

297 College Street - Zoning Amendment Application - Preliminary Report

Date:	October 3, 2011
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	11-267875 STE 20 OZ

SUMMARY

This application proposes to redevelop the lands at 297 College Street with a new mixed use building totalling 15-storeys in height. The applicant proposes to provide the first 2-storeys of the development for commercial purposes, with the remaining building being residential. The application proposes a total of 234 residential dwelling units and 136 parking spaces in a three levels of underground parking.

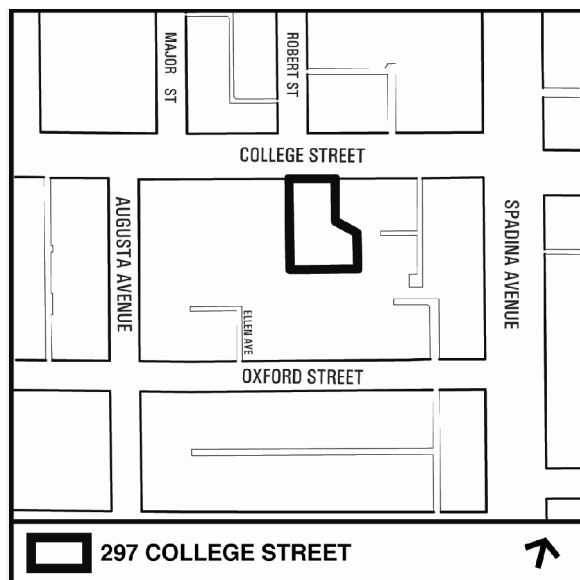
This report provides preliminary information on the above-noted application and seeks Community Council's directions on further processing of the applications and on the community consultation process.

A community consultation meeting is targeted for the end of 2011, with a Final Report and Statutory Public meeting anticipated for the second quarter of 2012. The target dates assume that applicant will provide all required information in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Staff be directed to schedule a community consultation meeting for



- the lands at 297 College Street together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within 120 metres of the site.
 3. Notice for the public meeting under the Planning Act be given according to the regulations under the Planning Act.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

Pre-Application Consultation

A pre-application consultation meeting was held with the applicant to discuss complete application submission requirements.

A pre-application community consultation meeting was held on July 5, 2011. The applicant presented their proposal for a 15-storey mixed-use building at this meeting. Issues raised by the community included: impact of the proposal on residents of Oxford Street, how construction on-site will be managed, materiality of the building, relationship of the building to the street, timing, and the provision of green development features.

PREVIOUS DECISIONS

In April 2005, City Council adopted certain recommendations of Toronto and East York Community Council and Planning staff with respect to an Avenues Study along College Street from west of Bathurst Street to Spadina Avenue.

An Urban Design Study report by Brook McIlroy (October 2004) and a Transportation Report by Totten Sims Hubicki (December 2004) were completed by a consultant team on behalf of the City. Based on a review of the study area and consultation with stakeholders, the study identified specific sites and locations as appropriate for intensification and provided height, setback and stepback recommendations based on surrounding conditions and characteristics, right-of-way width, and lot depth. The locations identified as having the greatest development potential were the northwest and southwest corners of the Spadina and College intersection, and the southwest corner of Bathurst and College (to Markham Street).

The consultant study has not been translated into either Zoning By-law changes along College Street or formally-adopted urban design guidelines by City Council.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Proposal

The applicant proposes to redevelop the site at 297 College Street with a 15-storey mixed use building. The applicant proposes to provide the first 2-storeys of the development for commercial purposes, with the remaining building being residential above.

The proposed development will have an overall building height of 51.5 metres, excluding mechanical penthouse, an overall gross floor area of 18,567 square metres, of which, 2,446 square metres will be for the non-residential component of the development. The application proposes a total of 234 residential dwelling units, 136 parking spaces and 176 bicycle parking spaces in three levels of underground parking, and an overall density of approximately 8.3 times the lot area.

As part of the proposal, the applicant is seeking to access the site via a shared driveway with the property located immediately west of the site. The applicant has indicated that this configuration is still being negotiated with the adjacent property owner, and should an arrangement between the two land owners not be possible, access to the site will be provided on the subject site.

Site and Surrounding Area

The subject site is located on the south side of College Street, west of Spadina Avenue, and is currently occupied by a 3-storey place of worship. The subject site is irregular in shape, having a frontage of approximately 32 metres at College Street, although wider at the southern boundary of the site, and a depth of approximately 61 metres. The overall site area is approximately 2,239 square metres.

Development in the vicinity is as follows:

North: Development on the north side of College Street consists of mixed use buildings ranging in height from 2 to 4 storeys.

East: Immediately east of the site is a 2-storey building and a surface parking area. Further east, College Street consists of mixed-use and institutional buildings ranging in height from 1 to 3 storeys.

South: Immediately south of the site are townhouses. Further south of the site is Kensington Market.

