

**6461 Steeles Avenue East - Zoning By-law Amendment  
Application - Preliminary Report**

<b>Date:</b>	May 29, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Scarborough Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Scarborough District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 42 – Scarborough-Rouge River
<b>Reference Number:</b>	14 143936 ESC 42 OZ

**SUMMARY**

This application proposes to amend the Upper Rouge-Hillside Zoning By-law and the Toronto Zoning By-law in order to permit a wildlife rehabilitation centre, including an intern residence, on lands currently owned by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). The subject lands are located within the Rouge Valley and are proposed to be transferred to Parks Canada in the creation of the Rouge National Urban Park. The subject lands are located at 6461 Steeles Avenue East.

This report provides preliminary information on the above-noted application and seeks Community Council's directions on further processing of the application and on the community consultation process.

The application should proceed through the normal planning process including the scheduling of a community consultation meeting. A final report will be prepared and a public meeting will be scheduled once the issues raised during the review of the development proposal have been satisfactorily addressed.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. Staff be directed to schedule a community consultation meeting for the lands at 6461 Steeles Avenue East together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within 120 metres of the site.
3. Notice for the public meeting under the Planning Act be given according to the regulations of the Planning Act.

### **Financial Impact**

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

On February 19, 2014, City Council considered a staff report on the process to transfer approximately 27 hectares of city-owned lands (including open and unopened road allowances) within the Rouge Valley to the federal government, and, to authorize the City to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the federal government and surrounding municipalities for assembling land to establish the Rouge National Urban Park. At that meeting, City Council adopted various recommendations, including supporting TRCA's decision to permit the Toronto Wildlife Centre to locate within the Rouge National Urban Park.

### **Pre-Application Consultation**

A pre-application consultation meeting was held with the applicant to discuss complete application submission requirements.

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

#### **Toronto Wildlife Centre**

The Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC) first opened in 1993 with the objective of: caring, treating and rehabilitating ailing, injured or orphaned wildlife; and, educating the public on wildlife issues. It is the only facility of its kind within the Greater Toronto Area and is the only facility in the Province with an oil spill response program. It is also the only Canadian wildlife centre with a dedicated wildlife rescue program.

The TWC provides medical and surgical treatment, nursery care and rehabilitation programming to an annual average of about 5,000 "patients", including native, rare, threatened and endangered species. Since opening, 270 different species have been admitted. The TWC has 23 permanent staff, as well as over 200 dedicated volunteers tasked as drivers, animal rescuers, and managing the Centre's hotline.

Educational programming by the TWC is provided by scheduled visits by groups such as students or wildlife enthusiasts to the Centre, with the majority provided at schools, community group meetings or at trade shows. The TWC works in conjunction with other agencies such as: the Ministry of Natural Resources; the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre; the Toronto Zoo; the Ontario Veterinary College; various animal service agencies; the OPP and municipal police.

The TWC is a registered charity that is dependent upon bequests, donations and special fundraising campaigns to sustain its capital and operating budgets. The TWC does not receive government grants.

## **Proposal**

The proposed rezoning would facilitate the establishment of a wildlife rehabilitation centre on lands located within the Rouge River watershed, on lands which, in part, have been used for agricultural purposes. The subject 27 hectares is proposed to be leased by the TWC from the TRCA for 20 years for a dollar per year.

The proposed 2-storey rehabilitation facility would have a total gross floor area of 4859 m<sup>2</sup>, and the proposed 3-storey intern residence would have a total gross floor area of 518 m<sup>2</sup> within a free-standing building. The total gross floor area for the entire proposal is 5376 m<sup>2</sup>. Access to the rehabilitation facility would be from a driveway from Steeles Avenue East.

The existing 3-storey farmhouse would be renovated to provide the intern residence for 7 interns. The new facility would incorporate the existing barn, which would be renovated. The existing barn addition however would be replaced with a new building using the existing footprint of the addition.

The facility would contain various rehabilitation rooms for various species, surgical, assessment and diagnostic rooms, a call centre, a public education display area, offices, a laundry area, staff areas, storage rooms, and 2 integral garages for rescue staff. An outdoor education and display area is located in front of the facility. Six outdoor fenced rehabilitation areas are proposed: one space is located on the south side of the facility, with the others located on the eastern and southern portion of the subject lands.

