

CITY CLERK

Consolidated Clause in Toronto and East York Community Council Report 6, which was considered by City Council on July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005.

10

Status Report - South of Eastern Study -629, 633 and 675 Eastern Avenue (Toronto-Danforth, Ward 30)

City Council on July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005, adopted this Clause without amendment.

Council also considered additional material, which is noted at the end of this Clause.

The Toronto and East York Community Council recommends that City Council:

- (1) adopt the staff recommendations in the Recommendations Section of the report (June 21, 2005) from the Director, Community Planning, South District subject to amending Recommendation (3) to read:
 - "(3) direct appropriate staff of the Economic Development and Culture Division and the Director, Waterfront Secretariat to report to Economic Development and Parks Committee for information, and to the Toronto and East York Community Council on the availability of suitable space in Toronto for the film sector and its needs with respect to future expansion and growth, and to consult with appropriate municipal departments, agencies, boards and commissions and the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, when preparing this report";
- (2) request the Director, Transportation Services, Toronto and East York District to undertake a traffic study in the area covered by the Community Improvement Plan which would address the outstanding Community Improvement Plan issues as well as the above requests and concerns as identified by the surrounding community. The results of the traffic study would:
 - (a) move commuter traffic off of local streets;
 - (b) address traffic calming on Eastern Avenue from Carlaw to Coxwell and local streets;
 - (c) meet school zone concerns;
 - (d) solve pedestrian concerns at the big box centres at Lakeshore and Leslie/ Lakeshore and Eastern; and

- (e) finish implementation of Community Improvement Traffic Projects;
- (3) request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with other appropriate City divisions and agencies, to report to the Toronto and East York Community Council, and to the Economic Development and Parks Committee for information, on the steps to be taken to maintain the current "Studio District" designation in the vicinity of Eastern Avenue, including maintaining street signs;
- (4) as part of the economic study being undertaken in the South of Eastern Study area, request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with Economic Development and Culture Division and the Director, Corporate Finance, to report to Toronto and East York Community Council and to the Economic Development and Parks Committee for information, on:
 - (a) the nature of employment, and the number and type of jobs, in the Kings area of the City of Toronto after redevelopment, compared to conditions prior to redevelopment;
 - (b) the applicability of the Kings experience to the South of Eastern study area and the proposed rezoning of 629, 633 and 675 Eastern Avenue;
- (5) request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with Economic Development and Culture Division and the Director, Corporate Finance, to report to the Toronto and East York Community Council and to the Economic Development and Parks Committee on incentives for employment uses to promote new investment for employment purposes and to maintain and grow the city's job base; and
- (6) request the Director, Community Planning, South District to have regard for the leasing of the new studio space in the Port Lands while preparing the Final Report respecting the application for zoning amendments for 629, 633 and 675 Eastern Avenue. and have in mind timing and other issues discussed at the July 5, 2005 Toronto and East York Community Council meeting.

The Toronto and East York Community Council submits the report (June 21, 2005) from the Director, Community Planning, South District:

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to submit the preliminary findings and results of a land use planning study undertaken for the lands bounded by Eastern Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard East, between the Don River and Leslie Street. The report also provides a summary of the review process to date for the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment applications submitted for 629, 633, 675 Eastern Avenue.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that City Council:

- (1) receive the general principles proposed by the Applicant as set out in Attachment 2 as the basis for further discussion and review in order to develop Development Principles for the South of Eastern Study area and the Toronto Film Studio site in particular.
- (2) direct City Planning staff, in consultation with other City divisions and agencies, to develop and report back on streetscape guidelines for Eastern Avenue following community consultation on the matter.
- (3) direct Economic Development staff to report back to Economic Development and Parks Committee for information and Toronto and East York Community Council on the availability of suitable space in Toronto for the film sector and its needs with respect to future expansions and growth.
- (4) inform the applicant for Toronto Film Studios that:
 - (a) an Arborist Report be submitted to the City for the site as required with the application submission;
 - (b) the applicant submit the environmental reports with respect to soil and groundwater conditions, and comply with any standard conditions of the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services in respect of the peer review process of the environmental submissions in order to achieve compliance with applicable Ministry of the Environment Guidelines, objectives and regulations, as part of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment application.
- (5) direct City Planning staff, in consultation with Economic Development staff, to establish and implement a protocol to involve owners and businesses in the South of Eastern area in future work.

