

November 12, 2015

**Planning & Growth Management Committee
City Clerk's Office
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2**

**Attention: Ms. Nancy Martins
Committee Secretary**

**Re: Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area Study - Final Report (Item PG8.7)
Draft Official Plan Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines
Our File: PN 5166**

Dear Ms. Martins:

We are writing on behalf of our Client, Al Reisman Limited, with respect to the Steeles Redlea Regeneration Area Study and the draft of the proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 321. Our Client is the owner of several properties located adjacent the southerly limits of Passmore Avenue, within the immediate vicinity of the Steeles-Redlea Regeneration Area and the lands affected by the proposed Official Plan Amendment, specifically 3241, 3251 and 3261 Kennedy Road, 19, 23, 25 & 27 Passmore Avenue, 29, 31 & 31A Passmore Avenue, and, 41 Passmore Avenue. For the reasons set out in this submission, concern is expressed in relation to the purpose and effect of the proposed Amendment No. 321 to the City of Toronto Official Plan.

By way of background, reference is initially made to Official Plan Amendment No. 231, the amendment adopted by Council on December 18, 2013, upon completion of the Five Year Municipal Comprehensive Review of Employment lands throughout the City of Toronto. Among other matters, Amendment No. 231 designated twelve parcels of land, located to the south of Steeles Avenue and which are bounded by the GO Rail Corridor on the east and Redlea Avenue on the west, within the Regeneration Area land use classification subject to Site and Area Specific Policy 395. In accordance with the approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto, it was understood that the intent of designating the lands within the Regeneration Area land use classification was to provide for a broad array of land uses and activities in a manner which would foster investment by providing for new construction and/or the re-use and renewal of existing structures as part of a key component of the City's growth strategy for this area.

A review of Section 4.7 of the approved Official Plan indicates that where lands are designated within the Regeneration Area land use classification, the uses permitted may include commercial, residential, institutional and light industrial land uses in concert with open space areas. The overall planning goal is to forge an attractive civic design which fosters a positive atmosphere for urban renewal and intensification of the built form.

In accordance with the approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto, the framework for the future development of the Regeneration Area is to be developed through a Secondary Plan which recognizes the existing built form and identifies the opportunities for redevelopment and intensification of vacant and/or underutilized lands. Through the Secondary Plan exercise, regard is to be had for the nature of adjacent land uses and the need to provide for an appropriate measure of compatibility between uses and activities which

establish differing priorities for the use of lands in close proximity of one another. It follows that, in establishing the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area, the intent of Official Plan Amendment No. 231 was to identify the opportunity for investment by both the public and private sectors in a manner which strengthens and reinforces the overall community structure through the creation of jobs and/or housing.

Section 18 of Official Plan Amendment No. 231 provided for the identification of the Steeles-Redlea Regeneration Area, having an area of approximately 9.96 hectares (i.e. 24.6 acres), through Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) 395 which states that *"development of the lands will proceed in accordance with a framework to be established through a study of the area that addresses the matters identified in Section 4.7.2 of the Official Plan ..."* and various other matters which are briefly summarized as follows, namely:

- the identification of land use buffers which provide for an appropriate separation between sensitive land uses and nearby Employment Areas;
- appropriate separation distances to the GO Rail corridor;
- the design of any sensitive land uses and buildings containing residential and other sensitive land uses to mitigate noise, vibration and other adverse effects from the Employment Areas and the GO Rail Corridor;
- a street and block plan that includes the Redlea Avenue Extension and other appropriate connections;
- a requirement that development of residential units also incorporate office employment uses; and,
- a requirement that Redlea Avenue be extended to Passmore Avenue prior to new development within the lands subject to Site and Area Specific Policy No. 395.

The policy concludes by stating that completion of the study that addresses the matters identified under Section 4.7.2 of the approved Official Plan, inclusive of the specific requirements noted above, will be deemed to satisfy the requirement for a Secondary Plan.