West: Immediately west of the subject site is a 4-storey building currently operated by Toronto Community Housing Corporation. Further west, College Street consists of mixed use buildings ranging in height from 1 to 3 storeys.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. The key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and, protecting public health and safety. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including: directions for where and how to grow; the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Staff will review the proposed development for consistency with the PPS and for conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Official Plan

Maps 2 of the Official Plan identifies that the subject site is located *Downtown*. The Official Plan identifies the *Downtown* as one of the areas which can accommodate a vibrant mix of residential and employment growth. The Official Plan identifies that the *Downtown* will continue to evolve as a healthy and attractive place to live and work, as new development that supports the reurbanization strategy and the goals for *Downtown*, is attracted to the area. In particular, Section 2.2.1.1 of the Plan identifies that the *Downtown* policies of the Plan will shape the City's future by accommodating development that:

- builds on the strength of *Downtown* as the premier employment centre in the GTA;
- provides a full range of housing opportunities for *Downtown* workers and reduces the demand for in-bound commuting; and
- focuses on the *Financial District* as the prime location for the development of prestige commercial office buildings and landmarks buildings that shape the skyline.

Although the Plan identifies that the *Downtown* as one of the areas which can accommodate growth, Section 3.1.3 identifies that tall buildings are desirable in the right places, but also acknowledges that they are not appropriate in all locations. When tall buildings are poorly located or designed, they can physically and visually overwhelm adjacent streets, parks and neighbourhoods. The Plan acknowledges that tall buildings are also only one form of intensification. Most of the proposed intensification is anticipated to be achieved with street oriented, grade related or mid-rise type buildings.

The Healthy Neighbourhoods Section of the Official Plan identifies that the intensification of land adjacent to neighbourhoods will be carefully controlled so that neighbourhoods are protected from negative impact. The plan also states that developments in *Mixed Use Areas* that are adjacent or close to *Neighbourhoods* will, among other matters, be compatible with those *Neighbourhoods*, provide a gradual transition of scale and density, maintain adequate light and privacy for residents in those *Neighbourhoods*.

The subject site is designated *Mixed Use Areas* in the Official Plan. This designation permits a broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses and includes policies and development criteria to guide development and its transition between areas of different development intensity and scale.

The development criteria in *Mixed Use Areas* includes, but is not limited to:

- creating a balance of high quality commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses that reduces automobile dependency and meets the needs of the local community;
- providing for new jobs and homes for Toronto's growing population on underutilized lands;
- locate and mass new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale;
- locate and mass new buildings to frame the edges of streets and parks;
- provide an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment;
- provide good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors;
- locate and screen service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and
- provide indoor and outdoor recreation space for building residents in every significant multi-residential development.

The Built Form policies, contained within section 3.1.2 of the Official Plan emphasise the importance of ensuring that new development fits within its existing and/or planned context, while limiting impacts on neighbouring streets, parks and open spaces. New buildings are required to provide appropriate massing and transition in scale that will respect the character of the surrounding area.

The Plan also contains policies regarding tall buildings in the city. Tall buildings are identified as those whose height is typically greater than the width of the adjacent road allowance. The Plan also limits these buildings to parts of the *Downtown, Centres*, and other areas of the city where they are specifically permitted by a Secondary Plan or Zoning By-law. The Official Plan also sets out key urban design considerations when considering a tall building proposal.

Zoning

The majority of the subject site is zoned MCR T3.0 C2.0 R2.5 in the former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86. The MCR Zone permits a range of residential and commercial uses within this zoning category to a maximum height of 16.0 metres.

Site Plan Control

The subject site and development are subject to Site Plan Control. An application for Site Plan Control has been submitted and is being reviewed concurrently with the Zoning By-law Amendment application.

Tall Building Guidelines

Toronto City Council approved the use of the document, “Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals” (Tall Buildings Guidelines) in June, 2006 on a pilot basis, and it was endorsed by Council in May, 2010. A tall building is generally defined as a building that is taller than the road right-of-way adjacent to the site. The right-of-way width for College Street at this location is 30 metres, and the proposed building at 51.5 metres is considered a tall building. The Tall Buildings Guidelines provide policy recommendations for tall buildings on issues of transition, building placement and orientation, entrances, heritage conservation, massing of base buildings, tower floorplates, separation distances, pedestrian realm considerations and sustainable design.

Reasons for the Application

A Rezoning application is required to permit the scale and density proposed by the applicant.

COMMENTS

Application Submission

The following reports/studies were submitted with the application:

- Architectural Plans
- Plan of Survey
- Planning Rational
- Traffic Impact Study
- Wind Study
- Arborist Report
- Archaeological Assessment
- Shadow Studies
- Landscape Plans

A Notification of Complete Application was issued on October 7, 2011

Issues to be Resolved

On a preliminary basis, the following issues have been identified. Other issues may be identified through the community consultation process and the processing of this application.