Background:

At its meeting on November 16, 2004, the Toronto and East York Community Council approved the staff recommendations contained in a Preliminary Report dated October 21, 2004, on an Application for an Official Plan Amendment and Rezoning for 629, 633 and 675 Eastern Avenue. In doing so Toronto and East York Community Council requested planning staff to undertake a review of the planning strategy for the area bounded by Lake Shore Boulevard, Don Valley, Leslie Street and Eastern Avenue in consultation with the Ward Councillor and the community as appropriate.

Comments:

The Toronto Film Studio site is located on the south side of Eastern Avenue just east of Pape Avenue. The application submitted proposes Official Plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit a range of office, service, retail, hotel and residential uses and increases in the height limit. The applicant is proposing the use of a (H) holding provision in the zoning by-law to ensure that when a development scheme comes forward the following happens:

- Council is satisfied that roads and other services are provided within the site, and that adequate parking and loading facilities are available;
- A Site Plan application has been approved;
- Council is satisfied that the site meets the Provincial standards for decommissioning of contaminated sites; and
- Where residential uses are proposed, the site is appropriate for those uses.

The Policy Framework

The Former City of Toronto Official Plan

The application site falls within an area designated Restricted Industrial Area. It is Council's policy to discourage the loss of employment land by encouraging the retention and renewal of employment in the City's industrial areas.

Policy Section 9.18 of Part I of the Official Plan states that Council will not consider a redesignation of any industrially designated land for any non-industrial use without first having considered a study of the area. Amongst other matters, the study shall have regard for:

- (a) the number and types of industrial firms and employees in the areas that would be adversely affected;
- (b) the impact on any surrounding industrial lands that would not be redesignated; and
- (c) the environmental condition of the lands and the need for soil decommissioning.

The New City of Toronto Official Plan

The new Official Plan for the amalgamated City of Toronto is now before the Ontario Municipal Board. Once the Plan comes into full force and effect, it will designate the Toronto Film Studio Site as an Employment Area. Employment Areas are places of business and economic activity consisting of offices, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, research and development facilities, utilities, media facilities, parks, hotels, retail outlets ancillary to the preceding uses, and restaurants and small scale stores and services that serve area businesses and workers.

The South of Eastern Area is included within an Employment District shown on the Urban Structure map (Map 2). Employment Districts play an important role in the Plan's growth

management strategy. They are large districts comprised exclusively of lands where the Employment Areas land use designation applies. These lands can accommodate substantial growth in jobs and meet the needs of some of the key economic clusters that are the focus of the City's Economic Development Strategy.

The Plan states that Employment Districts will be protected from the encroachment of noneconomic functions. The Plan therefore contains polices to protect and promote Employment Districts exclusively for economic activity in order to ensure a stable environment for investment, maintain and grow the City's tax base, offer suitable locations for a variety of employment uses and nurture key economic clusters that benefit from these strategic locations.

The Toronto Film Studio site falls within what is considered an "edge condition" of an Employment Area. The new Official Plan would provide for the consideration of large format warehouse use (big box retail) on major arterial roadways shown on Map 3. Both Eastern Avenue and Lakeshore Boulevard are major arterial roads shown on this map. However, neither Eastern Avenue nor Lake Shore Boulevard are envisioned as Avenues under the new Official Plan.

Provincial Policy Statement

The March, 2005 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The Province has a stated interest in protecting the long-term health and safety of the population, and the financial and economic well-being of the Province and municipalities. Economic prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on managing change and promoting transit accessible, cost-efficient, cost-effective development and land use. This includes reducing the potential for public cost or risk to Ontario's residents by directing development away from areas where there is a risk to public health or safety.