A total of 50 parking spaces are proposed in a parking area located to the west of the existing farmhouse. One parking space is proposed for the 7 interns. A parking rate of 1 space per 100 m<sup>2</sup> is proposed for the facility.

The subject land is not served by municipal water. As such, part of the proposal is to extend the water service along Steeles Avenue East to the subject property.

The proposed development is illustrated on Attachment 1, Development Area, Attachment 2, Site Plan, Attachment 3, Elevations – Toronto Wildlife Centre, and

Attachment 4, Elevations – Existing Dwelling. Specific details for the subject proposal are contained in Attachment 7, Application Data Sheet.

## **Site and Surrounding Area**

The subject 27 hectare property abuts 3 roads: Steeles Avenue East to the north, Littles Road to the east and Passmore Avenue to the south. Steeles Avenue in this location has a 2-lane rural cross-section, with gravel shoulders and ditches on either side. Littles Road extends south from Steeles Avenue East, terminating at Passmore Avenue. Passmore Avenue, west from Littles Road forms the southern boundary of the subject lands. In these locations, Littles Road and Passmore Avenue have 20 metre rights-of-way which are proposed to be closed and transferred to Parks Canada. Steeles Avenue in this location is not served by TTC.

The subject property provides a rural landscape, consisting of farmland and farm-related buildings. There is an intermittent drainage channel which runs from the adjacent lands to the east, across the property (field) in an east-west manner, and eventually draining into the Rouge River to the west in a more defined channel through the wooded area. The farm buildings include a 3-storey farmhouse, a barn and a drive shed. The subject lands are served by well water and a septic system as municipal sewers and water are not available. The existing farmhouse is a listed heritage property and is known as the Menno-Reesor house. Within the barn are barn swallows, birds that are an endangered species. The farm-related uses occupy approximately 17 hectares of the subject lands.

The remaining 10 hectares are comprised of the Cedar Brae Woods, a registered archaeological site; a permanent pond; and, a hedgerow centrally located and running north-south on the subject lands.

North: farmland on the north side of Steeles Avenue within the City of Markham, and a cemetery to the northeast;  
South: farmland and natural areas;  
East: farmland and an auto wreckers yard further east; and,  
West: Cedar Brae Golf Course which contains the Rouge River, and the residential community of Morningside Heights beyond. The 9<sup>th</sup> line in Markham terminates at Steeles Avenue East across from Cedar Brae Golf Course. The 9<sup>th</sup> line is approved by an environmental assessment to be part of the Donald Cousens Parkway connecting Highway 407 to Highway 401 via Morningside Avenue in the City.

## **Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. These policies support the goal of enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians. Key policy objectives include: building strong healthy communities; wise use and management of resources and protecting public health and safety. The PPS recognizes that local context and character is important. Policies are outcome-oriented, and some policies

provide flexibility in their implementation provided that provincial interests are upheld. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including: directions for where and how to grow; the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The Greenbelt Plan identifies the Greenbelt of the Greater Golden Horseshoe as an area where urbanization should not occur to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological functions and features occurring in this landscape. In particular, it restricts development and land use in the Rouge River Watershed and the Rouge Park area in Toronto. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Greenbelt Plan.

The 1994 Rouge Park Management Plan aims to protect, restore and enhance the natural, scenic and cultural values of the Park in an ecosystem context, and to promote public responsibility, understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this heritage.

Staff will review the proposed development for consistency with the PPS and for conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Greenbelt Plan and the Rouge Park Management Plan.

## **Official Plan**

Map 2, Urban Structure identifies the subject lands as part of the Green Space System. Green Space System policies identify the importance of natural heritage systems within the City and that they should be protected, improved and added to by acquiring lands associated with private development.

The subject lands are designated as Parks and Open Space Areas – Natural Areas on Map 22, Land Use Plan. Policy 4.3.1 states that this designation provides for parks and open spaces, valleys, watercourses and ravines, golf courses and cemeteries that comprise a green open space network in the City. Policy 4.3.2 states that development is generally prohibited except for recreational and cultural facilities, conservation projects, cemetery facilities, public transit and essential public works and utilities where supported by appropriate assessment. Policy 4.3.3 states that those areas identified as Natural Areas will be maintained primarily in a natural state, while allowing compatible recreational, cultural and educational uses and facilities that minimize adverse impacts on natural features and functions; as well as conservation projects, public transit, public works and utilities for which no reasonable alternatives are available, and that are designed to have only minimal adverse impacts on the natural features and functions.

