

STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

20 Brunel Court - Zoning Amendment Application – Status Report

Date:	March 14, 2016	
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council	
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District	
Wards:	Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina	
Reference Number:	09 142634 STE 20 OZ	

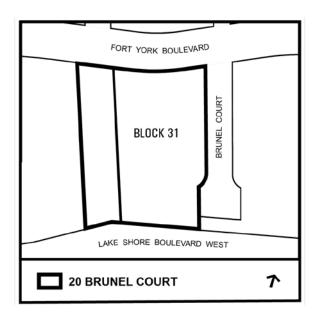
SUMMARY

The application proposes a shared community facility on City-owned lands including Block 31 and the easterly portion of Canoe Landing Park within the Railway Lands West. The shared facility will include a community centre, a child care centre along with two elementary schools for the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB).

This report provides the status of the zoning amendment application as the proposal has been revised since the initial submission in 2009. The proposal initially included an

affordable housing component along with the shared community and school facilities. Affordable housing in now proposed on Block 36 within the Railway Lands West rather than on Block 31. As a result the design of the project has been revised.

The report also seeks Community Council's directions on further processing of the application and on the community consultation process. Staff anticipate submitting a final report on the application to Community Council in the 3rd quarter of 2016.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

- 1. Staff be directed to schedule a community consultation meeting for the lands at 20 Brunel Court 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 of the Planning Act.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

The initial zoning amendment application was submitted by Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) on behalf of the City of Toronto in 2009 and proposed a mixed-use development that included an affordable housing component along with the shared community facilities including a community centre, a child care centre and two elementary schools. TCHC is no longer pursuing the residential component of the project on Block 31 but instead affordable housing will be constructed on Block 36N of the Railway Lands, situated on the north side of Fort York Boulevard east of Bathurst Street. The Preliminary Report on the initial application is available on the City's website at: http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-23177.pdf

At its meeting of July 16, 17, 18 and 19, 2013 Council approved a City-initiated Official Plan Amendment (OPA 255) for the shared facility to permit a portion of the underground parking garage and the building to extend into the easterly portion of Canoe Land Park adjacent to Block 31. The Final Report on OPA 255 is available on the City's website at: http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.TE25.5.

Community Consultation

The revised application was submitted in December 2015 by ZAS Architects on behalf of the City of Toronto. Prior to the submission of the revised application two community information sessions were held in the neighbourhood to present and discuss the revised proposal. The first was held on February 18, 2015 to seek input from the community in the early design phase for the facility. Participants identified how they use the existing park and put forward ideas on potential programming and activities for the community centre and park, as well as comments on the proposed child care centre, and the two schools. The session included a larger presentation repeated throughout the event as well as more focussed discussions on specific topics at a number of discussion tables. Representatives from each of the proposed facilities answered questions and facilitated discussion at the working tables. Staff from City Planning, Parks, Forestry and

Recreation, Children's Services, the TDSB and TCDSB, the Ward Councillor and approximately 100 members of the public attended the event.

A second information session was held on June 20, 2015 and preliminary design concepts were presented for discussion and input. The format was similar to the first session, with a repeating presentation along with information stations for more focussed discussions. Staff from City Planning, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Children's Services Transportation Services, the TDSB and TCDSB, the Ward Councillor and approximately 40 members of the public attended the event.

The proposal for shared facilities was well-received at both sessions, and many residents noted the need for the schools and child care centre, particularly with the growing number of families with young children in the neighbourhood. Participants put forward a number of suggestions for programming such as space for music, art and dance programs, many focussing on children, meeting rooms and spaces for community events such as, poetry slams and a community kitchen, along with suggestions on using the roof for activities such as community gardening. Participants suggested that in considering programming for the community centre that the focus should be on activities and programs that complement rather than duplicate facilities and services that are found in existing apartment buildings in the neighbourhood. Within the park, some ideas for new uses included an outdoor skating rink, playground, toboggan hill or a plaza/gathering place for community events such as movie nights or other special events.