The PPS supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning and recognizes linkages among policy areas. A key difference between this version and the previous 1997 version is that planning authorities must now make decisions on planning matters that are "consistent with" the policies of the PPS. The 1997 version stated that planning authorities should make decisions that "have regard to" the policies of the PPS. The new PPS policies support and complement many of the City's Official Plan's objectives. The PPS states that Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- (a) providing for appropriate mix and range of employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses) to meet long-term needs;
- (b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;
- (c) planning for, protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses; and

(d) ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.

Planning authorities may permit conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses (i.e. residential) through a comprehensive review, only where it has been demonstrated that the land is not required for employment purposes over the long-term and if there is a demonstrated need for the conversion.

Zoning

The area north of Lake Shore Boulevard between the Don Valley Parkway and Leslie Street is divided into three main sections. The west portion, between the Don River and west of Booth Avenue, is the heavy industrial area which includes the rail sorting yards and City Works yards. The land is zoned I3 D5 and I2 D5. These zoning categories permit industrial uses up to five times the area of the lot with basically no height limit. Only 1 shallow strip of land within 36.6 metres of the south side of Eastern Avenue has an 18 metre height limit.

The middle portion, between Booth and Carlaw Avenues, contains a small residential pocket, Morse Playground and a mix of light industrial uses. It is zoned R2 Z0.6 or I1 D2 with a height limit of 12 metres. Where I2 D2 applies the height limit increases to 15 metres. The density permitted in the Z0.6 portion is 0.6 times the area of the lot and in the D2 part it permits 2 times the area of the lot for industrial uses; see Attachment 3.

The final section, east of Carlaw Avenue to Leslie Street, is zoned I2 D5. This zone permits a range of retail and service uses, workshops, auto related uses, warehousing and storage and transportation related activities. Residential uses or artist live/work studios are not permitted. The maximum permitted density is five times the total lot area. Within 36.6 metres of Eastern Avenue on the south side, height is also limited to 18 metres. South of this point there is no height limit for industrial uses.

The South of Eastern Study Area

As noted above, if the City is considering redesignating Industrial land, a study must be undertaken to address the appropriateness of the possible change.

City staff has not completed all of the components of the South of Eastern Study. What is presented in this report is the information and analysis to date. The next steps are outlined later in this report.

The applicant for the Toronto Film Studio site has commissioned an Economic Review in support of their application. City staff have seen a presentation of the findings, but has not yet received the final report; therefore, staff has been unable to fully evaluate the findings. But we do know that more work is needed to determine if any change to the present planning framework is appropriate. City staff, including Economic Development staff, will be determining the economic health of the area through additional research and interviews with key area employers.

The study area is bounded by the Don River to the west, Eastern Avenue to the north, Leslie Street to the east and Lake Shore Boulevard to the south. The applicant's Economic Study used the same study area. This area does not function as a discreet Employment Area therefore, to properly assess the characteristics of this area, the original boundaries have been expanded south to Lake Ontario and east to Coxwell Avenue for the purposes of understanding the larger employment picture and to prevent the disclosure of private information by using employment numbers on a smaller basis. This larger area reflects both the historic linkages to the Port Lands, as well as the reality of the removal of the portion of the Gardiner Expressway. There are a total of 219 businesses employing about 11,300 people (131 businesses in the area north of Lake Shore employing approximately 7,400 employees and 88 in the area south of Lake Shore employing about 3,900 employees.

The area has remained remarkably stable, in terms of employment over the years. In 1985, for example, there were about 10,950 jobs compared to about 11,300 jobs today. The number of firms has actually increased over the past twenty years, from 192 firms in 1985 to 219 businesses today. Since 1994, employment has grown in the study area by 912 employees, or 8.8%.

The smaller sub-area north of Lakeshore has also been remarkably consistent over time, with 7,413 employees in 1985, which is virtually the same number as today.

The review to date has noted several strategic advantages as an employment area including:

- close proximity to downtown;
- easy access to major north/south and east/west transportation corridors; and
- a prominent address on the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard.

