



November 17, 2013

Planning and Growth Management Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair Milczyn and Members of Committee:

**Re. Item PG28.2 – Official Plan and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews: Amendments to the Official Plan for Economic Health and Employment Lands Policies and Designations and Recommendations on Conversion Requests
Site Specific Policy 424 - 11 Peel Avenue
Item PGXX – Title – 440 and 450 Dufferin Street**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Official Plan and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews. We are writing specific to the employment land conversion requests that affect 11 Peel Avenue and 440 and 450 Dufferin Street located in Ward 18. Active 18 Community Association is a group of residents and business owners in the West Queen West Area which has participated in all phases of the planning process while the area has experienced the intense condo development over the last few years. Active 18 understands that City Planning staff is supporting the conversion of 11 Peel Avenue from an Employment Lands designation to a Mixed Use designation in the Official Plan (Pages 68 and 69 of the staff report). We also understand that City Planning staff is not supporting such a conversion on the 440 and 450 Dufferin Street site. We offer the following comments further to a Resolution of Active 18's community members at our Annual General Meeting of November 4, 2013.

Employment Land Conversions in West Queen West

There has been much discussion over the past few years regarding the potential for these sites to convert to mixed use. Active 18 has always been concerned with such a conversion primarily due to the fact that our neighbourhood has become saturated with residential uses, generally of the small condominium variety, in the Queen West Triangle south of Queen Street. This has been mitigated somewhat by the arts and culture uses integrated into some of the buildings resulting from Section 37 benefits. These include the new Theatre Centre, the Artscape Triangle Lofts, the Toronto Media Arts Cluster, and the like. However, the existing affordable employment space in the neighbourhood is now under significant threat, and the public transit system is overwhelmed by the number of new residents moving in. As such, the Active 18 Steering Committee, guided by our many citizen members, has been of the opinion that land in our neighbourhood should be preserved and used for affordable employment uses.

11 Peel Avenue

We understand that the development of employment / industrial uses on 11 Peel Avenue may be incompatible with surrounding neighbourhood and mixed uses, and that the surrounding infrastructure changes have isolated the site from adjacent employment lands, per the staff report. While Active 18 have no objection to the conversion, we are of the opinion that a greater amount of employment needs to be retained on the site. As such, we would not object to the conversion subject to the following:

- That a minimum density of two times the area of the lot of non-residential uses must be provided as part of any redevelopment of the lot, as is currently permitted under the existing zoning.

- That maximum Section 37 community benefits are provided and that these benefits be available for appropriate non-profit arts and cultural uses and/or affordable light industrial uses complementary to the neighborhood. This could be in partnership with local non-profit agencies.
- That the park space proposed along Dufferin Street should be the second priority for the application of Section 37 benefits, and that the City hold a design competition and engage the community to determine the uses, design and future management of the park and coordinate those uses where possible with non-residential programs in the surrounding buildings.

We request that the recommendations of the Planning and Growth Management Committee be revised to accommodate the above items.

430, 436, 440-444 Dufferin Street and 41 Alma Avenue and 450 Dufferin Street

Similar to 11 Peel Avenue, Active 18 has always been concerned with the loss of employment lands on this site for the reasons stated above. We understand that the conversion of 430-450 Dufferin Street and 41 Alma Avenue is not supported by City Planning staff due residential uses being incompatible with adjacent existing industrial uses, the loss of existing affordable workshop space, and the precedent that would be set with respect to potential future employment land conversions to the north and west. Active 18 have no objection to the City Planning staff position although we feel an Area or Secondary Plan should be conducted to carefully review the options. However, if a recommendation to convert this site to Mixed Use is to be considered by the Planning and Growth Management Committee, then certain conditions should be attached to the change of use, as follows:

- That a proper “secondary” or “area” plan be prepared for the land west of Dufferin Street south of Florence, to include long-term park, transportation and built form planning for the area, prior to the consideration of any zoning amendment or site plan within the study area. The process to develop this plan should start immediately.
- That a minimum density of two times the area of the lot of non-residential uses must be provided as part of any redevelopment of the lot, as is currently permitted under the existing zoning.
- That maximum Section 37 community benefits are provided and that these benefits be available for appropriate non-profit arts and cultural uses and/or affordable light industrial uses complementary to the neighborhood. This could be in partnership with local non-profit agencies.
- That the height not exceed 12 storeys.
- That the development provides for a high quality and distinctive design.

If the above can be provided, and adequately secured through the appropriate minutes of settlement or other binding legal instrument then Active 18 would not oppose the conversion of these lands to mixed use.

We request that the recommendations of the Planning and Growth Management Committee be revised to accommodate the above items.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Charles Campbell - for Steering Committee of Active 18 Community Association

cc. Linda Macdonald, Manager, City Planning
Sarah Phipps, City Planning
Ana Bailao, City Councillor, Ward 18