Main issues identified by participants at the information sessions related to traffic congestion in the area particularly at Spadina Avenue and Fort York Boulevard. Concerns with respect to vehicular access including how buses for the schools would be managed along with pick-up and drop-off for the facilities were also identified by participants. Improving pedestrian access to the site particularly for children was noted by a number of participants, due to the high level of traffic at the intersection of Spadina Avenue and Fort York Boulevard, and the lack of a pedestrian crossing on the south side of the intersection. Introducing a designated area for dogs in the park was also put forward by some.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Proposal

The application proposes a shared community facility which will include a City community centre, a child care centre and two elementary schools for the TDSB and TCDSB. The schools are planned to accommodate 550 students each for a total of 1100 students, and the child care centre is planned for a total of 52 children (10 infants and 42 toddler and pre-school). The total gross floor area of the shared facility is 15,807 m² consisting of a 4,618 m² community centre (including multi-purpose community space), a 690 m² child care centre, a 5,358 m² TDSB elementary school and a 5,141 m² TCDSB elementary school (Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

The proposed building design consists of two low-rise building elements bisected by an east-west mid-block pedestrian connection from Brunel Court to Canoe Landing Park. The north and south building elements are connected by a glazed bridge at the second level that permits movement between the facilities. The western portion of the site will be programmed as shared recreation space that will link to the existing sports fields in Canoe Landing Park. This shared space forms a playground courtyard between the north and south building elements.

The north building element is proposed to be 2 storeys high and will contain the community centre which fronts along Fort York Boulevard, and shared indoor school recreation facilities, including the gymnasium for the two schools oriented towards Brunel Court and the interior playground courtyard. Portions of the roof are proposed for programmed recreation space such as a multi-sports court, a fitness decks, wellness program space, planting beds and a running track. An extension is proposed at the north end of the community centre into Canoe Landing Park to provide additional multi-purpose space for community use.

The south building element is proposed to be 3 storeys high and will contain the TDSB and TCDSB elementary school offices and classrooms integrated on all three levels. The main access for the schools is proposed from the mid-block connection and Brunel Court. The child care centre is proposed on the ground floor oriented towards the playground courtyard.

Access to below grade loading, parking and pick-up and drop-off is proposed at the south end of the site off of Brunel Court. Two levels of underground parking are proposed with 74 spaces. Buses for the schools are proposed to take pick-up and drop-off on Brunel Court midway down the street at the main entrance to the schools. Additional site and development statistics are included in the application data sheet in Attachment 6.

Site and Surrounding Area

The site is situated on the south-west corner of Fort York Boulevard and Brunel Court and includes Block 31 of the Railway Lands as well as a portion of Canoe Landing Park. Block 31 was transferred to the City in 1994 for community facilities as a part of the planning approvals for the larger Railway Lands. At that time the City along with the TDSB and TCDSB entered into an agreement that set out the framework for establishing a community centre and elementary schools on the site.

The site is approximately 1.3 hectares in area, rectangular in shape and is currently vacant. The site is relatively flat with current site elevations situated 3 to 6 metres lower than the adjacent lands or streets. The site has frontage of approximately 107 metres along Fort York Boulevard and 129.5 metres along Brunel Court.

North: There are a number of mixed-use and taller residential towers developed as a part of the CityPlace neighbourhood on the north side of Fort York Boulevard ranging in height from 15 to 47 storeys. North of these buildings is the Northern

Linear Park that extends along the south side of the rail corridor situated further north.

West: Canoe Landing Park is to the west of Block 31. The park is 3.1 hectares in size and includes playing fields and play areas that will be used by the schools as well as the public.

South: To the immediate south of the site are Lake Shore Boulevard West and the Gardiner Expressway.

East: Opposite the site on the east side of Brunel Court is a mixed-use development that includes two residential towers of 42 and 49 storeys as well as 3-storey townhouses along Brunel Court.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2014 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. These policies support the goal of enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians. Key policy objectives include: building strong healthy communities; wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. The PPS recognizes that local context and character is important. Policies are outcome-oriented, and some policies provide flexibility in their implementation provided that provincial interests are upheld. 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.

Official Plan

The site is located in the *Downtown* and is designated *Mixed Use Areas* and *Parks and Open Spaces Areas* in the Official Plan.

