

Francine Adamo

NY8.42.4

From: Geoff Kettel <gkettel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 4, 2015 5:38 PM
To: Francine Adamo
Cc: Carol Burtin Fripp; dag Enhorning; Councillor Burnside; Harold Madi; Joe Nanos; Mary (Planning) MacDonald
Subject: NY8.42 - 146-150 Laird Drive
Attachments: LPOA 146-150 Laird Drive NYCC Sept 8 2015 .pdf

Hi Francine

Please find the submission from the LPOA on this agenda item, and ensure that it is part of the public record. We would like to speak to the item on Sept 8th.

Regards

Geoff Kettel for
Geoff Kettel and Carol Burtin Fripp, LPOA

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4.24.84

Leaside Property Owners' Association Incorporated

1601 Bayview Avenue, P.O. Box 43582
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September 4, 2015

North York Community Council
North York Civic Centre
Main floor, 5100 Yonge St.
Toronto, ON M2N 5V7
Attention: Francine Adamo
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**RE: NY8.42 146-150 Laird Drive – Zoning By-law Application 14 169650 NNY 26
OZ**

Dear Councillor Augimeri and members of Community Council

The Leaside Property Owners Association provides this correspondence regarding the planning application for a Zoning By-law Amendment of the property at 146-150 Laird Drive to permit an eight storey rental retirement building, with 175 units, and a seven storey condominium intended for seniors, with 109 units. The overall development would have 284 units and FSI would be approx. 3.45.

The LPOA supports Planning Staff's recommendation that:
"City Council direct the City Solicitor, together with City Planning and other appropriate staff, to attend the Ontario Municipal Board proceedings for the appeal to oppose the Zoning By-law Amendment in its current form".

The LPOA also supports the concerns raised by Planning Staff in the "COMMENTS" section of their report, particularly those presented in the sub-sections dealing with Heritage, Site Organization, Built Form, Building Height and Transition, Streetscape/Access, Transportation, and Parking.

The LPOA's key concerns, including those that were expressed by the community at the Community Consultation meeting on February 9, 2015 are:

- **The subject proposal does not conform to the intent of the Toronto Official Plan's "Mixed Use Areas" policies** for the following reasons:
 - 1) As reflected in paragraph three of the "Mixed Use Areas" policies, the Official Plan envisages a decline in residential density as one goes from the Downtown, to the Centres, to the Avenues, and then to other "Mixed Use Areas". As the City generally associates mid-rise development as being appropriate for the areas

identified as Avenues, an eight storey building would not be appropriate in this “Mixed Use Areas” strip which is **not** designated as an avenue.

- 2) While the “Mixed Use Areas” policies permit residential uses in either single use or mixed use buildings, it would not appear to be the intent of the Official Plan to allow such a massive “single use” residential complex that other uses are precluded from approximately 2/3rds of the frontage on the west side of Laird between McRae Drive and Markham Avenue. If the car dealership on the northwest corner of Markham and Laird was to be redeveloped and a residential development proposed on that lot, almost an entire block along Laird would be used for residential purposes. Again, this is not the intent of the Official Plan.
- **The development represents massive over-development of the site and poor urban design.** The proposed buildings are monolithic in the context of the existing mixed format commercial on Laird, and the single detached housing to the west, with which they would share the block.
 - The massing, height and length of the project will create unacceptable shadowing and loss of privacy for the residents on the west side of Randolph Drive, and south side of McRae Drive.
 - The proposed height and scale of the proposed development would simply overpower surrounding uses. Other than the stepping down on its western side, the proposed minimal setbacks from the western property boundary, and an attempt to blend the south building’s façade with that of the heritage building to the north, little thought seems to have been given to how the development could truly fit into the neighbourhood.
 - The monolithic nature of the design renders the site impermeable. Extending Commercial Road fully into the property would improve access into and around the site and provide for separation of the south building into two (rather than the single massive slab building). This has not been done. The proposal to access an underground parking garage by way of a westward extension of Commercial Road does not ameliorate this concern.
- **Land use incompatibility between the proposed development and neighbouring uses.** A business owner in the Leaside Business Park spoke to a concern that the proposed use would have potential negative impacts on existing neighbouring industrial uses (for example MOE has standards for noise emissions, exhaust emissions etc. for industrial uses in proximity to residential uses). Ongoing development in the area, particularly residential development, will make it impossible for existing uses to expand and provide additional opportunities for employment. In fact, new residential uses may hasten the departure of industrial uses from the Business Park thereby further reducing its usefulness as “Employment Lands”. As such, the proposal would contribute to and accelerate the erosion of the Employment Lands in the Leaside Business Park east of Laird.