Upon reviewing the form and content of proposed Amendment No. 321 to the Official Plan for the City of Toronto, it is submitted that Amendment No. 321 is not effective to implement the intent of Section 4.7, the Regeneration Area policies, or, to satisfy the overall intent of Site and Area Specific Policy 395. In addition it is submitted that the proposed Amendment does not establish an appropriate land use planning framework which implements the intent of the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Rather, the effect of the proposed amendment may be summarized as follows, namely:

- to designate those lands located directly to the south of Steeles Avenue, between Redlea Avenue and the GO Rail corridor, having an area of approximately 3.15 hectares (i.e. 7.8 acres) and a depth of approximately 150 metres, as a Mixed Use Area;
- to designate the balance of the Regeneration Area lands as an Employment Area, that is the designation which applied to the lands prior to the adoption of Official Plan Amendment No. 231 in December of 2013;
- to identify the need for two east-west links (i.e. local roads) from Kennedy Road to the Milliken GO Station east of Redlea Avenue and to require a mid-block pedestrian connection from Steeles Avenue to the GO Station;

- to recognize, through a new Site and Area Specific Policy 497, four existing places of worship situated beyond the boundary of the Regeneration Area, that is uses which, in accordance with the policies contained in Official Plan Amendment No. 231, are non-employment uses and thus represent a conversion of Employment lands;
- to delete Site and Area Specific Policy 104, which recognized places of worship, business and trade schools, fraternal organizations, long term care facilities and recreational uses as a permitted use, from those lands bounded by Steeles Avenue on the north, Midland Avenue on the east, Passmore Avenue on the south and Kennedy Road on the west, that is lands beyond the area identified as forming part of the Steeles-Redlea Regeneration Area;
- to establish various policies relating to the future development of the Mixed Use Area; and,
- to provide for the use of Holding Provisions in the implementing zoning by-law as conditions to development.

To summarize, the effect of the proposed amendment is to re-designate a relatively small portion of the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area, consisting of approximately 3.2 hectares (i.e. 7.8 acres) located to the north of the off-street parking area associated with the Milliken GO Station, within the Mixed Use Area land use classification, and, to provide for enhanced vehicular and pedestrian linkages to the GO Station. In essence, the amendment serves to facilitate the proposed redevelopment of 4665 Steeles Avenue East for the purposes of three residential condominium towers containing upwards of 780 units connected by a three storey podium containing a retail commercial component and a below grade parking structure.

It is further significant to note that, notwithstanding the intent of SASP 395 which states that Redlea Avenue be extended to Passmore Avenue prior to new development occurring in the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area, such a requirement is omitted from the proposed amendment. While the amendment speaks to the need for the road linkages to the Milliken GO Station east of Redlea Avenue, there is no definitive statement to require that Redlea Avenue be extended to Passmore Avenue to service the needs of the Regeneration Area as a whole.

Similarly, while various studies have been undertaken to address the impact of introducing sensitive land uses within the Regeneration Area, the amendment generally lacks specificity as to the means and/or nature of the measures to be implemented to mitigate potential impacts. Rather, the issue is deferred to the zoning stage of the approval process. It is further suggested that, at a minimum, there is a need to address the spatial separation distances from adjacent employment areas and the GO Rail corridor having regard for the current proposal to enhance service levels along this corridor.

The proposed amendment lacks the vision necessary to provide a comprehensive framework for the future growth and development of the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area in a manner which promotes the revitalization and renewal of underutilized lands at a scale consistent with the need to provide for intensification of the built form. In this context, reference is made to the fact that the Milliken GO Station is representative of a Major Transit Station Area under the Provincial Growth Plan. Accordingly, one would expect that the opportunities for intensification within 500 metres of the station would be a significant consideration in the advancement of a detailed secondary plan for the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area. Given the policy directions set forth under the Provincial Growth Plan, it is further reasonable to anticipate that the secondary planning exercise would have resulted in a development framework which promotes the overall intensification of the built form at a scale consistent with the planned transit service levels.

Ms. N. Martins
Re: Item PG 8.7

-4-

November 12, 2015

In conclusion, re-designation of all but the northerly portion of the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area within the General Employment land use classification is simply effective to create uncertainty for the area as a whole by reason of pressure for the introduction of residential, office, institutional and commercial uses on the lands to the south of the Milliken GO Station. On behalf of our Client, we respectfully submit that, prior to proceeding with adoption of the proposed amendment, it is incumbent upon the City to establish a comprehensive planning framework which clearly defines the opportunities for urban renewal and intensification through urban design measures which may be implemented to ensure a reasonable measure of compatibility with the adjacent employment areas. Such matters are intrinsic to the development of a comprehensive Secondary Plan to guide the redevelopment of those lands within the Steeles - Redlea Regeneration Area.

Sincerely yours,
McDermott & Associates Limited



J. D. McDermott, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Principal Planner

copy to: Al Reisman Management Limited
Attention: Mr. Keith Lahey

Devry Smith Frank, LLP
Attention: Mr. David White, Q.C.