The development criteria for Parks and Open Space Areas in Policy 4.3.6 states that development will:

- protect, enhance or restore trees, vegetation and other natural heritage features;
- preserve or improve public visibility and access, except where access will damage sensitive natural heritage features or areas, or unreasonably restrict private property rights;
- maintain, and where possible create linkages between parks and open spaces to create continuous recreational corridors;
- maintain or expand the size and improve the usability of publicly owned Parks and Open Space Areas for public parks, recreational and cultural purposes;
- respect the physical form, design, character and function of Parks and Open Space Areas; and
- provide comfortable and safe pedestrian conditions.

The Built Form policies specify that new development be located and organized to fit with its context and to frame and support adjacent streets, parks and open spaces to improve the safety, pedestrian interest and casual views to these spaces from the development. New developments are to locate and organize vehicular parking, vehicular access and service areas and utilities to minimize their impact on the property and on surrounding properties to improve the safety and attractiveness of adjacent streets.

Heritage Resource policies state that heritage resources on properties listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties will be conserved. If development occurs on archaeological sites, significant archaeological deposits should be conserved by on-site preservation. Where archaeological features are preserved on-site, any development or site alteration will maintain the heritage integrity of the site.

The Natural Environment policies support strong communities, competitive economy and a high quality of life, public and private city-building activities and changes to the built environment including public works that will be environmentally friendly. This includes protecting and improving the health of the natural ecosystem to minimize air, soil and water pollution, recognizing rainwater and snowmelt as a resource and managing and improving the quantity and quality of stormwater and groundwater infiltration and flows, as well as, protecting, restoring and enhancing the health and integrity of the natural ecosystem, supporting bio-diversity and targeting ecological improvements. Areas within the natural heritage system which contain certain characteristics are particularly sensitive and require additional protection to preserve their environmentally significant qualities. The subject lands are part of the Natural Heritage System on Map 9, Natural Heritage.

Site Specific Policy 141 applies to a broad area, north of Twyn Rivers Drive, East of Staines Road. The objective of this policy is to protect, restore or enhance the natural ecosystem and cultural heritage features; to ensure protection of these features; use innovative planning, management and land use techniques; to promote knowledge and understanding of the natural and cultural values of the Rouge Park, and to provide opportunities for appropriate recreational enjoyment. Specifically, it is to promote, preserve and enhance the Upper Rouge as an integrated natural heritage area, to protect significant archaeological and historical resources by emphasizing heritage conservation

and education; to permit uses that are compatible with the objectives of this area, such as natural science, educational interpretive, zoological, recreational, curatorial and research uses and associated facilities; agricultural uses, including crop farming, livestock and demonstration farming, archaeological sites designated by the Provincial Government, historic resource uses, wildlife habitat enhancement and observation areas.

As well, all agencies and parties implementing the policy will: promote and enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitats and communities; encourage natural science, educational, curatorial and research facilities that further the understanding of the attributes of the Rouge Park; ensure proper stormwater management practices are employed to not increase the potential for erosion; generally ensure that new permanent buildings or structures are not visible from the valley lands; selectively encourage the regeneration of the cleared areas and the planting of native tree species and other native vegetation to enhance the natural heritage characteristics; and encourage public agencies to demonstrate sensitivity in these objectives in the design and implementation of their facilities and undertakings. The policy also enables development to occur in the absence of municipal services.

## **Zoning**

Toronto Zoning By-law 2569-2013 zones the subject lands as Open Space Natural (ON) which permits the following uses: ambulance depots, agricultural uses, fire hall, parks, police stations, public utility and transportation uses. Under certain conditions, the following may also be permitted: clubs, cogeneration energy, education uses, entertainment place of assembly, place of assembly, recreation uses, renewable energy, retail stores and a stable.

The Upper Rouge-Hillside Community Zoning By-law No. 25278 zones the subject lands as Agricultural Zone (AG) for most of the lands and Natural Environment Zone (NE) for the southwestern portion of the lands. Within the Agricultural Zone, agricultural uses and those uses permitted in the Natural Environment Zone are permitted. Within the Natural Environment Zone, recreational uses which do not require potable water or sanitary sewage disposal and existing dwellings as the date of the passage of the Zoning By-law are permitted.

