

**Information Report
225 Wellesley Street East and 550 Ontario Street**

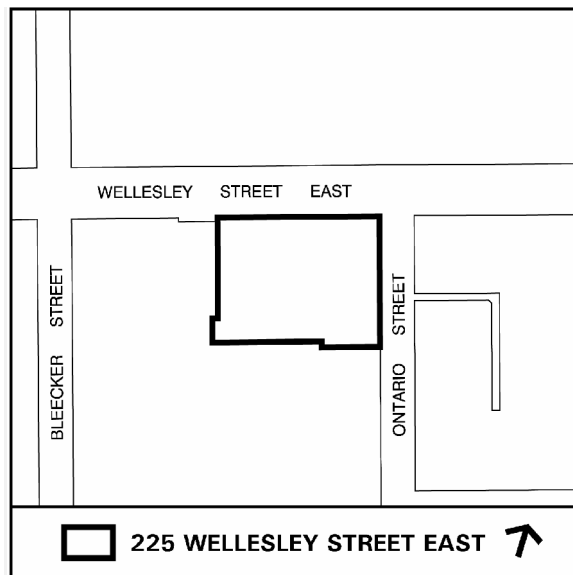
Date:	December 20, 2006
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 28 – Toronto Centre - Rosedale
Reference Number:	Not Applicable

SUMMARY

At the request City Council, at its meeting of September 25-28, 2006, this report summarizes the steps and actions which would be necessary to permit and implement retention of the existing entrance ramp to Hugh Garner Co-op’s underground garage as a separate entrance ramp, within the context of development proposed at 225 Wellesley Street East (Parcel A of the Winchester Square lands). Three planning-related approvals would be required: a minor variance or rezoning; an amendment to the existing Section 37 agreement; and an amended Site Plan Approval. Staff believe that the anticipated planning process for Parcel B of the Winchester Square lands will provide an appropriate process to review the proposal to retain the ramp and bring forward recommendations to Council.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications.



DECISION HISTORY

The Ontario Municipal Board approved By-law 740-2004 to amend general zoning by-laws and site specific By-law 657-76 with respect to lands known as Winchester Square. The by-law prescribes development standards for the property located at 225 Wellesley Street East, comprising Parcel A and Parcel B of the Winchester Square lands. The by-law also secures community benefits pursuant to Section 37 of the *Planning Act*. One benefit is the closing, decking over and landscaping of the entrance ramp to the underground garage beneath the Hugh Garner Co-op, located at 550 Ontario Street, to provide additional landscaped open space on the block. Closing of the ramp would require Hugh Garner Co-op to share the ramp of the adjacent proposed residential building on 225 Wellesley Street East (Parcel A).

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The planning process that resulted in By-law 740-2004 was unusually lengthy. An application for rezoning was submitted in 1987 and eventually led to an OMB hearing which convened in 1993 and 1994. A 1995 OMB decision directed and guided settlement discussions which concluded in 2003. The OMB issued an order in 2004 enacting the by-law.

Winchester Square includes two remaining development parcels. Parcel A is on the corner of Wellesley Street East and Ontario Street. Parcel B is on the corner of Wellesley Street East and Bleecker Street. The Hugh Garner Co-operative is a neighbouring property located at 550 Ontario Street. An open, unfinished underground parking garage currently occupies Parcel A. The dormant garage has been problematic for the neighbourhood for many years.

Today, the new owner of 225 Wellesley Street East is moving forward with the marketing and development of residential condominium buildings on both parcels, and is nearing Site Plan Approval for Parcel A. Consistent with the approved Zoning By-law and Section 37 Agreement, the proposed site plan reflects decking over and landscaping of the Co-op's existing ramp, and construction of a new ramp to be shared by both the Co-op and the new condominium. Nonetheless, both the owner of 225 Wellesley Street East and the Board of Directors of the Hugh Garner Co-operative have expressed strong interest in retaining Hugh Garner's existing ramp in order to provide two separate ramps and thereby simplify the relationship between the two properties and improve convenience for residents.

At its September 2006 meeting, Council adopted a motion from Councillor McConnell requesting the Director of Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, to report to Council, through the Toronto and East York Community Council, at the first Council meeting of 2007, on the steps and actions which would be necessary to permit and implement retention of the existing entrance ramp to Hugh Garner Co-op's underground garage as a separate entrance ramp.

COMMENTS

The Hugh Garner Co-op actively participated in the planning process for Winchester Square. Given the strong interest expressed by the Board of Directors in a separate ramp access to the Co-op's underground garage and the fact that the Co-op is a stakeholder significantly and directly impacted by the planned ramp closure, City Planning staff support retention of the ramp in principle, subject to technical review and completion of necessary approval processes.

Three planning-related approvals are required in order to revise the development concept to retain the existing ramp as a separate ramp for Hugh Garner Co-op.

1. Minor Variance or Zoning By-law Amendment.

By-law 740-2004 requires that the owner of Parcel A provide and maintain a new access ramp that will also serve the Hugh Garner Co-op's underground garage and close, deck over and landscape the existing ramp, as a benefit to be secured through a Section 37 Agreement. To permit the retention of Hugh Garner's existing ramp, this requirement would either have to be varied by the Committee of Adjustment or amended through a rezoning process. (Further discussion with the proponent will be required to determine whether minor variance or rezoning would be most appropriate.)

2. Amended Section 37 Agreement

The City secured the closing of the Hugh Garner ramp as a benefit through an agreement pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act, registered on the title of the lands. An amendment to the agreement, authorized by City Council, would therefore be necessary.

3. Amended Site Plan Agreement

As noted above, the owner of Parcel A is nearing Site Plan Approval for the site. The proposed site plan shows a single shared ramp, rather than separate ramps for the new building and the Hugh Garner Co-op. Assuming that the proposed site plan is approved, the owner would then need to seek an amendment to the site plan which reflects retention of the existing Hugh Garner ramp. Amendment of the Site Plan Approval would be delegated to staff, unless "bumped up" by a member of Council.

The owner of 225 Wellesley Street East has informed staff that he intends to seek revisions to the permitted form of development on Parcel B of the site and as a result is marketing stacked townhouses on Parcel B rather than an apartment building. This form of development has not yet been reviewed by staff. It will require minor variances or an

amendment to the site specific zoning by-law, an amendment to the Section 37 Agreement, and Site Plan Approval. Staff believe that the anticipated planning applications for Parcel B will provide an appropriate process to review the retention of Hugh Garner Co-op's existing parking ramp and bring forward recommendations to Council.

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SIGNATURE

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