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use land and resources and are appropriate for and efficiently use the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available.

With respect to Employment Areas, the PPS provides for an appropriate mix and range of employment to meet long term needs, opportunities for a diversified economic base, planning for and protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses and ensuring infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs. With respect to housing, the PPS promotes densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of alternative transportation modes and public transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed.

Greater Toronto Airport Authority

The applications have also been circulated to the Greater Toronto Airport Authority for review with respect to aircraft noise issues and conformity with airport height restrictions.

Reasons for the Application

As referenced above, the Plan permits much of the commercial use proposed. Residential development is contemplated on the northwest portion of the lands through a site-specific policy in the new Official Plan. A revision to the land use map is required to add an appropriate

residential designation. The application will otherwise be reviewed within the context of all of the Official Plan polices especially related to the need to create “whole communities” and particularly where residential permission is considered to be appropriate.

An amendment to the Zoning By-law will be necessary to accommodate the full range of uses requested by the applicant. A site-specific zoning by-law would also be appropriate to implement appropriate development standards.

Issues to be Resolved

This is a significant development proposal which represents an opportunity to implement many of the Official Plan’s objectives and policies with respect to city building. The applicant advises that the economic and social benefits of their proposal will result in the employment of approximately 9,000 people and the generation of more than 150 million dollars a year in tax revenue to the municipal, provincial and federal governments.

A development of this scale brings revitalization and reinvestment in the social, economic and environmental infrastructure. It will be important to capitalize on this opportunity to maximize the change and advance various initiatives including such opportunities as transit improvements in the northwest part of the City, community development and building relationships between institutions in the area. The following issues must be addressed as the proposal evolves:

- (a) consideration of the Secondary Plan policies and conformity with the large site policies of the Official Plan;
- (b) market and transportation considerations with respect to the proposed retail uses pursuant to the Official Plan’s Employment Area policies;
- (c) the availability, need and opportunities for enhancement of transportation services, parks and recreation facilities, tourism facilities, pedestrian systems and municipal services and infrastructure will be reviewed;
- (d) the form and scale of the proposed residential development on the lands;
- (e) urban design objectives, guidelines and parameters ensuring high quality architecture, landscape and design including the provision of public art and promotion of connections with adjacent areas;
- (f) preservation of trees, ravines, and natural heritage features;
- (g) the potential for environmental enhancement including the implementation of “green” development standards;
- (h) phasing of development and alternative implementation strategies including the potential use of a subdivision agreement, holding by-laws and an agreement under Section 37 of the Planning Act; and

- (i) other issues raised through the circulation of the application to civic officials and through the community consultation process.

Conclusions:

It is recommended that an initial community meeting / open house be scheduled. Additional public meetings may be warranted to consider specific aspects of the development. These will be organized in consultation with the applicant and the Ward Councillor. Given the extensive phased approvals required for this complex project, it is recommended that staff investigate alternative implementation strategies to facilitate the orderly and timely development of the lands. The completion of further staff reports and the statutory public meeting under the Planning Act is targeted for the second quarter of 2007, provided that all required information is submitted to the City in a timely manner.