## **Site Plan Control**

The proposed development is subject to site plan control and a site plan application (14 143954 ESC 42 OZ) has been made. It is being processed concurrently with the rezoning application.

## **Ravine and Natural Feature Protection**

Ravines are important natural landforms that are part of the City's natural heritage system and like ravines, tableland forests are important natural features in the City that are also vulnerable to degradation. A portion of the subject lands are within the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law and contain the Cedar Brae Woods. Cedar Brae Woods meets the Official Plan's criteria for being an environmentally significant area. As such, these areas may require additional protection to preserve their environmental

qualities and significance. The submitted environmental impact study has been circulated to staff in Urban Forestry, Ravine and Natural Feature Protection, Environmental Planning and TRCA for review.

### **Tree Preservation**

An arborist report/tree preservation plan was submitted with the application and is under review by Urban Forestry, Ravine and TRCA staff.

### **Archaeological Assessment**

An archaeological assessment was submitted and is currently being reviewed by Heritage Preservation staff.

### **Heritage Preservation**

A heritage impact assessment was submitted and is currently being reviewed by Heritage Preservation staff.

### **Reasons for the Application**

The TWC currently is leasing space at Downsview Park. Although the lease is not being renewed, the TWC will be able to stay until a new location is found. Downsview Park is the fourth location from which the TWC has operated from and the lands subject to the rezoning application would enable a permanent location.

The current zoning applying to the subject lands does not permit a wildlife rehabilitation centre, including an intern residence. Development standards appropriate for this development will be required.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Application Submission**

The following reports/studies were submitted with the application: an arborist report, an archaeological assessment, an environmental impact study, a heritage impact study, a planning rationale, a site servicing and stormwater management report, and a traffic study.

A Notification of Complete Application was issued on May 20, 2014.

### **Issues to be Resolved**

Prior to the presentation of a final report on the application, the following issues need to be reviewed and satisfactorily addressed by the applicant:

1. Conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement, and the Greenbelt Plan;
2. Conformity with the Rouge Park Management Plan for the portion of subject lands affected;

3. Conformity with the Parks and Open Space Areas – Natural Areas Natural Heritage, Built Form and Heritage Resource policies in the Official Plan;
4. Conformity with Site Specific Policy 141 of the Official Plan;
5. Ensuring that adequate protection of the Cedar Brae woods and the archaeological site are provided;
6. Ensuring that the barn swallows are adequately protected under Provincial and Federal legislation;
7. Ensuring that there is adequate water service for the proposal and that stormwater management is appropriately addressed; and
8. Ensuring an adequate parking supply is provided.

The TGS Checklist has been submitted by the applicant and is currently under review by City staff for compliance with the Tier 1 performance measures.

Additional issues may be identified through the review of the application, agency comments and the community consultation process.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Raymond David, Director  
Community Planning, Scarborough District

