

NY28.31.5

North York Community Council - My comments for 2013.NY28.31 on November 19, 2013
North York Community Council

From: frankand lori <frankandlori@sympatico.ca>
To: <nycc@toronto.ca>
Date: 11/18/2013 3:11 PM
Subject: My comments for 2013.NY28.31 on November 19, 2013 North York Community Council

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the November 19, 2013 North York Community Council meeting on item 2013.NY28.31, Final Report - Yonge, Duplex, Helendale and Orchard View Block Planning Study

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

BLOCK STUDY (NY28.31)

Avenue Road Eglinton Community Association (ARECA) has been involved in community activities since the 1970s, and was incorporated in 1988. ARECA has always been concerned with maintaining the existing residential fabric of the neighbourhood. While the predominant built form is comprised of single-family residences, there are low rise and mid-rise buildings in our neighbourhood, but no high-rise structures outside of the specific Yonge Eglinton corner. In the last couple of years, we have seen increased pressure from developers to build high-rise structures. While that may be appropriate for the Yonge Eglinton Growth Centre, it is not appropriate outside of the Secondary Plan area.

I will not rehash the Block Study background information or recommendations.

What I do want to provide is an historical perspective on the evolution in our thinking. Historically, ARECA like most community organizations was focused on Height and Density. We railed against the imposition of these large built forms in our neighbourhood. We were not always on the side of City Planning Department. We appeared before the OMB, and with very few exceptions, the proposed development went ahead as planned. We were wasting our time and efforts.

We sat back and licked our wounds, and decided that a better approach may be to consider the residents specifically, i.e. to focus on the public realm. We wished for wider sidewalks, more seating locations, etc... We even supported the BAZIS development at the North East corner of Yonge and Eglinton as did other community groups because the public realm was inviting, interesting, and in our view, would provide pedestrians with a much improved public space.

Yes – public realm trumped height and density.

We participated in the Block Study because we felt there was a real opportunity to make a great space in and for the community. Clearly, given the OMB applications, the developers in this instance did not agree. They are going ahead with their own plans, and those plans are completely devoid, in our view, of any public realm improvements in the area.

ARECA supports intensification.

ARECA supports the Growth Centre at Yonge and Eglinton.

ARECA supports more emphasis on public realm.

ARECA supports built form transitions in the Secondary plan area.

ARECA supports the Block Study, and agrees with the report.

Frank Peters

President, ARECA