Land Use

The Provincial Policy Statement indicates that the Official Plan is to direct development to suitable areas. Intensification and redevelopment is to be provided in areas that take into account the existing building stock or area, and availability of infrastructure and public service facilities that meet projected needs. The Official Plan directs growth to certain areas of the City, and the areas which can best accommodate growth are shown on Map 2, Urban Structure of the Official Plan. The areas for growth have been identified as the *Downtown*, the *Centres*, the *Avenues* and *Employment Districts*. The subject site is within an area identified for growth.

In addition to identifying the areas appropriate for growth, the Official Plan also contains policies regarding how intensification adjacent to *Neighbourhoods* should occur in order to minimize negative impacts on those areas. Staff will review the appropriateness of the intensity of development in relation to the policies contained within the Official Plan.

Height and Density

The Official Plan identifies that tall buildings are desirable in the right places, but also acknowledges that they are not appropriate in all locations. When tall buildings are poorly located or designed, they can physically and visually overwhelm adjacent streets, parks and neighbourhoods. The Plan acknowledges that tall buildings are also only one form of intensification. Most of the proposed intensification is anticipated to be achieved with street oriented, grade related or mid-rise type buildings.

The proposed height and density exceeds the maximums as prescribed by the Zoning By-law for the site, and thus, the appropriateness of the proposed height and density needs to be evaluated in terms of the surrounding context, impacts on adjacent properties, and land uses.

Building Siting and Massing

The Official Plan Built Form policies stress the importance of new development fitting harmoniously into its existing and/or planned context and limiting its impacts on neighbouring streets, parks, open spaces and properties. The Official Plan identifies that developments may be considered not only in terms of the individual building and site, but also in terms of how that building and site fit within the context of the neighbourhood and the City. New development within *Mixed Use Areas* is required to locate and mass new buildings to frame the edge of the streets, maintain sunlight and comfortable wind conditions, and locate and mass new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale.

The proposed building siting and massing will be reviewed in terms of the building's proximity to the existing residential dwellings directly to the south, the proposals relationship to College Street, and its compliance with the development criteria for *Mixed Use Areas*.

Surrounding Context

Intensification on land adjacent to neighbourhoods is required to be carefully controlled so that neighbourhoods are protected from negative impact by locating and organizing to fit with its existing and/or planned context while ensuring that negative impacts are limited and adequately mitigated. The proposal seeks to introduce a built form and density that are greater than what exists in the area. The variation between the height of the proposed buildings and the height of the adjacent neighbourhood requires review and analysis.

Tall Buildings

The Official Plan identifies a tall building as a building which has a height greater than the width of the adjacent right-of-way. In this case, the overall building height is greater than the College Street right-of-way, and thus is considered a tall building. Staff will review the Design Criteria for the review of Tall Building Proposals and the appropriateness of the proposed scale and massing in terms of overall heights proposed, built form arrangements on the site, building floor plate sizes, setbacks from lot lines, as well as the compatibility and relationship with the surrounding context.

Parking and Vehicular Access

The amount of parking provided and the location of the parking, in addition to the design of the shared site access, must be reviewed in relation to the demand generated by the proposal, and in context of the developments proximity to public transit. A Transportation Study has been submitted and is currently under review by the City's Technical Services Division.

Amenity Space

Section 3.1.2.6 of the Official Plan states that every significant new multi-unit residential development will provide indoor and outdoor amenity space for residents of the new development, in addition to identifying that each resident will have access to outdoor amenity spaces.

The proposal includes 297 square metres of indoor and 140 square metres of outdoor amenity space for the residential component of the development. The proposed indoor and outdoor amenity space is less than that which is required by the Zoning By-law, and thus, the adequacy of the amenity space proposed will be considered through the review of the application.

College Street

Although this portion of College Street is not identified as an *Avenue* in the Official Plan, the applicant has provided a Segment Study Analysis of a limited portion of College Street. The Segment Study Analysis identifies possible scenarios of build out at the same height and density as proposed for this site on the sites immediately adjacent to 297 College Street. Staff will review the Segment Study Analysis as part of this application and provide further detail and analysis within the Final Report.

Full Range of Housing

The Official Plan provides direction to provide a full range of housing in terms of form, tenure and affordability. The provision of this range of housing across the City and within neighbourhoods is important to achieving the diversity required to meet current and future needs of residents, and to provide economic competitiveness and social cohesion. Staff will work with the applicant in effort to provide family sized units within the development.

Section 37 of the *Planning Act*

The application in its current form will be subject to Section 37 contributions under the *Planning Act*. Should the application be approved, Staff in consultation with the Ward Councillor, will identify and secure public benefits pursuant to Section 37 of the *Planning Act* including appropriate community services, facilities and amenities which address local priorities.