Downtown Policies

As an area where growth is anticipated and encouraged, the Official Plan provides for new development in the *Downtown* that: builds on the strength of the area as an employment centre, provides for a range of housing opportunities and supports and enhances the speciality retail and entertainment districts. The Official Plan directs growth to the *Downtown* in order to achieve multiple City objectives. Among other things, it promotes the efficient use of municipal services and infrastructure, concentrates jobs and people in areas well served by transit, promotes mixed use development to increase opportunities for living close to work and to encourage walking and cycling, improves air quality and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by

reducing reliance on the private automobile all in keeping with the vision for a more liveable Greater Toronto Area. The Official Plan recognizes that as the population of the *Downtown* increases, enhancing existing parks, and preserving and strengthening the range and quality of the social, health, community services and local institutions are essential to improve the quality of life for *Downtown* residents.

Public Realm and Built Form Policies

The public realm policies of Section 3.1.1 of the Official Plan recognize the essential role of our streets, open spaces, parks and other key shared public assets in creating a great City. These policies aim to ensure that a high level of quality is achieved in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design in public works and private developments to ensure that the public realm is functional, beautiful, comfortable, safe and accessible.

The built form policies of Section 3.1.2.2 seek to ensure that new development is located, organized and massed to fit harmoniously with the existing and/or planned context and will limit its impacts on neighbouring streets, parks, open spaces and properties. Section 3.1.2.4 of the Plan requires that new development provide amenity to adjacent streets and open spaces to make these areas attractive, interesting comfortable and functional for pedestrians.

Mixed Use Areas Policies

A broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses in single use or mixed-use buildings, as well as parks and open spaces and utilities are permitted within the *Mixed Use Areas* designations.

Section 4.5.2 includes criteria for development in *Mixed Use Areas* to ensure, among other matters, that the location and massing for new buildings achieves transitions between areas of different development intensity and scale, frames the edges of streets and parks with good proportion and maintains sunlight and comfortable wind conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets, parks and open spaces. Development in *Mixed Use Areas* should also provide attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environments and have access to schools, parks, community centres, libraries and childcare. It should also take advantage of nearby transit services; provide good site access and circulation as well as an adequate supply of both visitor and resident parking. In addition, service areas should be located to minimize impacts on adjacent streets.

Parks and Open Space Areas Policies

Parks and Open Space Areas consist of the parks, and open spaces, valleys, watercourses, ravines and other recreation and open space areas that comprise the Green Space system in Toronto and are essential elements of complete communities. The Official Plan seeks to ensure that all parks are high quality providing a range of opportunities for passive and active recreation and cultural experiences, and provide comfortable and safe pedestrian conditions. Development is generally prohibited within Parks and Open Spaces Areas and the plan provides that areas identified as

Parks will be used primarily for public parks and recreation opportunities. OPA 255 approved by Council in July of 2013 provides for portions of the proposed building and underground parking to extend into the easterly 30 metres of Canoe Landing Park.

The Official Plan is available on the City's website at: http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=03eda07443f36410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD

Railways Lands West Secondary Plan

The subject site is located with the Railway Lands West Secondary Plan area. The Railway Lands West Secondary Plan provides a locally-focussed policy framework for guiding growth and change in the Secondary Plan area.

The Secondary Plan identifies that the Railway Lands West will be developed as an integral part of the Downtown so that the barrier effects of the road and rail corridors will be minimized and the central City reunited with the Central Waterfront. New development in the Railway Land West should have a mix of uses, and a form, character and environmental quality which will ensure that the area is used by people for a wide variety of purposes throughout the day.

Section 3 of the Secondary Plan establishes the principles regarding the structure, form and physical amenity of the Railway Land West development and recognizes that significant public buildings will be important elements of this structure. The policies of Section 3.2 provides that buildings will clearly define and give form to the edges of streets, parks and open spaces, take into account the potential for creating and enhancing pedestrian views and sight lines and reinforce the visual continuity and spatial definition of streets and other publicly accessible open spaces.