Characteristics of Business Establishments and Employment

This area was once a thriving manufacturing area with many jobs. As the manufacturing focus of the area declined many of these jobs left the area and Canada. However, even though manufacturing jobs have left this area over time, it has remained a relatively stable Employment Area as new businesses have grown to replace the departing firms. Where large employment uses have departed, other uses have emerged to fill the vacated space. One notable example is the new BMW headquarters where the former Lever Brother's offices were located on the south side of Sunlight Park Road just west of Broadview Avenue. There is a range of other examples including the Canada Post facility, auto related uses, and film studios.

In 1991 the City created a business development strategy for this area, branding it as "The Studio District" and facilitating the location of film and related production uses. In fact the City paid over \$6500 to manufacture and install 20 street signs in the Leslie/Eastern Studio District.

Large employers have continued to be very important to the area. In 1985, the top ten largest employers accounted for two-thirds of the total employment (the top ten accounted for 72% of the employment in the area north, and 53% of the total employment in the area south of Lake Shore). This did not change substantially over time. In 2004, the ten largest employers

accounted for about 71% of the total employment in the study area (73% in the North, and 68% in the South).

The applicant's presentation of their Economic Study also noted the growth of small and medium sized businesses in the area. In 1985 there were 60 establishments of less than 100 employees, while in 2004 this number had grown to 96 establishments. The business services and creative industries have also grown. In 1985 there were 10 establishments employing about 250 employees. By 2004 this had grown to 40 establishments with over 400 employees.

In short, this is not a stagnant area where, as manufacturing facilities have moved out of an area, land has gone unused for employment purposes for extensive periods of time. This area has shown remarkable employment stability, with the growth and establishment of a few new large uses, as well as the growth of several small businesses.

The Applicant's Presentation

As noted previously, the applicant's consultant has made several presentations (to city staff, the community working group and the larger community) on their Economic Study. They have concluded that, while the area is not viable for traditional manufacturing type uses, there has been an emerging economic trend supporting new employment uses. They have also stated that office uses and value-added industry is more likely to be attracted to the particular site if there is comprehensive redevelopment including a mix of uses.

The Toronto Film Studio Application

The 7.3 hectare (18-acre) site subject to the applications is shown on Attachment 1. Toronto Film Studios intends to vacate this site and move to the Port Lands. The owner has asked the City to consider expanding the land use permissions at the Eastern Avenue location, and would like the zoning permissions to be as flexible as possible to help ensure that redevelopment of the site takes place.

As previously noted, after the Preliminary Report was considered by Council, a Community Working Group was established. Approximately 15 community members were invited to attend. The group was chaired by a community member and met about once a month to review matters. They asked for various presentations from the applicant and City staff. Out of these meetings a decision was made to hold 4 information meetings for the larger community. The topics discussed at these meetings included:

- South Riverdale neighbourhood profile and the existing population characteristics;
- the traffic changes since the take down of the Gardiner;
- urban design possibilities for the site;
- the applicant's vision for the site; and
- a presentation of the economic study undertaken by the applicant's consultant.

The focus of the community discussion and review was on the application. The community wanted to understand the existing employment situation in the study area and what changes have occurred in the area since the Gardiner dismantling.

The community has been clear that they want to see the following things happen:

- A clean-up strategy for the Canada Metal site at 721 Eastern Avenue and adjacent properties affected
- Connecting South Riverdale back to the water and removal of the existing barriers by implementing a strategy for connections in a North/South direction not just east/west
- Promotion of clean technology and green environment
- A traffic strategy plan for this area
- A precinct plan, prior to redevelopment taking place
- A voice in the process for the community

Outstanding Issues

1. Official Plan Strategy for accommodating residential growth

The new Official Plan clearly states that the Downtown, Centres and the Avenues are the focus for accommodating residential growth at a scale that is appropriate to a particular context. There is more existing capacity to accommodate forecasted residential growth to the year 2031 in these and other areas including the Waterfront and NE Scarborough.