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Development Area

Attachment 2: Site Plan

Attachment 3: Elevations - Toronto Wildlife Centre

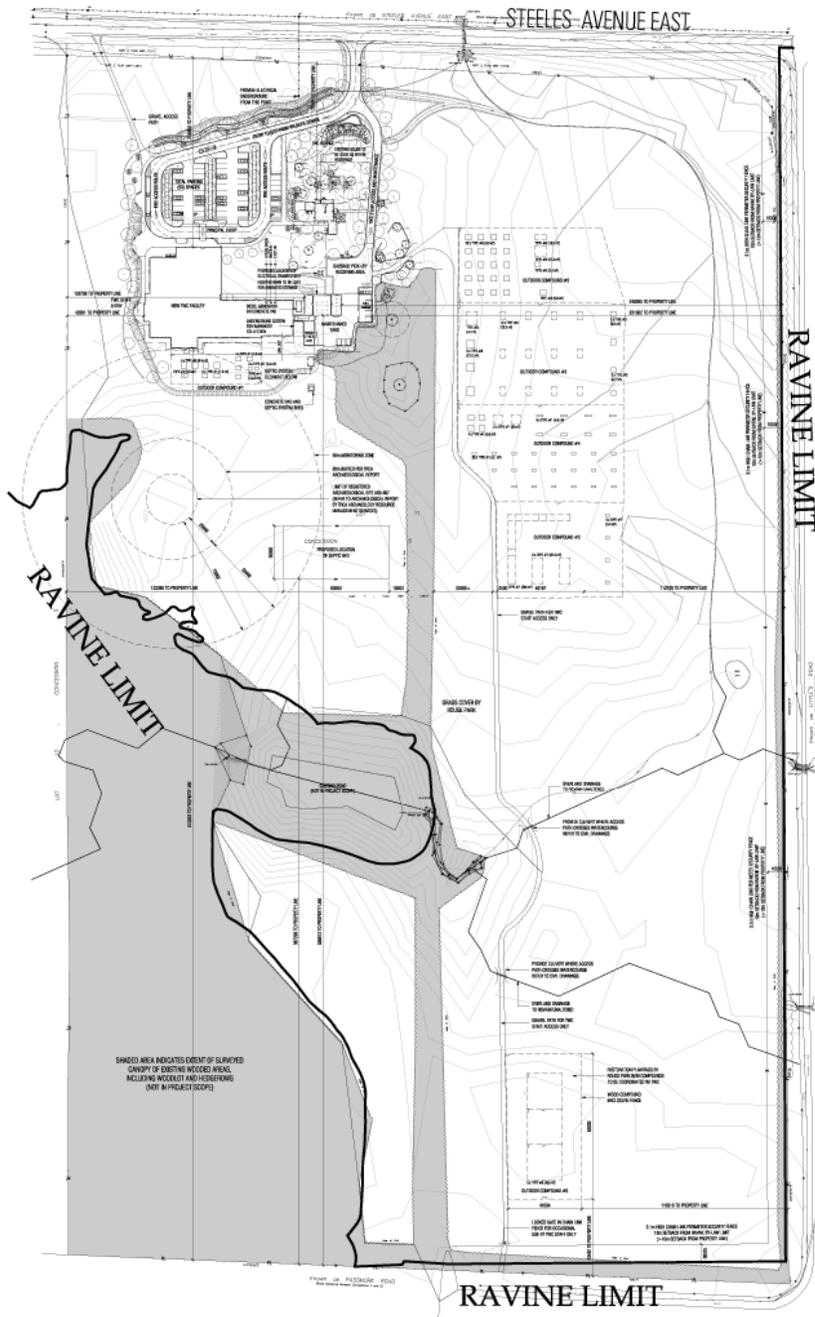
Attachment 4: Elevations - Existing Dwelling