Development in the Railway Lands West will contribute to the achievement of an attractive, inviting, comfortable and safe public realm and will ensure that the dimension and quality of public sidewalks reflect their importance in the overall pattern of public spaces, and incorporate high quality co-ordinated improvements including among other things paving, and tree planting. The Secondary Plan seeks to ensure that buildings, streets, sidewalks, parks and other publicly accessible open space in the Railway Lands West are designed and developed to promote public safety, including the creation of clear visual and physical access to public open spaces from the streets and from other public areas. Section 3.4 of the Secondary Plan provides that the siting of and setting for significant public buildings will enhance their public significance and identity and promote a sense of place within the City.

The easterly portion of the site (Block 31) is designated *Mixed-Use Area D* and the westerly portion of the site within Canoe Landing Park is designated *Parks and Open Space Areas* within the Secondary Plan (Attachment 7). In addition to residential uses *Mixed-Use Areas D* is intended for local street-related retail and services uses as well as community services and facilities such as the community centre, child care centre and

schools proposed. The *Parks and Open Spaces Areas* designation provides for parks and open space uses as well as community services and facilities subject to certain criteria.

Section 5 of the Secondary Plan includes specific requirements concerning the schools and community services and facilities and sets out the framework for securing a community centre and schools in cooperation with the TDSB and the TCDSB within the Railway Lands West. Block 31 and the easterly portion of the Canoe Landing Park are identified on the Parks and Open Space Plan within the Secondary Plan as the 'General Location for Community Centre and Schools' (Attachment 8). The policies of Section 5.8 provide that the community centre and schools should be developed either independently or jointly and set out the criteria regarding the location and form of the facilities including:

- consider the shared use of the exterior and interior spaces
- consider the size of buildings to maximize open space
- ensure that the open space remains useable, well configured, contiguous and physically and visually accessible from public streets
- consider sun, wind, air quality and noise conditions; and
- consider views.

Section 11 of the Secondary Plan sets out the development strategy for the Railway Lands West including the use of holding symbols in the zoning by-law. Conditions for removal of holding symbols, generally include the requirement that a precinct plan and precinct agreement or a subdivision plan and subdivision agreement that sets out the requirements for development such as servicing, streets, parks and other community services and facilities within the larger Precinct. The subject site is situated within Precinct 3 that includes only Block 31 and Canoe Landing Park and there is currently no Precinct or Subdivision Plan for Precinct 3. Block 31 is subject to a holding symbol. Section 11.13 of the Secondary Plan provides that the requirements for the removal of the holding symbol on individual sites may be reduced subject to specific conditions. These include requirements for servicing, environmental reports and mitigation measures as necessary, as well as a schools and community services and facilities agreement that secures community services and facilities such as the schools, community centre and child care centre proposed on the subject site. The development must also be considered of major public significance. Staff consider the proposal development to be of major public significance and are reviewing the application to ensure that the criteria outlined in Section 11.13 of the Secondary Plan are satisfied prior to the removal of the holding symbol.

The Railways Lands West Secondary Plan is available on the City's website at: http://www1.toronto.ca/planning/19-railway-lands-west.pdf

Zoning

The site is subject to the provisions of the Railway Lands West Zoning By-law 1994-0805. The eastern portion of the site (Block 31) is zoned Commercial Residential (CR)

with a holding symbol (h), and the western portion within Canoe Landing Park is zoned Parks (G) (Attachment 9).

The CR zone permits a wide range of residential and non-residential uses including the community centre, public elementary schools and a child care centre. While the holding symbol is in place the community centre and child care are permitted. A separate zoning by-law amendment application (File # 15 268121 STE 20 OZ) to remove the holding symbol has been submitted and is being reviewed concurrently with the current zoning by-law amendment application. The G zone permits a range of park uses as well as the community centre, child care centre and public elementary schools. A specific qualification in the zoning by-law identifies the location for the public and separate elementary schools on Block 31 and in a G zone.

