

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 28, 2010

TO: Chair and Members of the Planning and Growth Management Committee

RE: Zoning Study of Oakwood Avenue Arts District.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

1. The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, undertake a planning study of Oakwood Avenue from Eglinton to St. Clair Avenues to establish the necessary planning framework to further encourage the area to evolve into an "Arts District" such as permitting live-work studio space.
2. Because this Study will involve more than two community council areas the matter be processed through the Planning and Growth Management Committee of Council.
3. The Study be completed for consideration by Committee no later than September 2010.

Background:

Attached is a report entitled *A Report on "EnVisioning 2010: An Eglinton-Oakwood Community Forum"*, which resulted from a two-year long community dialogue that culminated in a session facilitated by the 5 Points Community Action Group and myself. The overwhelming turnout and the resultant report demonstrates that the area has the strength of purpose and collective will to move this area to a more vibrant and sustainable community. The report provides a blueprint for enhancing and strengthening this neighbourhood that grows directly out of grassroots community action.

A number of initiatives have emerged from the "EnVisioning 2010" Community Forum, some of which include:

1. Two Clean and Beautiful City projects to enhance the neighbourhood.
2. The organization and implementation of the Oakwood BIA.
3. Two planning initiatives designed to move the area towards an "Arts District".

4. A move towards a special sign district designed to create first party signage standards that will enhance the area as a distinct retail district.
5. A dialogue sponsored by Toronto Police Services' 13 Division between bar owners and the community that was designed to attempt to modify the effects of a concentration of liquor licensed establishments on the intersection of Oakwood and Vaughan.
6. Action to establish community facilities and bring together the efforts of a number of community and social service agencies working in the area.
7. Concerted collective effort to control expansion of liquor license applications.
8. Community Action towards a safer community.

This notice of motion follows on the two planning initiatives already approved by Council.

On September 27, 2006, Council amended the zoning by-laws for the commercial areas at the intersections of Vaughan Road/Oakwood Avenue and Rogers Road/Oakwood to permit additional arts-related land uses (photography shops, art galleries, studios, etc).

On April 6, 2009, Council approved a rezoning application for a three-storey walk-up apartment building at 458 Oakwood and also permitted ground floor live work studio space for artists. At this meeting, City Council also approved a Site and Area specific Policy in the Official Plan to permit arts-related uses for the lands designated Neighbourhoods fronting on Oakwood Road between Rogers Road and Vaughan Road. Moreover, a number of planning applications along Oakwood Avenue have been approved in the last few years that provide artist live-work studio space.

To make the establishment of an Arts District a reality, what is now required is a planning study of Oakwood Avenue that extends from St. Clair to Eglinton Avenue. This is a necessary condition to lay the groundwork for the renaissance of this neighbourhood.