Parkland

The *Planning Act* enables the municipality under Section 42 to require, as a condition of development or redevelopment of land, a conveyance of land and/or cash-in-lieu of land for park or other public recreational purposes. For residential uses, the site is subject to 5%, or if the site is located within a Parkland Acquisition Priority Area, the amount of conveyance is determined by the overall site size. The subject site is located within a Parkland Acquisition Priority Area as outlined in the Alternative Parkland Dedication By-law 1420-2007.

Toronto Green Standard

Staff will be encouraging the applicant to review sustainable development opportunities by utilizing the Toronto Green Standard, adopted by City Council in July 2006. The Toronto Green Standard (TGS) is a tool to implement the broader environmental policies of the Official Plan. Several of the natural environment policies of the Official Plan encourage green development. These policies are geared to reduce the negative impacts of development on the natural environment through practices such as improved stormwater management, water and energy efficiency, and waste reduction and recycling. These policies also promote development that enhances the natural environment and support green industry.

The TGS Checklist has been submitted by the applicant and is currently under review by City staff for compliance with the Tier 1 performance measures.

CONCLUSION

A community meeting is anticipated to be held in late 2011. Provided that the applicant provides all required information and addresses any issues raised without delay, a Statutory Public Meeting is targeted for the second quarter of 2012.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

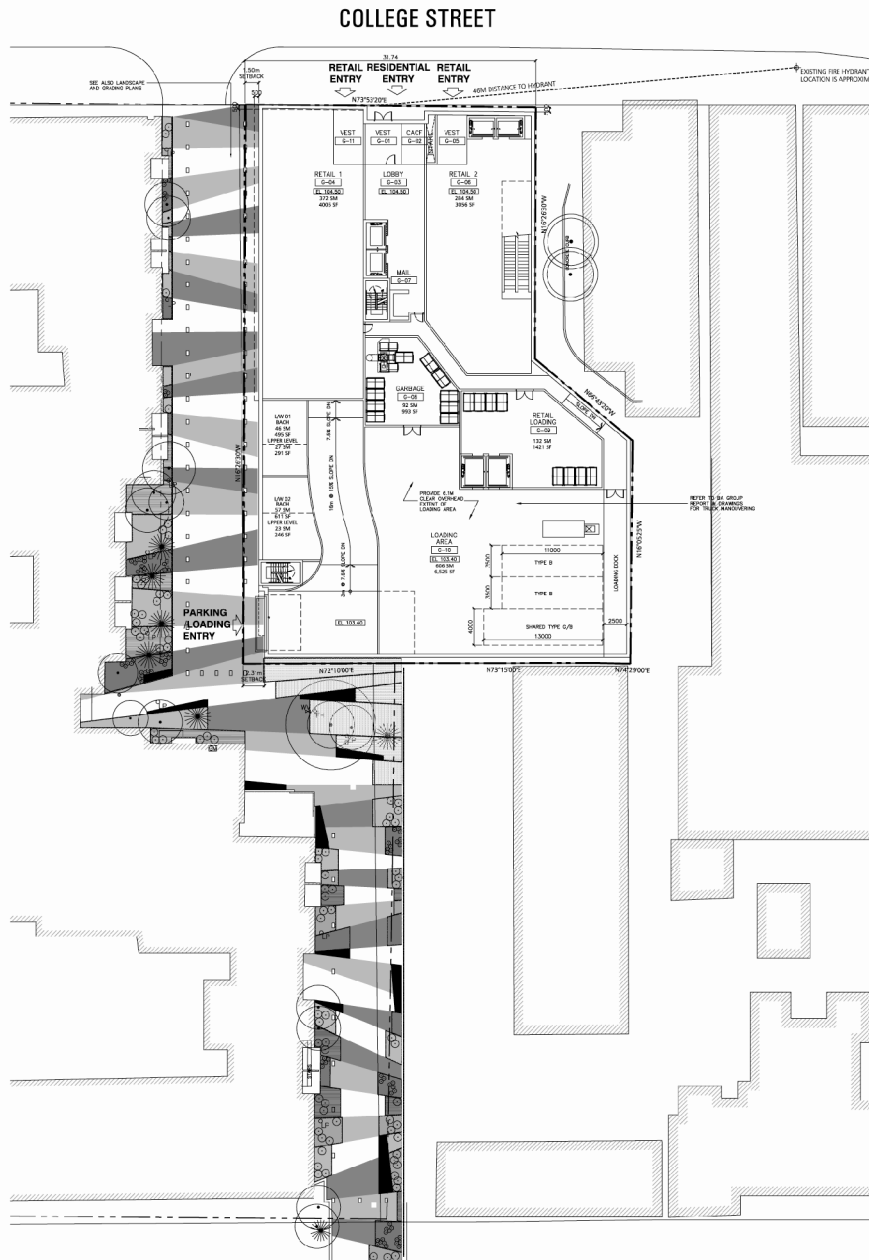
Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning,
Toronto and East York District

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Site Plan
Attachment 2: Elevations
Attachment 3: Zoning
Attachment 4: Application Data Sheet