The maximum overall gross floor area permitted on Block 31 is 31,398 square metres with a maximum non-residential gross floor area of 2,775 square metres. The community centre, child care centre, and schools are exempted from these overall gross floor area limits. The maximum building height permitted within the CR zone is 21 metres with tower elements permitted to a maximum height of 45 metres (Attachment 10). A maximum building height of 15 metres is permitted in the G zone with a restriction on above-grade building elements except for stairwells and ventilation shafts within a 30 metre wide zone at the eastern edge of the park adjacent to Block 31. The existing Zoning By-law also includes development standards in relation to building envelopes, build-to zones along streets, and interior courtyard and canopy requirements.

Toronto Urban Design Guidelines – Railway Lands West and Central

The site is within an area subject to the Railway Lands West and Central Urban Design Guidelines. These guidelines are intended to provide a context for development of the lands into a predominantly residential neighbourhood, along with non-residential and entertainment uses, parks, schools, daycares and other amenities.

In keeping with the Secondary Plan, Block 31 along with the eastern portion of Canoe Landing Park is identified as the general location for a future community centre and schools. The Guidelines provide for a range of recreation and cultural activities within the park and support activities associated with the schools, child care centre and community centre. A view corridor 20 metres wide is identified at the east edge of Canoe Landing Park with this space to incorporate design elements reflective of those in the adjacent public realm such as lighting, decorative paving and other landscape treatments, and this area is to be accessible at all times. The Guidelines also identify the Southern Linear Park, a 12 metre wide linear park that extends along the south edge of the site and provides a transition between the Block and the Gardiner Expressway-Lakeshore Boulevard corridor. The completion of the Southern Linear Park adjacent to the site is proposed as part of the project.

The Railway Lands West and Central Urban Design Guidelines are available on the City's website at:

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/city_planning/urban_design/files/pdf/29railwaylands_wescen.pdf

Site Plan Control

A Site Plan application (File # 15 268064 STE 20 SA) has been submitted and is being reviewed concurrently with the zoning amendment application.

Design Review Panel

The City's Design Review Panel considers publicly-initiated projects containing significant visual and physical public realm impacts such as the proposed project. The application is scheduled to be considered by the City's Design Review Panel at its meeting on April 5, 2016.

Reasons for the Application

A zoning by-law amendment is required to establish development standards such as building setbacks, build-to lines, building envelopes and other standards as necessary to address the proposed design of the shared facility. As well, the zoning by-law currently prohibits above grade building elements with the exception of stairwells and ventilation shafts within the 30 metre zone at the east edge of the park and the proposal includes a extension of the community centre into this area at the north end of the site.

COMMENTS

The subject site was identified in the early planning phases of the Railway Lands development as one of the main sites for community services and facilities including a community centre, child care centre and schools anticipated to be needed to serve the residents in the new neighbourhoods being planned for this area. The Railways Lands West and Central areas have seen rapid growth in a relatively short period of time, with many new residential and mixed-use developments constructed over the last 15 years. There are currently approximately 15,000 residents living in this area of the downtown that includes the now well established and vibrant CityPlace neighbourhood. Community centres, child care centres, and schools are essential elements of complete communities and the proposed shared facility will provide much needed community services and facilities for residents, among them many young families with children. An interdivisional staff team has been established to facilitate the review of the application to ensure that issues are identified and addressed in a timely fashion.

Issues to be Resolved

Issues identified to date in the review of the application include:

- Transportation considerations such as proposed pick-up and drop-off arrangements including buses on Brunel Court, and potential traffic impacts.
- The interface of the development with the park including the design of the outdoor play areas, and the integration of these spaces with the existing park.

- Park and site access and views in relation to the proposed design of east-west and north-south walkways.
- Adequacy of proposed building setbacks to ensure sufficient sidewalk zone widths to support a high level of pedestrian activity and provide sufficient space for sidewalks, street trees and other pedestrian amenities.
- Design and materiality of the proposed building in relation to its setting and functions.
- Impacts of the proposed extension to the community centre on the north-south view corridor and the interface of the building extension and associated exterior plaza space with the existing park.

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.

Additional issues may be identified through the review of the application, agency comments and the community consultation process. As priority social infrastructure for this growing community, the review of this project will be expedited.

