

November 14, 2013

City Planning - Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis
Metro Hall
55 John St., 22nd Floor
Toronto ON M5V 3C6

Attention: Mr. Paul Bain, Project Manager, Official Plan Review

- and-

Chair and Members of the Planning and Growth Management Committee
Toronto City Hall, 10th Floor, West Tower
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Attention: Ms. Nancy Martins, Committee Administrator

Dear Chair and Members of the Planning and Growth Management Committee:

Re: Request for Revisions to the proposed draft Official Plan Amendment No. 231 in respect of the property municipally known as 22 METROPOLITAN ROAD in the City of Toronto

We are the solicitors for Novi Corporation, the owner of the property municipally known as 22 Metropolitan Road (the “Site”) in the former City of Scarborough. The Site is located immediately southeast of the Warden Avenue overpass at Highway 401. More specifically, the Site is located on the north side of Metropolitan Road, one property east of Warden Avenue, which Site is irregular in shape with a total area of 3.47 ha and a frontage of 114 m along Metropolitan Road.

The underutilized Site is currently occupied by two buildings, one 2-storey “U”-shaped building and one 1-storey building, which collectively make up the Howard Johnson Inn and Suites Toronto East, a 190-room hotel along with an above-grade parking lot and landscaped open space to the south along Metropolitan Road, which Site is derelict and in desperate need of reinvestment. The Site is surrounded by an eclectic mix of uses including Highway 401 to the immediate north, employment uses including food and commercial distribution centres and self-storage buildings to the east, employment uses including manufacturers, industrial uses and a commercial mover/warehouse to the south, a Methodist Church and the Salvation Army office building to the immediate west, and lower density residential uses further west.

The Site is identified as an “Employment District” pursuant to the Urban Structure Map of the City of Toronto Official Plan, as amended, along with the corresponding “Employment Areas” designation pursuant to the Land Use Map of the same Official Plan, with the Site being a “transitional” property in close proximity to employment uses, with a location on the boundary of the “Ellesmere Road Employment District”.

In recognizing the “transitional” nature of the location on the edge of an Employment District and the opportunity to meet the Provincial and Municipal policies and growth targets with respect to intensification of underutilized sites with excellent locational attributes, our client and its consultants submitted an application for an Official Plan Amendment on November 6, 2012 requesting that the Site and the adjacent properties to the immediate west be removed from the “Employment District” and that the Site be redesignated from “Employment Areas” to “Mixed Use Areas” in conjunction with the 5-Year Official Plan/Municipal Comprehensive Reviews (the “OP Review”), in order to allow our client to modernize and upgrade the existing hotel through the construction of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme. The proposed phased development includes a new 13-storey hotel along the northern portion of the site to be constructed in the first phase, which will replace the existing hotel use and represents a \$15 million investment into “employment” uses in the area. In addition to the replacement of the existing hotel use, our client proposes to infill the remainder of the Site in a second phase with a 20-storey mixed use complex fronting on Metropolitan Road to the south with commercial, office and residential units, along with two buildings 20-storeys and 21-storeys in height in the central portion of the Site containing a mix of residential units with commercial space at grade.

Without the additional proposed residential and mixed use permissions sought in our client’s application for an Official Plan Amendment, maintenance and reinvestment into the existing hotel use on the site is not financially viable. We would respectfully submit that the proposed redesignation of this transitional Site on the boundary of an Employment District is not only good planning that meets all Provincial and Municipal policies with respect to meeting growth targets, but will also intensify an underutilized and derelict Site along Highway 401 in a manner which is virtually identical to the reinvestment that has been approved and occurred on sites with similar locational attributes along this highway corridor. In addition, the proposed redesignation will permit our client to not only maintain and improve the existing employment uses, but deliver additional employment uses beyond those which exist today in a manner that is financially viable, allowing the required reinvestment into employment uses in the area to proceed in conjunction with a comprehensive mixed use proposal.