Attachment 1: Site Plan



Site Plan

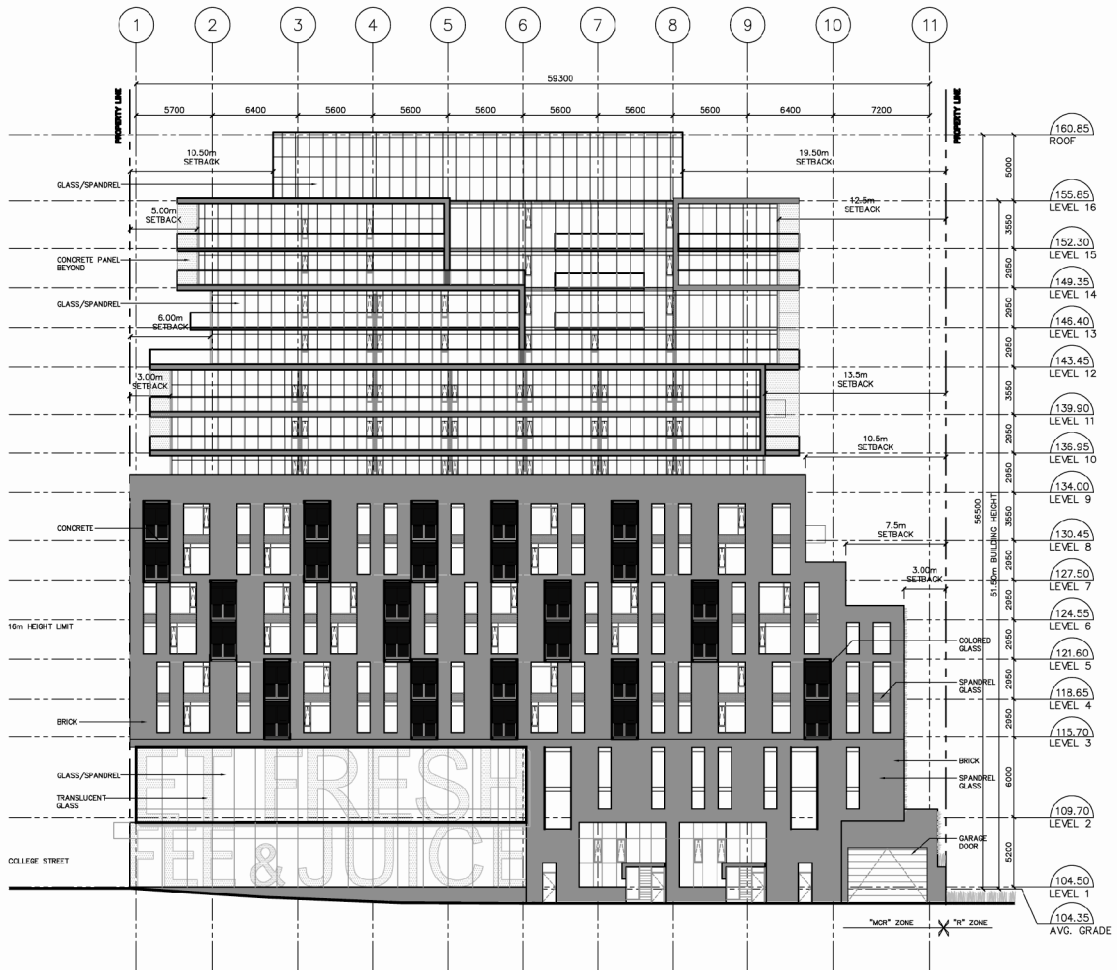
297 College Street

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale 

File # 11_267875

Attachment 2: West Elevation



WEST Elevation

Elevations

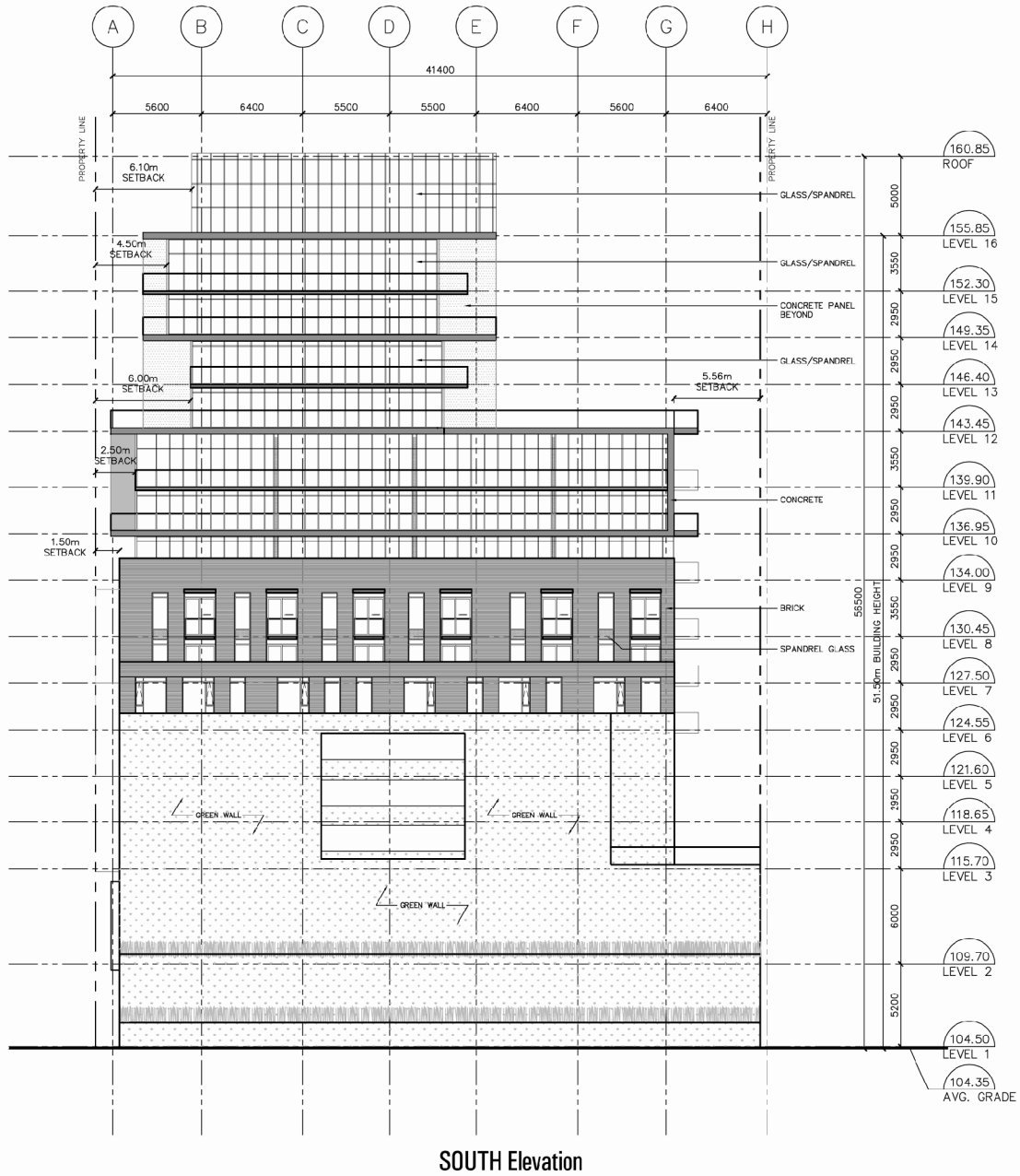