CONTACT

Susan McAlpine, Senior Planner Tel. No. (416) 392-7622 E-mail: smcalpin@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Site Plan

Attachment 2: North Elevation Attachment 3: South Elevation Attachment 4: East Elevation Attachment 5: West Elevation

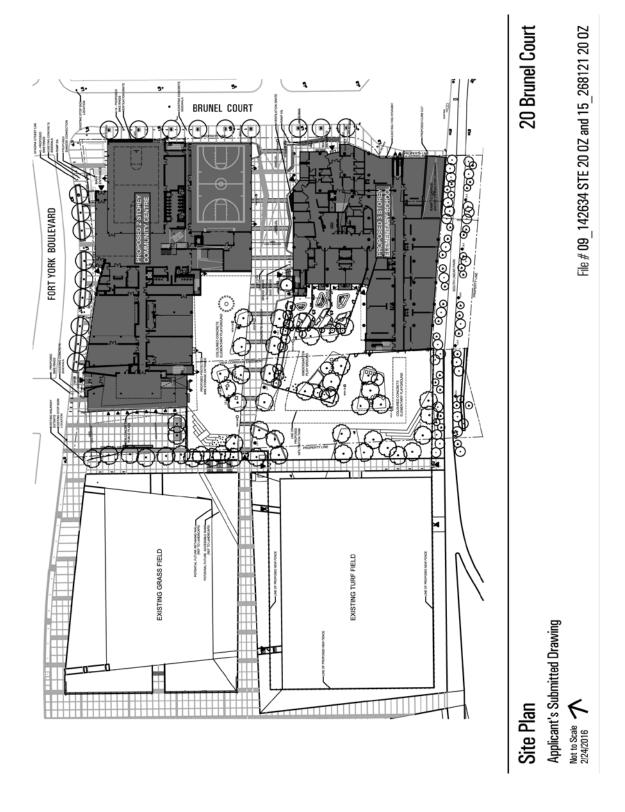
Attachment 6: Application Data Sheet

Attachment 7: Railway Lands West Secondary Plan – Land Use Plan

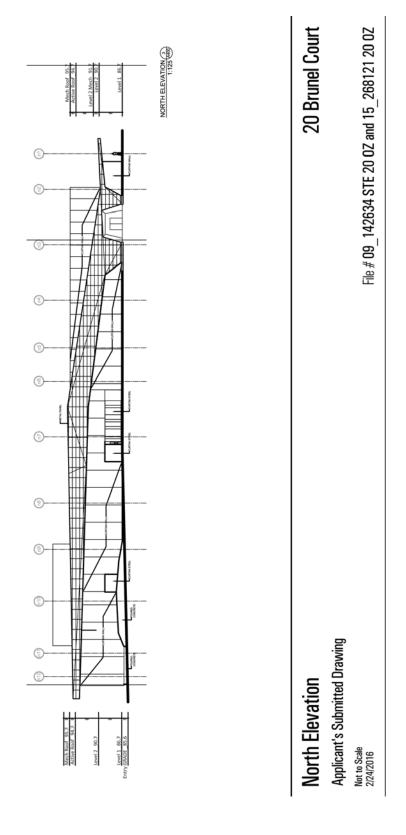
Attachment 8: Railway Lands West Secondary Plan – Parks and Open Space Plan