Attachment 5: Zoning – Toronto Zoning By-law

Attachment 6: Zoning – Upper Rouge-Hillside Zoning By-law

Attachment 7: Application Data Sheet

# Attachment 1: Development Area



## Development Area

6461 Steeles Avenue East

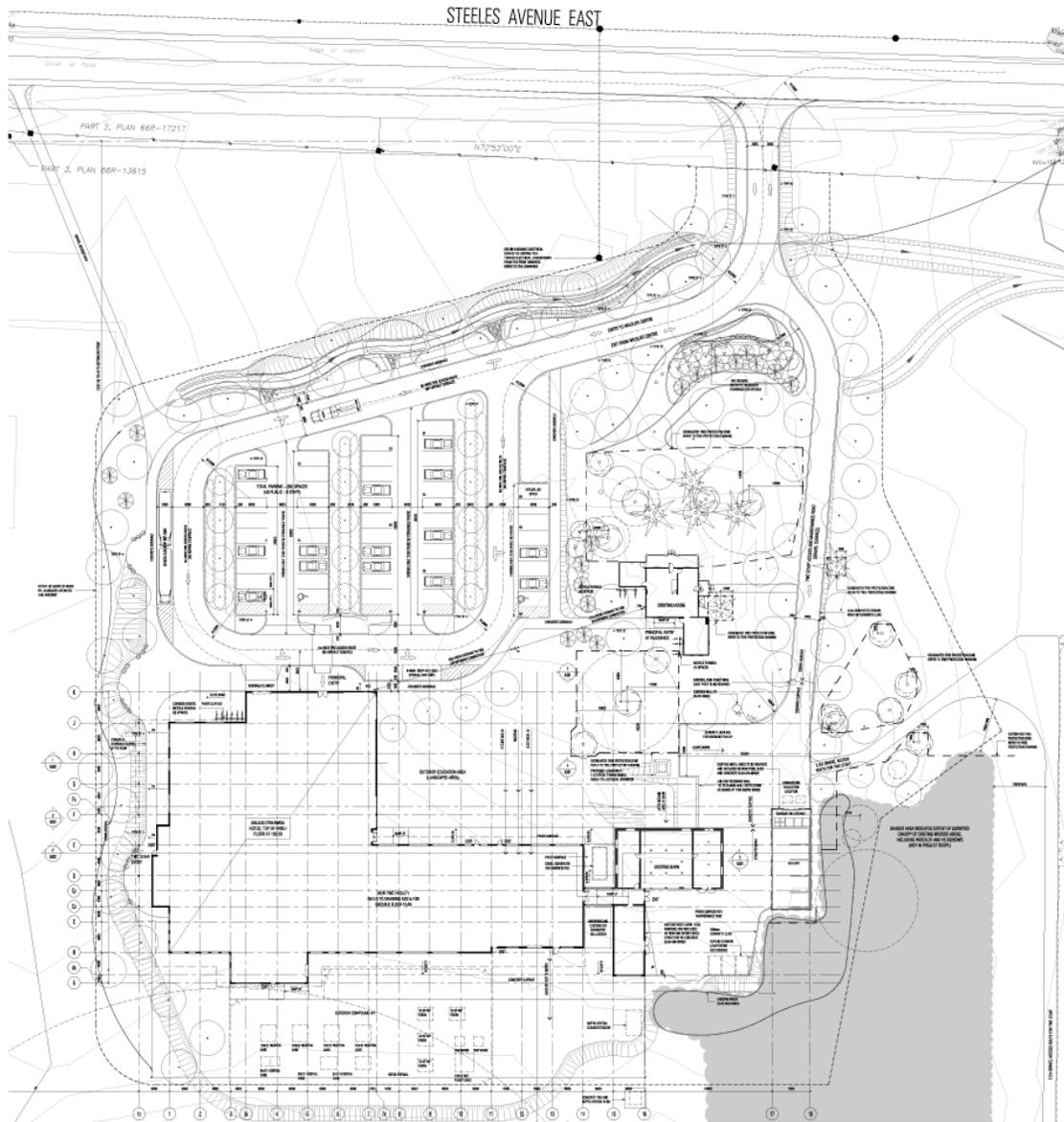
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale  
04/24/14



File # 14 143936 ESC 42 0Z

## Attachment 2: Site Plan



### Site Plan

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

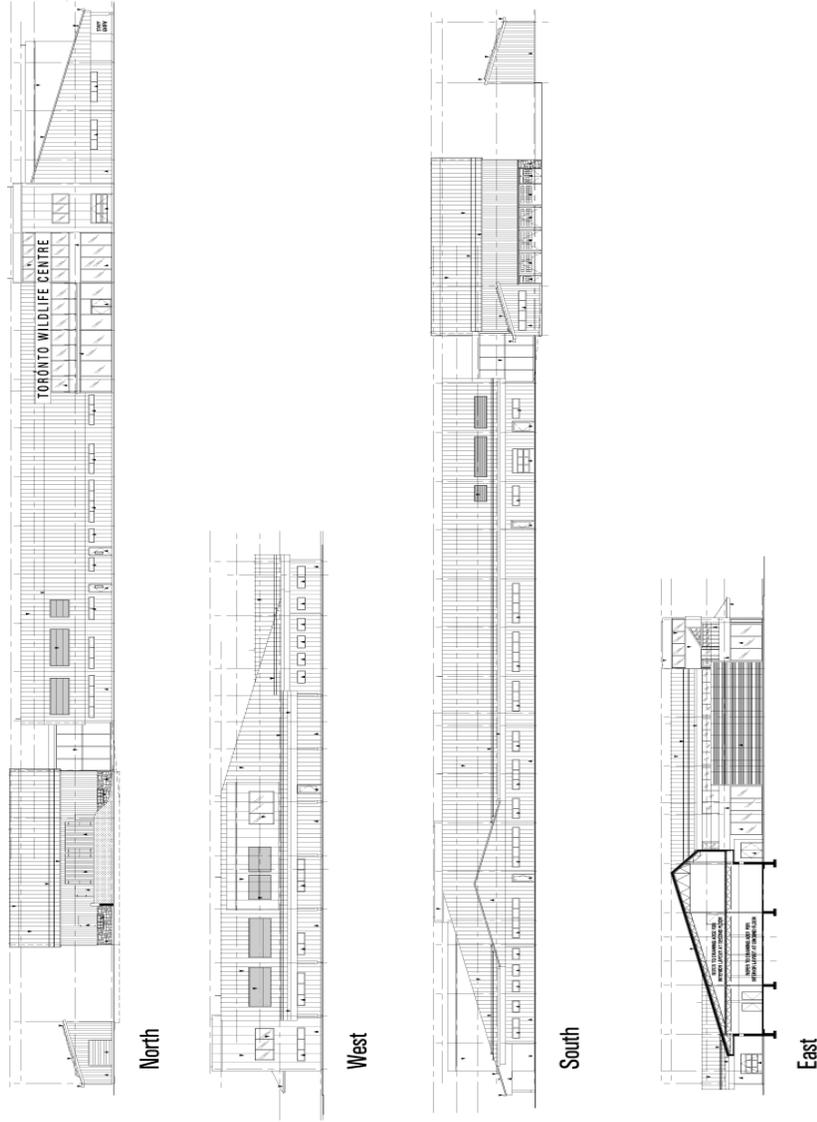
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04/24/14