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
09/26/2011

297 College Street

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Attachment 3: South Elevation



Elevations

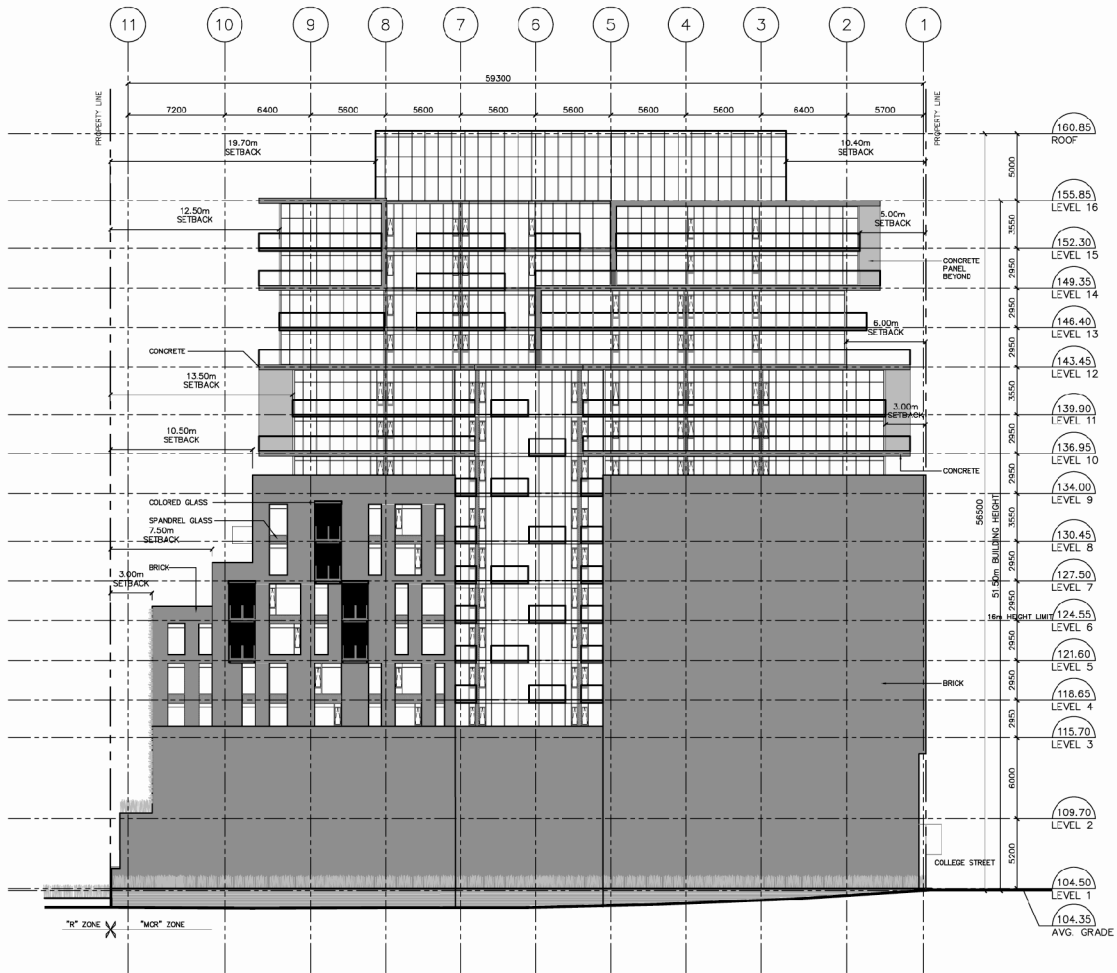
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