On November 8, 2012, the Planning and Growth Management Committee (the “P&GMC”), and later City Council, considered a Staff Report which provided preliminary assessments of 65 conversion requests associated with the OP Review and ultimately adopted a number of recommendations, including one which directed Staff to conduct additional analysis of 10 properties, including the Site, which further analysis considered the following criteria:

1. The applicant demonstrating that a significant portion of the site will include employment uses;
2. A phasing plan that articulates the employment uses noted in Part [1] above will be constructed as part of the first phase of any development; and

3. Any residential uses be designed or situated in a manner to prevent or mitigate against adverse impacts of noise, vibration, traffic, odour and other contaminants from industry upon occupants of the new development and lessen complaints and their potential impact on business.

On January 29, 2013, City Planning Staff issued a Preliminary Report which was later adopted by the P&GMC on February 28, 2013 which directed Staff to review, among other things, our client's proposed Official Plan Amendment in conjunction with the OP Review. In response to the above-noted criteria, our client's consultant submitted supplementary materials to City Staff on October 31, 2013, which materials confirmed that a significant portion of the Site will include employment uses, that employment uses would be constructed in the first phase of the development (along with additional employment uses in the second phase), and that all residential units will be appropriately designed to mitigate against adverse impacts from employment uses.

Our client has reviewed the City's draft Official Plan Amendment No. 231 with respect to the Policies, Designations and Mapping for Employment Areas, which proposes that the Site be designated as an "Employment Area" pursuant to the revised Urban Structure Map, and that the Site be designated as "Core Employment Areas" pursuant to the revised Land Use Map.

In light of the foregoing review, our client respectfully submits that the proposed conversion request is not only good planning, but will meet the criteria established for this Site during the OP Review. Accordingly, our client respectfully requests that the Planning and Growth Management Committee amend the proposed draft Official Plan Amendment No. 231 as follows:

1. Amend the Urban Structure Map (Map No. 2 in the City of Toronto Official Plan) attached as Appendix 1 to the draft Official Plan Amendment No. 231, to remove lands known municipally in 2012 as 22 Metropolitan Road from "Employment Areas";
2. Amend the Land Use Map (Map No. 19 in the City of Toronto Official Plan) attached as Appendix 2, Map 16 of the draft Official Plan Amendment No. 231, to redesignate the 22 Metropolitan Road lands from "Core Employment Areas" to "Mixed Use Areas"; and
3. Amend Chapter 7 of the City of Toronto Official Plan, Site and Area Specific Policies, by adding Site and Area Specific Policy No. ~~ for the lands known municipally in 2012 as 22 Metropolitan Road as follows:
 - (a) Mixed use developments including residential uses are permitted by way of a Zoning By-law Amendment provided that the following phasing plan is followed to ensure the employment uses are developed in advance of or at the same time as the residential uses:
 - (i) Phase 1: A hotel development, which shall contain a minimum of 190 hotel rooms and shall be equal to or exceed the existing non-residential gross floor area used for hotel purposes in 2013 (11,335 square metres);

- (ii) Phase 2A: Residential development must be accompanied by no less than 5,000 square metres of combined office, institutional and commercial uses, which office, institutional and commercial uses shall be provided prior to or at the same time as the residential uses; and
- (iii) Phase 2B: Residential development must be accompanied by no less than 1,500 square metres of commercial uses, which commercial uses shall be provided prior to or at the same time as the residential uses.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned, or Laura MacCormick, a Planner in our office.

Yours very truly,



Adam J. Brown

Encls.

Cc: Councillor Peter Milczyn
Councillor Josh Colle
Councillor John Filion
Councillor Frances Nunziata
Councillor Karen Stintz
Councillor Adam Vaughan
Councillor Norm Kelly
Mr. Joe Nanos (Manager, Scarborough District Community Planning)
Mr. Ron Chan (Applicant)
Mr. Peter Smith (Bousfields Inc.)