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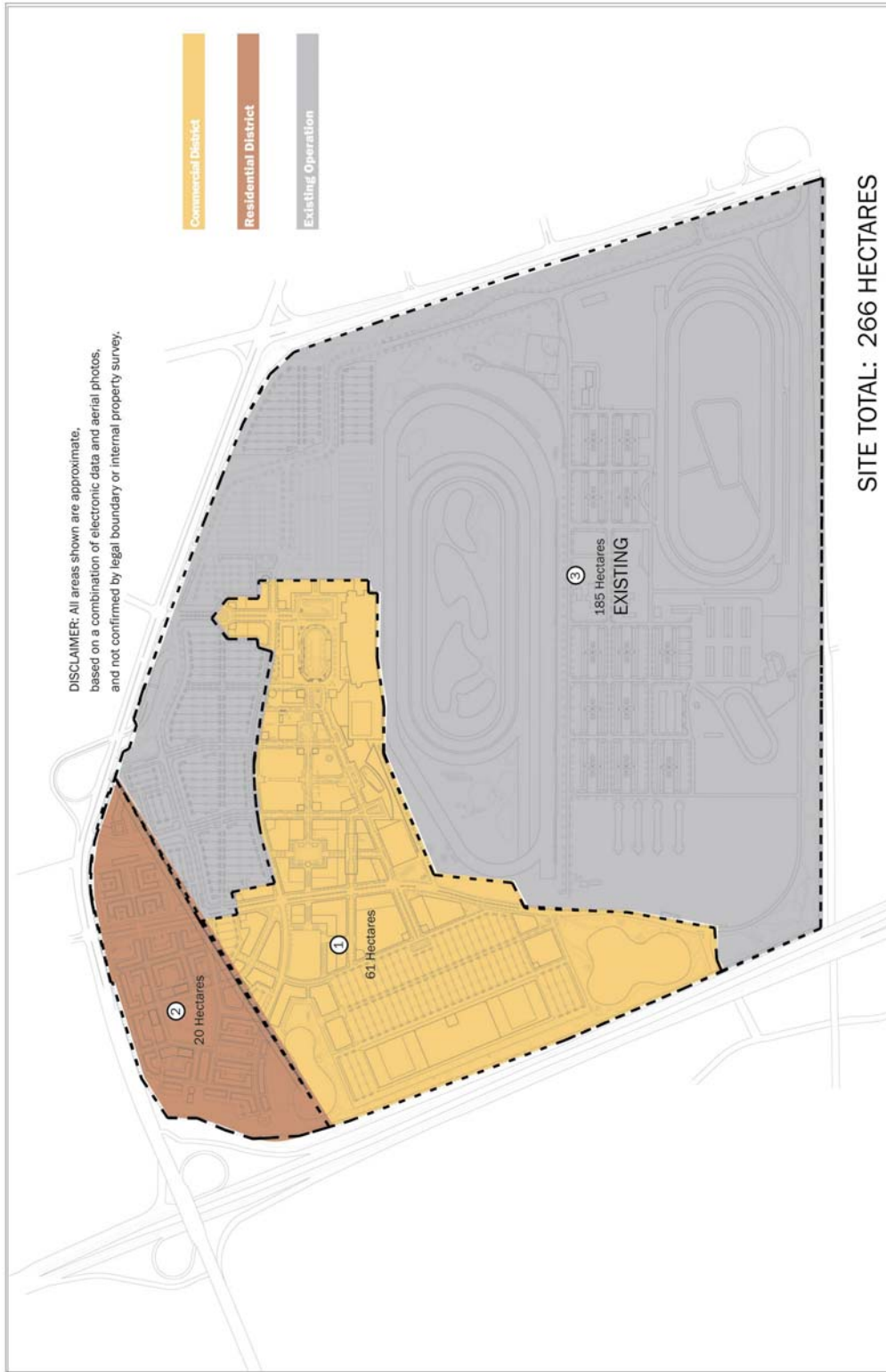
List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Master Plan
Attachment 2: District Plan
Attachment 3: Ice Park Plaza Neighbourhood Concept
Attachment 4: Galleria Neighbourhood Concept
Attachment 5: Toronto Official Plan
Attachment 6: Zoning
Attachment 7: Application Data Sheet