Attachment 9: Zoning – Land Use Attachment 10: Zoning – Height

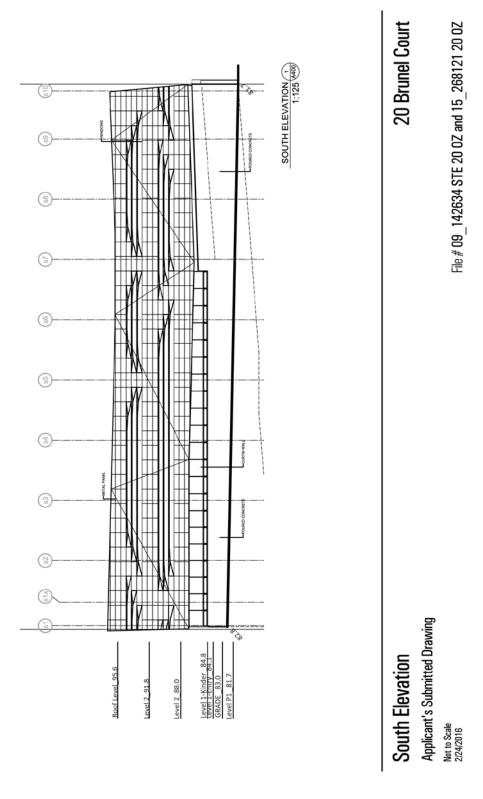
Attachment 1: Site Plan



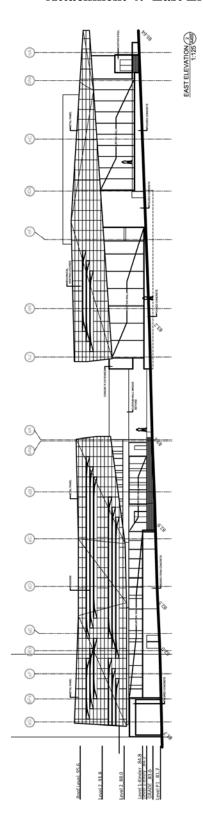
Attachment 2: North Elevation



Attachment 3: South Elevation

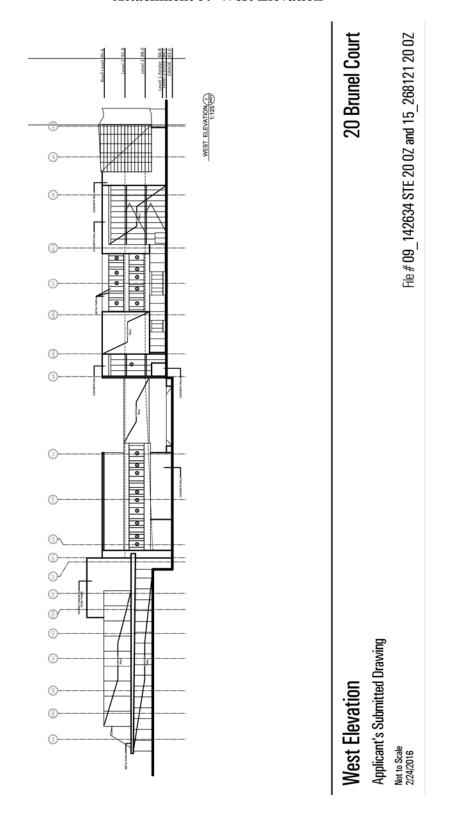


Attachment 4: East Elevation



20 Brunel Court File # 09_142634 STE 20 0Z and 15_268121 20 0Z Applicant's Submitted Drawing East Elevation Not to Scale 2/24/2016

Attachment 5: West Elevation



Attachment 6: Application Data Sheet

Application Type Rezoning Application Number: 09 142634 STE 20 OZ

Details Rezoning, Standard Application Date: May 28, 2009

Municipal Address: 20 Brunel Court

Location Description: PL D970 PT LT20 RP 66R16838 PT 1 **GRID S2017

Project Description: Rezoning appplication to permit the construction of the shared community facilities

including a City community centre and child care centre and two elementary schools; for the

Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board.

Applicant: Agent: Architect: Owner:

ZAS Architect ZAS Architect City of Toronto

517 Wellington St. W 517 Wellington St. W

Suite 404 Suite 404

Toronto, ON M5V 1G1 Toronto, ON M5V 1G1

PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation: Mixed Use Areas and Parks and Site Specific Provision:

Opens Space Areas

Zoning: CR & G Historical Status:

Height Limit (m): 21 & 15 Site Plan Control Area: Y

PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq. m): 13420.78 Height: Storeys: 2 & 3 Frontage (m): 107 Metres: 13

Depth (m): 129.5

Total Ground Floor Area (sq. m): 6225 **Total**

Total Residential GFA (sq. m): Parking Spaces: 74

Total Non-Residential GFA (sq. m): 15807 Loading Docks

Total GFA (sq. m): 15807

Lot Coverage Ratio (%):

Floor Space Index: 1.17

DWELLING UNITS FLOOR AREA BREAKDOWN (upon project completion)