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297 College Street

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Attachment 4: East Elevation



EAST Elevation

Elevations

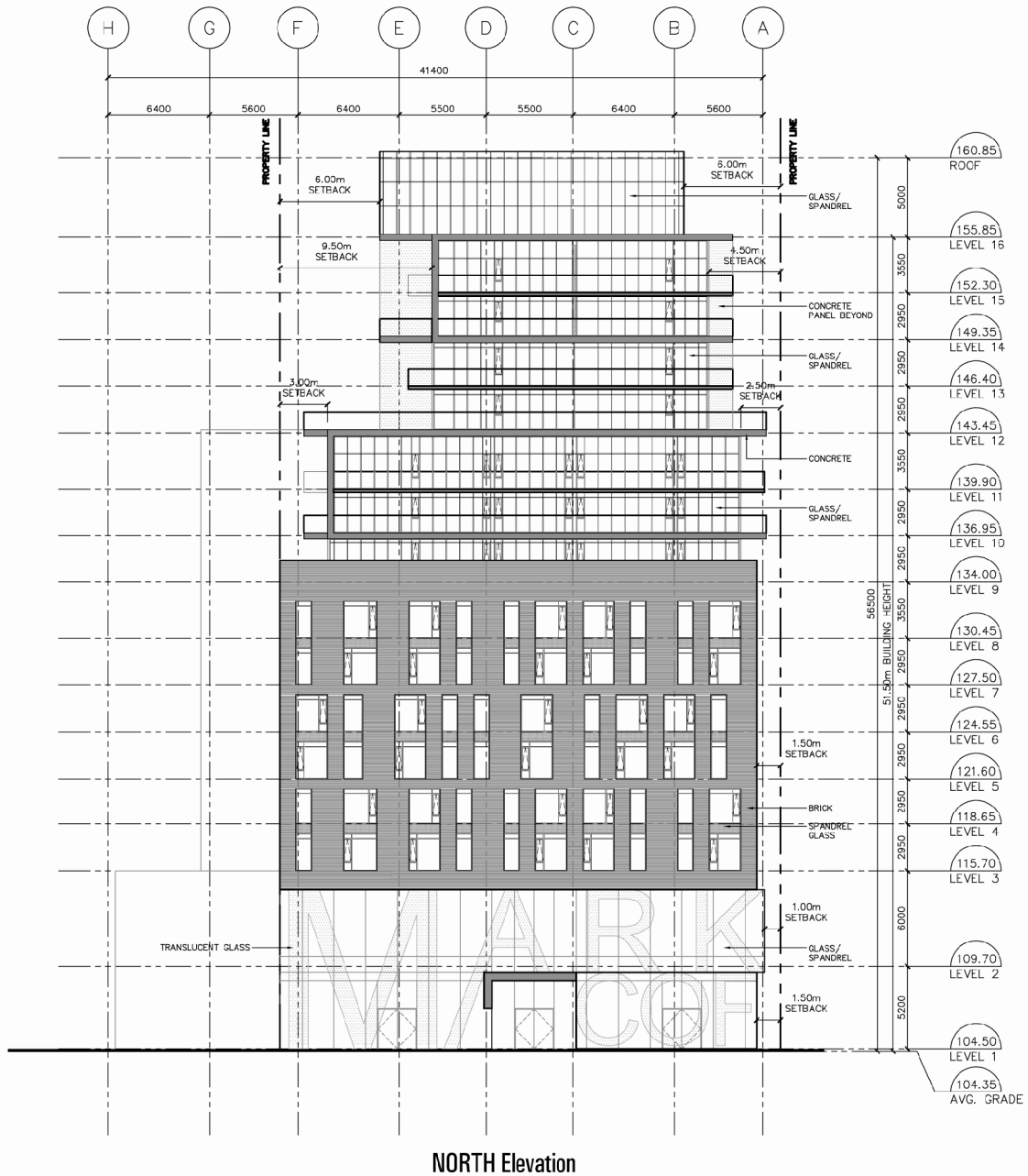
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