Attachment 1: Master Plan



Attachment 2: District Plan



Attachment 3: Ice Park Plaza Neighbourhood Concept



Attachment 4: Galleria Neighbourhood Concept



Beyer
Blinder
Belle

Attachment 5: Toronto Official Plan



 **TORONTO** City Planning Division
Official Plan

555 Rexdale Boulevard

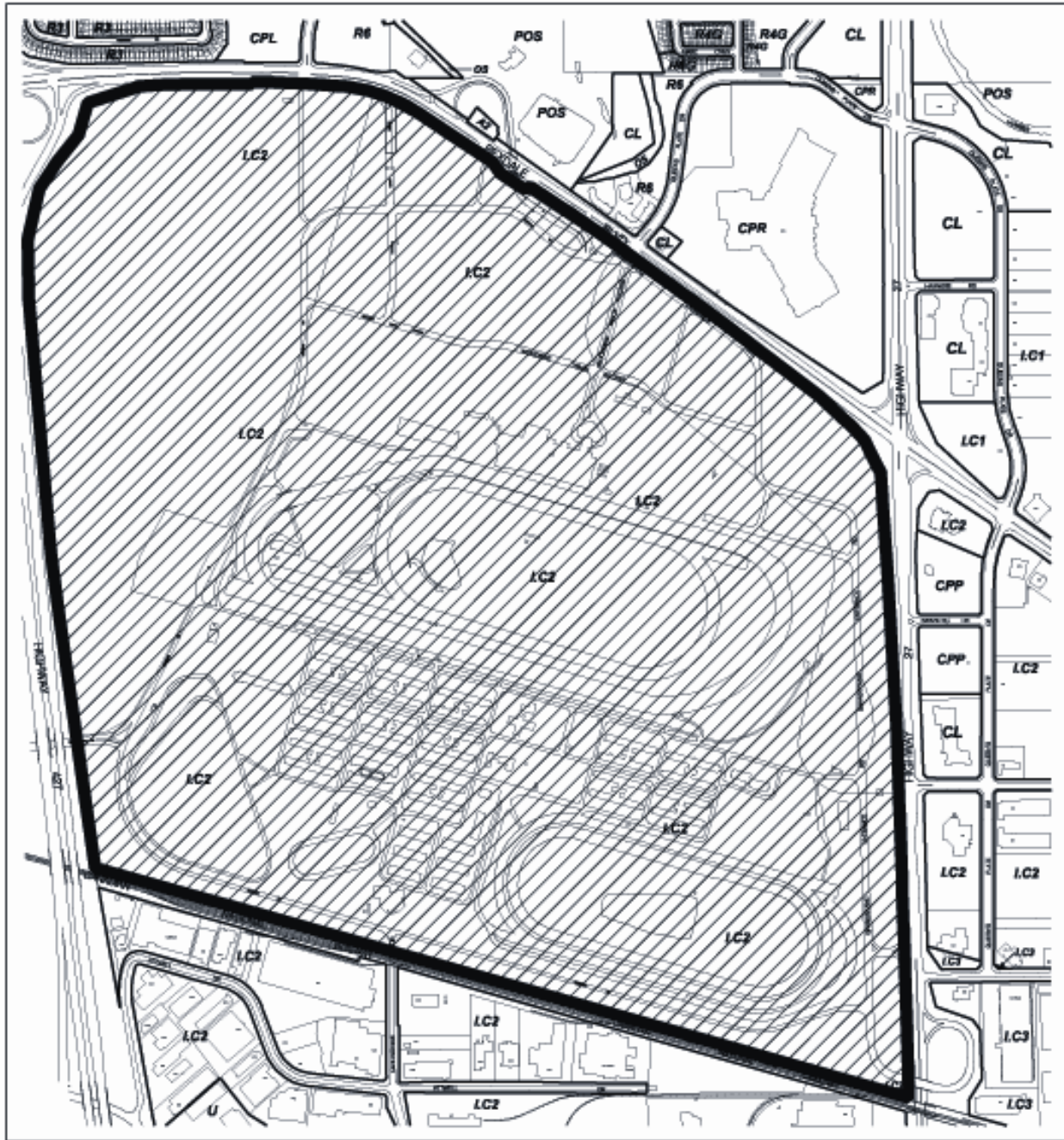
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|---|---|--|
|  Site |  Mixed Use |  Institutional |
|  Neighbourhood |  Natural Areas |  Employment Area |
|  Apartment Neighbourhood |  Parks |  Utility Corridor |



Not to Scale
08/22/06

Attachment 6: Zoning




Zoning

555 Rexdale Boulevard

File # 06_152217

Former Etobicoke

- R3 Residential Third Density
- R6 Residential Sixth Density
- R4G Residential Fourth Density Group
- CL Commercial Limited

- LC2 Industrial Class 2
- LC3 Industrial Class 3
- OS Public Open Space
- POS Private Open Space

- CPL Commercial Planned Local
- CPR Commercial Planned Regional
- CPP Commercial Planned Referred
- U Utilities
- (H) Holding District



Not to Scale
Zoning By-law 11,737 as amended
Extracted 08/18/06 - MH

Attachment 7

APPLICATION DATA SHEET

Application Type	Official Plan and Zoning	Application Number:	06 152217 WET 02 OZ
	Amendment		06 167659 WET 02 OZ
Details	OPA, Standard	Application Date:	June 29, 2006

Municipal Address: 555 REXDALE BLVD, TORONTO ON
Location Description: CON 3 & 4 FTH PT LTS 27-31 **GRID W0201
Project Description: Proposed Official Plan and zoning amendments to facilitate a proposed mixed-use development consisting of residential and commercial districts.

PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	Industrial	Site Specific Provision:	Class 2 industrial (1.C2) By-Laws 8777 8798
Zoning:	Class 2I industrial: I.C2	Historical Status:	
Height Limit (m):		Site Plan Control Area:	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq. m):	810000	Height: Storeys:	0
Frontage (m):	0	Metres:	0
Depth (m):	0		
Total Ground Floor Area (sq. m):	172 797		Total
Total Residential GFA (sq. m):	209 025	Parking Spaces:	10 500
Total Non-Residential GFA (sq. m):	293 433	Loading Docks	0
Total GFA (sq. m):	502 458		
Lot Coverage Ratio (%):	21		
Floor Space Index:	0.62		

DWELLING UNITS

FLOOR AREA BREAKDOWN (upon project completion)

Tenure Type:	Freehold		Above Grade	Below Grade
Rooms:	0	Residential GFA (sq. m):	209 025	0
Bachelor:	0	Retail GFA (sq. m):	173 370	0
1 Bedroom:	0	Office GFA (sq. m):	120 063	0
2 Bedroom:	0	Industrial GFA (sq. m):	0	0
3 + Bedroom:	0	Institutional/Other GFA (sq. m):	0	0
Total Units:	+/- 2500			

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