- **The loss of value and quality of the employment on the site compared with existing employment.** The proposed retirement home will employ staff at less than stellar wages for “care giving”, and in the kitchen for meal preparation. An existing tenant in one of the buildings noted that she employs 10 people and the proposed development would put those jobs in jeopardy. This underscores the need for reasonably priced office space, possibly in the Business Park, to accommodate uses displaced by the redevelopment of these and similar lands. This replacement of “creative and benign” types of jobs with residential uses and low wage employment is occurring with increasing frequency in the Leaside area.
- **The unacceptably low level of heritage conservation** of the Durant Motors Head Office Building. This building (across the road from the site of Durant’s production facility) represents one of the few remaining vestiges of Canada’s early auto industry and one of only two large buildings representing the industrial history of Leaside. As well, the distinctiveness of the Durant Motors building in its setting is radically diminished by the above noted “attempt to blend the south building’s façade with that of the heritage building to the north”. There needs to be consideration of retaining and conserving BOTH buildings.
- The Leaside Community is experiencing major increases in traffic on Laird and on neighbouring local streets such as Randolph. At the February 9th Community Consultation Meeting, the public raised questions re traffic volumes, pedestrian safety, proposed parking standards, and ingress and egress which were not adequately addressed.
- Neighbouring residents expressed concern about the impact the proposed use might have on local ground water movements. This concern needs to be addressed as part of the City’s review of this proposal
- Intangible (but non-legislated) concerns about the inappropriateness of the site’s location and the scale of the facility to accomplish the applicant’s vision for “aging in place”. Other retirement homes in the neighbourhood are more appropriate in scale and context for this purpose. However we appreciate that this is not within the mandate of city staff to address this.

LPOA Recommendations to Council:

1. **That Council direct the City Solicitor, together with City Planning and other appropriate staff, to attend the Ontario Municipal Board proceedings for the appeal to oppose the Zoning By-law Amendment in its current form.**
2. **That the concerns raised by Planning Staff in the “COMMENTS” section of their report, particularly those presented in the sub-sections dealing with Heritage, Site Organization, Built Form, Building Height and Transition, Streetscape/Access, Transportation, and Parking form the basis of the City’s presentation before the OMB.**

3. As other proposals similar to this are likely to emerge for the west side of Laird
- **That a detailed study be undertaken by the City to determine how this property and other properties along Laird, particularly the west side of Laird can be redeveloped to create a streetscape and mixture of uses that form an integrated whole rather than a collection of disparate and incompatible uses; and that**
 - **such a study be part of a comprehensive study that would focus on the west side of Laird, the Eglinton East frontage between Sutherland and Laird, the Laird/Brentcliffe Focus Area, and the Leaside Business Park, and be used to develop revised Official Plan policies for this area.**

Without such a comprehensive study, residents will be faced with a series of site specific applications with no sound planning framework to ensure that the resulting development is reasonable in scale and is in keeping with the broader interests of the community.

The LPOA appreciates your consideration of our comments.

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel for

Geoff Kettel and Carol Burtin-Fripp
Co-Presidents

c.c. Councillor Jon Burnside
Joe Nanos, Director, Community Planning, North York District
Mary MacDonald, Manager, Heritage Preservation Services
Harold Madi, Director, Urban Design
Dag Enhorning, President, Leaside Business Park Association