### 6461 Steeles Avenue East

File # 14 143936 ESC 42 0Z

### Attachment 3: Elevations - Toronto Wildlife Centre



**Elevations**  
6461 Steeles Avenue East

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale

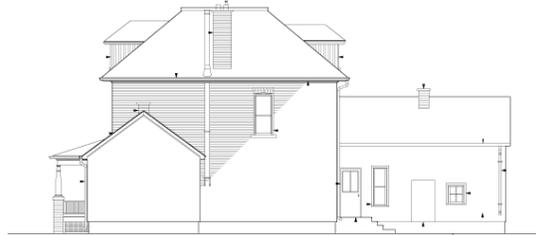
4/24/14

File # 14 13936 ESC 42.02

## Attachment 4: Elevations - Existing Dwelling



North



West



East



South

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### Elevations

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale  
4/24/14

6461 Steeles Avenue East

File # 14 13936 ESC 42 0Z

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# Attachment 5: Toronto Zoning By-law



Zoning By-law 569-2013

6461 Steeles Avenue East

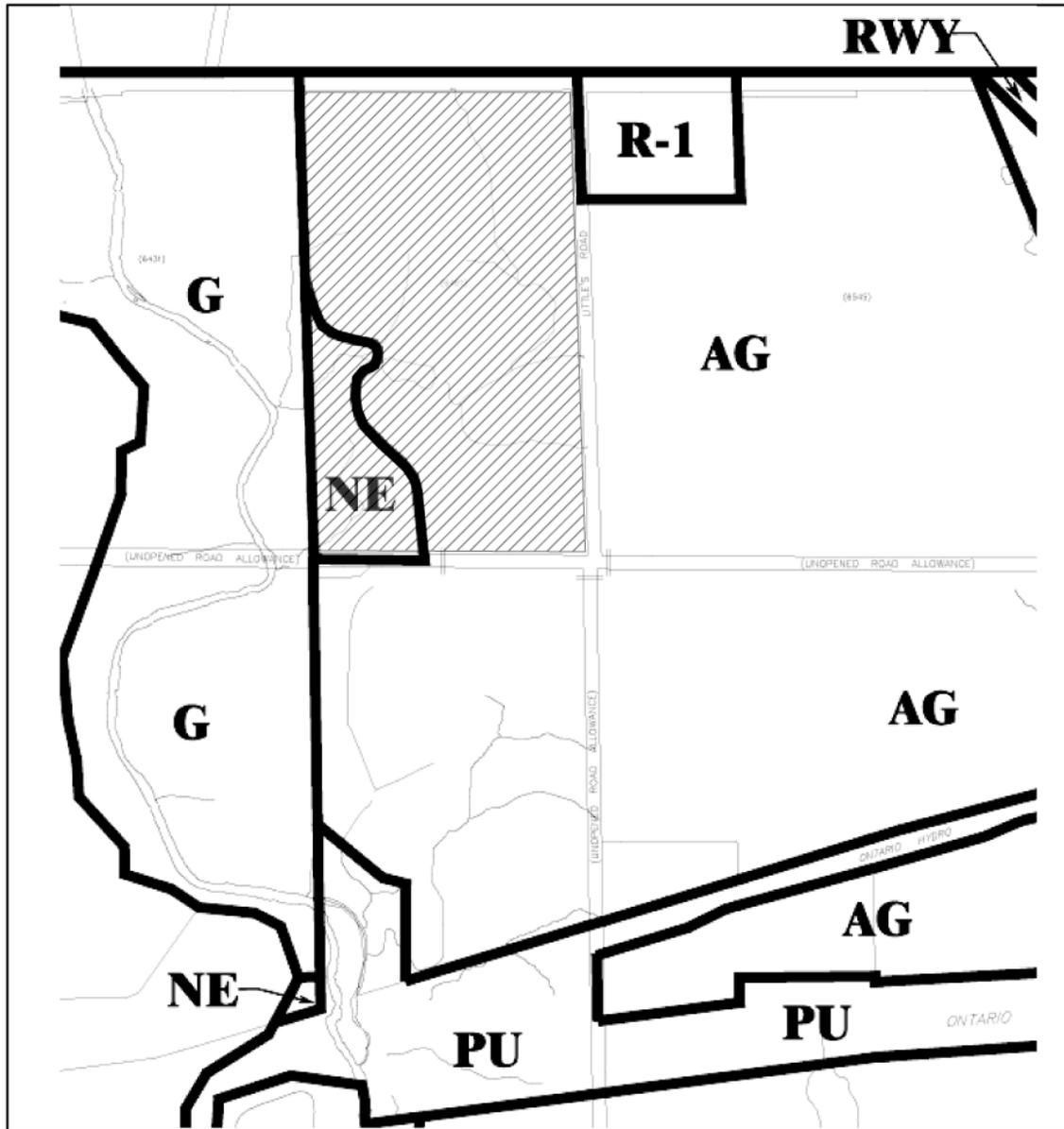
File # 14 143936 ESC 42 02

-  Location of Application
- ON Open Space Natural
- OG Open Space Golf Course



Not to Scale  
Extracted: 04/28/2014

Attachment 6: Upper Rouge-Hillside Zoning By-law



Upper Rouge Hillside Community

6461 Steeles Avenue East

File # 14 143936 ESC 42 02

-  Location of Application
- NE** Natural Environmental Zone
- R** Rural Residential Zone
- RWY** Railway Zone
- AG** Agricultural Zone
- G** Golf Course Zone
- PU** Public Utilities Zone



Not to Scale  
Extracted: 05/06/2014

## Attachment 7: Application Data Sheet

Application Type	Rezoning & Site Plan	Application Number:	14 143936 ESC 42 OZ 14 143954 ESC 42 SA
Details	Rezoning, Standard	Application Date:	April 16, 2014

Municipal Address: 6461 STEELES AVE E  
