TORONTO Member Motion

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM27.21	ACTION			Ward:17

St. Clair Avenue Study - Request for the City Solicitor and the Chief Planner and Executive Director to Take Part in the OMB Hearing Appeal - by Councillor Cesar Palacio, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc

**** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.***
**** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral.***
**** This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.***

Recommendations

Councillor Cesar Palacio, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the City Solicitor and the Chief Planner and Executive Director to take part in the Ontario Municipal Board hearing(s) on November 14, 2012 to defend the St. Clair Avenue Study appeal within Old Weston Road and Hounslow Heath Road in order to allow for redevelopment and economic revitalization in the area.

Summary

In May, 2009, City Council considered a final report (May 11, 2009) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, entitled "City Initiated Avenue Study for St. Clair Avenue Study."

The purpose of the Official Plan amendment on the Avenue Study was to identify St. Clair Avenue West as an Avenue with areas intended to accommodate higher buildings and additional intensification, given the level of gentrification of the surrounding residential community and the increased demand for City living.

In spite of the St. Clair Avenue Transportation Improvement Project, the Capital Design Strategy St. Clair West and the St. Clair West Revitalization Strategy, the area has remained stagnant; the existing MCR zoning challenges and constraints has not stimulated the permitted level of development for this part of St. Clair Avenue West.

Based on the St. Clair vision generated through public consultations, staff proposed a built form that is generally 7 to 9 stories in height. The area under appeal between Old Weston Road and Hounslow Heath Road was acknowledged within the report by Planning staff as an area that can accommodate greater building heights, more specifically, staff proposed 12-storey building heights within the former West York Chev Olds and neighbouring sites as a prominent location in the Study Area for redevelopment.

As a result of an outstanding appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board, this section of St. Clair Avenue West has been suppressed by delays and over development of big box stores, west of Keele Street and mid high-rises to the east. As a result, we have a commercial strip that is in decline with vacant stores and other businesses which are struggling to survive.

While other sections of St. Clair thrive with an influx of new mid-rise and high-rise developments, the area in question has remained stagnant. Two full blocks of land sit empty with no end in sight as any interest in redeveloping the land has dried up due to the lengthy delays in dealing with the appeal.

This issue has been on the back burner for far too long and immediate action is needed to ultimately permit greater development opportunity than what the current zoning affords in the western segment of St. Clair, the area that is the subject of the appeal.

This Motion is urgent because the St. Clair Avenue Study, between Old Weston Road and Hounslow Heath Road, was appealed and will be before the Ontario Municipal Board on November 14, 2012. It is imminent that a compromise between appellants and the City Planning Division could be reached prior to the Ontario Municipal Board hearing.

(Submitted to City Council on October 30 and 31, 2012, as MM27.21)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM27.21