

MUNICIPAL, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT LAW

16 May 2017

Sent via E-mail (pgmc@toronto.ca)

Planning and Growth Management Committee  
and City Council, City of Toronto  
100 Queen Street West  
12<sup>th</sup> Floor, West Tower  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Attention: Nancy Martins, Administrator

Dear Councillors:

**Re: Dufferin-Wilson Regeneration Area Study and  
City-initiated Official Plan Amendment  
Submissions by First Long Weekend Developments Inc.**

We represent First Long Weekend Developments Inc. ("FLWD"), the owner of lands located at 693, 695, 675, 685 Wilson Avenue and 30 Billy Bishop Way (the "FLWD Site"). The FLWD Site includes a Best Buy store, a Michaels store, and various other retail and restaurant uses, and adjoins lands that include a Costco store and a Home Depot store, which are under separate ownership. The retail and restaurant uses on the FLWD Site and the Costco and Home Depot are commonly collectively referred to as the "Downsview Power Centre". The Best Buy and Costco stores are located on the westerly portion of the Downsview Power Centre, which immediately abuts the Dufferin-Wilson Regeneration Area.

On behalf of FLWD, we have reviewed the staff report dated 8 March 2017 regarding the Dufferin-Wilson Regeneration Area Study (the "Directions Report"), including the attached draft Official Plan Amendment (the "Draft OPA"), and offer the following submissions for Council's consideration.

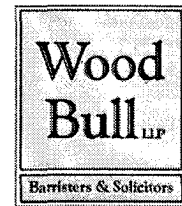
**(1) East-West Pedestrian Mid-Block Connection to Downsview Power Centre**

The Dufferin-Wilson Area map in the Draft OPA includes a "Potential Pedestrian Connection" located approximately halfway between Wilson Avenue and the New Public Street, running east-west from the eastern boundary of the Dufferin-Wilson Area to the Downsview Power Centre (the "Pedestrian Connection"). The same pedestrian connection is shown on Attachment 1 to the Directions Report (Proposed Dufferin-Wilson Regeneration Area Structure Plan) and Attachment 4 to the Directions Report (Movement Strategy).

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Given the current configuration of the Downsview Power Centre, we respectfully submit that the Pedestrian Connection should be deleted from the Draft OPA.

The Pedestrian Connection connects to the rear of the Costco store, which area is predominantly used by trucks for loading purposes. The area is not designed for the safe passage of pedestrians and cyclists. Beyond the rear area of the Costco store, to the east of Costco and Best Buy, is a parking area that extends in all directions southward and eastward towards Billy Bishop Way. The TTC Wilson Subway Station lies beyond Billy Bishop Way. There is no dedicated continuous pedestrian route connecting the Costco store to the TTC Wilson Subway Station.

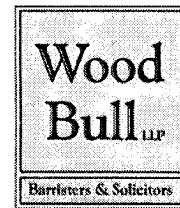
It is apparent from a review of the Directions Report that a central planning objective of the area policy is to improve the public realm and increase pedestrian connectivity to the TTC Wilson Subway Station. As noted in the Vision section of the Directions Report, *"a green and animated public realm will provide safe and comfortable options for pedestrians and cyclists to get to and from local destinations and public transit."* Although FLWD takes no issue with this overarching policy objective, it has serious concerns about promoting a connection that is unsafe for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. From a planning perspective, the Pedestrian Connection does not provide a safe and comfortable option for pedestrians to reach public transit.

Furthermore, the Pedestrian Connection is unnecessary because a safe and comfortable pedestrian route to the TTC Wilson Subway Station already exists - Wilson Avenue. As noted in the Directions Report, the introduction of the north-south Dufferin-Wilson Greenway will provide additional connection from the Dufferin-Wilson Area to the TTC Wilson Station. Policy 4(b) of the Draft OPA provides that, *"the Dufferin-Wilson Greenway ... will connect Wilson Avenue to Billy Bishop Way and provide direct and safe connections through the Dufferin-Wilson area and extend the public street network to provide an integrated route for pedestrians and cyclists to the TTC Wilson Station ..."*

Focusing pedestrians along Wilson Avenue would be consistent with the City's broader planning objectives for Wilson Avenue. In this regard, in the Directions Report staff reference Wilson Avenue as *"act[ing] as a ceremonial entrance to the community, and build[ing] on the vision established in the Wilson Avenue Avenues Study and Urban Design Guidelines"*. In the Movement section of the Directions Report, staff also state that, *"Wilson Avenue is envisioned as a grand boulevard with a grade separated cycle track, a double row of trees and plenty of amenities for pedestrians and transit users up to William R. Allen Road."* In fact, pedestrians travelling eastward from Downsview Power Centre to the TTC Wilson Station must travel along Wilson Avenue to reach the station, because there is no direct pedestrian connection from the east edge of the Downsview Power Centre to the station.

Therefore, promoting Wilson Avenue as the main pedestrian connection to the TTC Wilson Station is a more appropriate planning approach to increasing connectivity in the area than introducing a new, incomplete and unsafe connection through the rear of the Costco store.

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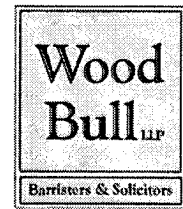
For the reasons stated above, we respectfully submit that it would be appropriate to remove the “Potential Pedestrian Connection” from the Draft OPA.

**(2) Introduction of New Sensitive Land Uses**

The Draft OPA includes policies aimed at ensuring that where new sensitive land uses are introduced to the proposed Mixed Use Area, they will be compatible with surrounding employment uses. FLWD fully supports the inclusion of those policies, however has some concerns about the scope and clarity of the policies. In particular:

- Policy 2(v) should be modified to:
  - replace the reference to “sensitive uses” to “residential and other sensitive land uses”, to be consistent with OPA 231 policy language;
  - specify that “existing employment uses” includes all of the uses at the Downsview Power Centre;
  - clarify the policy by separating the requirement to demonstrate compatibility through studies, from the possible mitigation solutions;
  - specify that sensitive land uses should “not impede the continuation of existing employment uses within and outside of the study area” including any expansions or additions to those existing permitted uses;
  - replace the term “study area” with the term “Mixed Use Area”; and
  - add a requirement that the “appropriate noise, dust, air quality, vibration compatibility and traffic studies” be peer reviewed by a qualified consultant.
- Policy 10(b) should be modified to:
  - replace the reference to “sensitive uses” to “residential and other sensitive land uses”, to be consistent with OPA 231;
  - add the requirement that “sensitive uses will be required to demonstrate the proposed development meets all provincial policy and guidelines ... “
- Policy 11(a) should be modified to specify that “zoning by-laws, minor variance, consent, or any other public action will implement the Vision and the policies of the Dufferin-Wilson SASP.”

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- Policy 11(d) and General Policy (d) should be modified to require that the City give neighbouring landowners a reasonable opportunity to review the proponent's compatibility studies and provide comments regarding same.
- General Policy (d) should be modified to identify what the feasibility analysis must demonstrate such as:
  - achievement of the applicable provincial guidelines;
  - how land use compatibility is proposed to be achieved and maintained; and
  - whether there are circumstances in which the lands might be designated "Class 4".

FLWD would welcome an opportunity to discuss these modifications with staff.

**Request for Notice**

As a final matter, we hereby request notice of any future community consultation meetings and/or Council and Committee meetings with respect to this Study.

Yours very truly,

**Wood Bull LLP**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jshapira", is positioned below the firm name.

Johanna R. Shapira

JRS/af

c. Client