2. Impact on the Employment Area of Considering Residential

Considering introducing residential uses on the Toronto Film Studio site cannot be done in isolation. This is a mid-block location. Any consideration of residential at this location will clearly impact the entire employment area, at a minimum east of Booth Street to Leslie Street. If residential is to be considered all the way down to Lakeshore, this may impact the Port Lands to the south. The City can expect further residential applications on industrial land should this application be approved for residential development.

- 3. Improvements Along Eastern and Along Lake Shore Boulevard
- 3.1 Eastern Avenue

Concerns have been expressed from the community about how Eastern Avenue works, where the traffic lights are located and where others should go if development occurs in the future. They also want to explore the future potential to 'green' the roadway, add new sidewalks and increase comfort for pedestrians and cyclists.

Following the Gardiner Dismantling, a Community Improvement Plan for the area was passed, By-law 866-1999. Some items specified have been completed but others projects have not commenced. In the case of Eastern Avenue the community has indicated that the projects listed for Eastern Avenue have not been undertaken. It should be noted that Eastern Avenue is scheduled to be resurfaced in the next 5 to 7 years from Lewis Street to Leslie Street. This provides time to consider opportunities for public realm enhancements.

3.2 Lake Shore Boulevard

The future of Lake Shore Boulevard following the Gardiner takedown is just beginning. Planning for the Port Lands, the new film studio, the creation of linkages in a north/south direction and connections into the Port Lands and the future redevelopment of both sides of this street are issues just in the early planning stages. The possibilities and the goals and objections to be achieved here are widespread. The co-ordination and the setting out of the visions will be ongoing over the next few years.

4. Environmental Issues

The departure of the manufacturing businesses south of Eastern Avenue left behind an extensive environmental history for workers and as well as for the residents of South Riverdale. Due to this history, the south of Eastern study area contains many sites that would be considered Brownfield sites that should be cleaned up in the future and involve intense interest from the community's point-of-view.

In addition, the community promotes the concept of green technology as a concept that should be included in the future vision for all development in South Riverdale. Site clean-up has future implications for redevelopment south of Eastern and may in fact dictate some built form solutions at this location.

The Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services would normally provide conditions of approval related to the environmental assessment and remediation of the site and any lands that may be conveyed to the City, if required. So far, these reports have not been submitted to the City.

Environmental reports with respect to soil and groundwater conditions are required as part of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment process. The applicant must comply with any standard conditions of the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services respecting the peer review of the submissions and any applicable Ministry of the Environment Guideline objectives and regulations.

5. Promoting Investment

Incentives for employment uses may need to be explored. The recent experience in Southern Etobicoke where incentives are applied through the Community Improvement Plan could be considered here as well. However, discussion with officials of the Finance Department and other stakeholders need to occur. Staff need a better understanding of conditions necessary to promote new investment for employment purposes and to maintain and grow the job base. Next Steps

Given the complexity of development issues and potential impacts from development on the Toronto Film Studio site it is important that the South of Eastern study continue. A comprehensive plan should be the result of a participatory process involving all affected parties. Accordingly, a process of community consultation and consensus building must also continue.

Work still underway includes a review of the consultant's report, the employer interviews and a requested report from Economic Development staff specifically on issues related to the film sector industry.

The next step is to develop the following:

- the role this site can play in increasing employment opportunities in the area;
- the role of the site in context of the City's stated goals and objectives;
- the role of this site in addressing neighbourhood desire for local area improvements; and
- the interface between employment uses and residential uses.

The applicant has established Development Principles attached as Attachment 2 for the Toronto Film Studio site. Tabling these principles with the community, city staff, Ward Councillor and the applicant is a good way to focus future discussion and work towards a shared vision for the site, which would benefit the site, the employment area and the neighbourhood.

Conclusions:

The applicant submitted an OPA, Zoning By-law Amendment with new height limits for the site and a proposed Holding By-law as a way of dealing with future permissions for 629-633 – 675 Eastern Avenue to provide greater development flexibility for the site. This 18 acre parcel of land needs a comprehensive approach to deal with the future redevelopment potential of the site. The size, location, its relationship to the low density residential area to the north and the opportunities it presents to the community, the impact on adjacent employment uses, site accessibility constraints, importance of the abutting roadways, contamination, parking implications above ground, impact on the existing TTC service, new bike path and the close proximity to the proposed Lake Ontario Park are some of the issues that need to be addressed.