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297 College Street

File # 11_267875

Attachment 5: North Elevation



Elevations

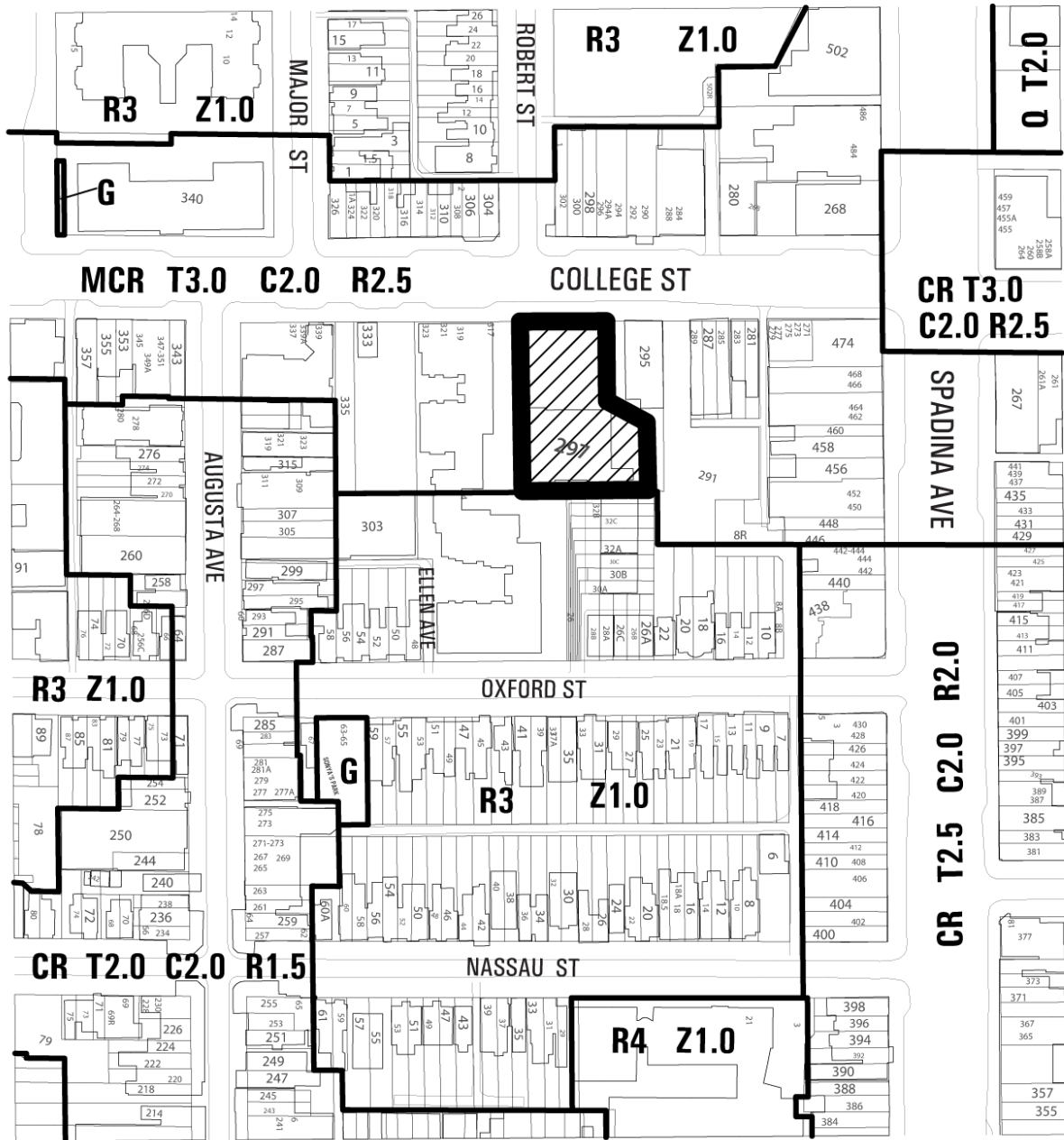
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

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297 College Street

File # 11_267875

Attachment 6: Zoning



Zoning City of Toronto By-law 438-86

297 College Street

File # 11_267875_OZ

- G Parks District
- R3 Residential District
- R4 Residential District
- CR Mixed Use District
- MCR Mixed Use District
- Q Mixed Use District



Not to Scale
Zoning By-law 438-86 as amended
Extracted 09/26/2011