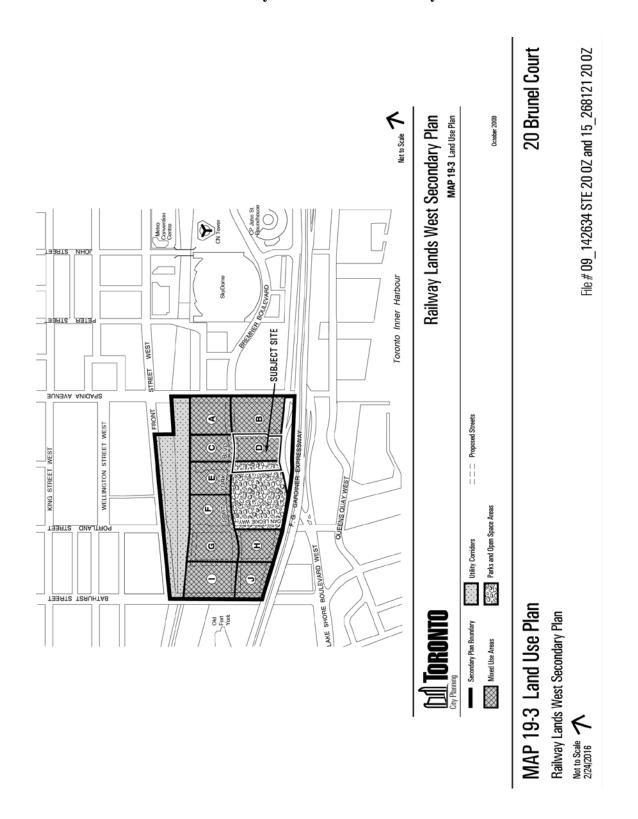
Tenure Type:		Above Grade	Below Grade
Rooms:	Residential GFA (sq. m):		0
Bachelor:	Retail GFA (sq. m):	0	0
1 Bedroom:	Office GFA (sq. m):	0	0
2 Bedroom:	Industrial GFA (sq. m):	0	0
3 + Bedroom:	Institutional/Other GFA (sq. m):	15807	0
Total Units:			

CONTACT: PLANNER NAME: Sue McAlpine, Senior Planner

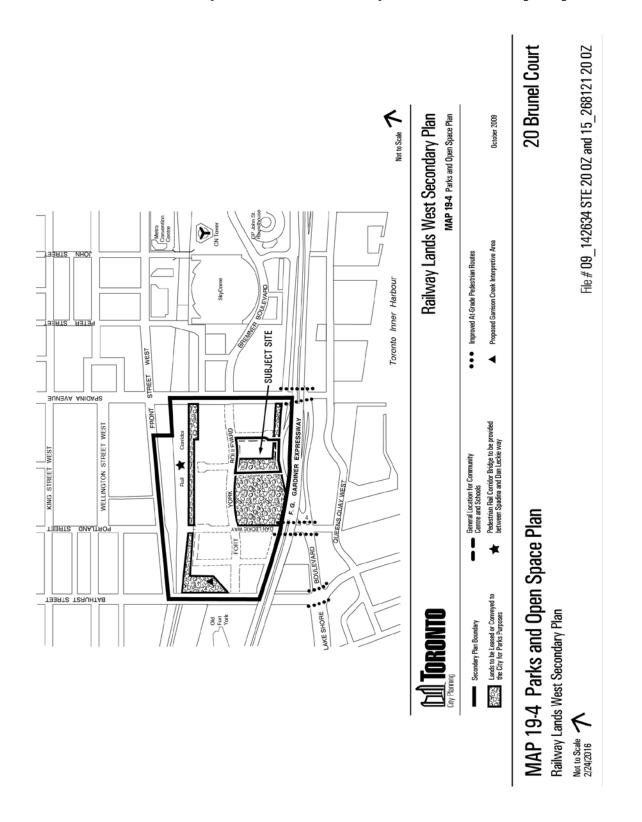
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Attachment 7: Railways Lands West Secondary Plan – Land Use



Attachment 8: Railways Lands West Secondary Plan – Parks and Open Space Plan



Attachment 9: Zoning By-law – Zone Category