 Location Description: SCARBOROUGH CON 5 PT LOT 11 RP 66R13615 PT PARTS 1 AND 3 \*\*GRID E4202  
 Project Description: Zoning amendment to allow a wildlife rehabilitation habitat centre (Toronto Wildlife Centre) with an overall gross floor area of 5376 m2 including the retention of the existing dwelling (listed heritage home).

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Agent:</b>	<b>Architect:</b>	<b>Owner:</b>
JAMES RASOR STANFORD DOWNEY ARCHITECTS			TORONTO & REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

### PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	Parks & Open Spaces	Site Specific Provision:	
Zoning:	AG &NE (Upper Rouge-Hillside), ON (Toronto)	Historical Status:	
Height Limit (m):		Site Plan Control Area:	Y

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq. m):	274306.5	Height:	Storeys:	2 and 3
Frontage (m):	383		Metres:	10.65
Depth (m):	678			
Total Ground Floor Area (sq. m):	3709.6			<b>Total</b>
Total Residential GFA (sq. m):	0		Parking Spaces:	50
Total Non-Residential GFA (sq. m):	5375.8		Loading Docks	1
Total GFA (sq. m):	5375.8			
Lot Coverage Ratio (%):	1.4			
Floor Space Index:	0.02			

### DWELLING UNITS

### FLOOR AREA BREAKDOWN (upon project completion)

		Above Grade	Below Grade
Tenure Type:			
Rooms:	0	Residential GFA (sq. m):	0
Bachelor:	0	Retail GFA (sq. m):	0
1 Bedroom:	0	Office GFA (sq. m):	0
2 Bedroom:	0	Industrial GFA (sq. m):	0
3 + Bedroom:	0	Institutional/Other GFA (sq. m):	5375.8
Total Units:	0		

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