The vision as presented on June 6, 2005 to the community and City Staff by the applicant generated concerns from the community and staff.

Contact:

Denise Graham, Senior Planner, East Section Telephone: 416-392-0871; Fax: 416-392-1330; E-mail: dgraham1@toronto.ca (Copies of the following Attachments in the report were forwarded to all Members of the Toronto and East York Community Council with the agenda for its meeting on July 5, 2005, and copies are on file in the City Clerk's Office:

- Attachment 1: Map of the Study Area and application site;
- Attachment 2: Applicant's Proposed Development Principles for the site; and
- Attachment 3: Zoning Map for the Study Area.)

Attachment 1



Map of the Study Area and Application Site

Attachment 2

Applicant's Proposed Development Principles for the Site

Principles of Urban Design

- Framework of streets and blocks
- Scale of buildings
- Heights decrease from South (Port Lands) to North (Existing Community)
- Traffic control
- Calm and urbanize Eastern Avenue
- Prevent infiltration to existing community
- Park and greenway
- Mix of uses
- Environmental goals
- Site clean-up and removal of polluting uses
- Sustainable green design strategies

Attachment 3

Zoning Map for the Study Area



The Toronto and East York Community Council also had before it the following communications and copies are on file in the City Clerk's Office:

- Communication (July 5, 2005) from Joe Lobko, Architect Inc.;
- Communication (July 4, 2005) from Kenneth W. Ferguson, Toronto Film Studios;
- Communication (July 5, 2005) from Christopher J Danton;
- Communication (June 28, 2005) from Councillor Fletcher;
- Communication (July 5, 2005) from Tyler J. Curtis;
- Communication (July 5, 2005) from Steven Mirkopoulos; and
- Communication (July 5, 2005) from Mark Flowers.

The following appeared before the Toronto and East York Community Council:

- Kenneth Ferguson, President, Toronto Film Studios;
- Sharon Howarth;
- Paul Kenyon, Absolute Location Support Services;
- Daniel Friesen;
- Linda Lynch;
- Peter Lukas, Representative, Ontario Film and Television Studio Owners Association;
- Suzanne McCormick;
- Mark Flowers, Davies Howe Partners;
- Terri-Lynn Leeking;
- Megan Torza;
- Wayne Porter;
- Skeeter Jones;
- Richard Walker;
- Michael Rosenberg; and
- Joe Clark.

City Council – July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005

Council also considered the following:

Communications:

- *(undated) from John Karmouche [Communication 10(a)];*
- (July 19, 2005) from Linda Lynch [Communication 10(b)];

- (July 19, 2005) from Sharon Howarth [Communication 10(c)];
- (July 19, 2005) from Terri-Lynn Leeking [Communication 10(d)];
- (July 19, 2005) from Linda Lynch [Communication 37(b)] enclosing a binder of materials; and
- *(undated) cover letter forwarding the following [Communication 37(c)]:*
 - (July 20, 2005) from D. Jim Mirkopoulos, Vice President, Cinespace Film Studios;
 - (July 5, 2005) from Steve Mirkopoulos, President, Cinespace Film Studios, Peter Lukas, President, Showline Studios, and Lillyann Goldstein, President Wallace Studios, on behalf of the Ontario Film and Television Studio Owners Association;
 - (July 6, 2005) from Don Carmody, Producer;
 - (July 6, 2005) from John Eckert;
 - (July 5, 2005) from Christopher J. Danton;
 - (July 4, 2005) from Marty Dejczak, Location Manager, Dejcak Productions Inc.;
 - (July 5, 2005) from John Karmouche;
 - (July 5, 2005) Tyler J. Curtis;
 - (April 17, 2005) from the Ontario Film and Television Studio Owners Association; and
 - (July 18, 2005) Playback Trade Publication Article, entitled "Evictions for T.O. Service Companies".