

HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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To: Toronto East York Community Council
From: Harbord Village Residents' Association

Re: TE 11.35 Honest Ed's and Mirvish Village Preliminary Report

Oct. 5, 2015.

Today, we begin the fine-grained evaluation of the Westbank proposal to transform a block and a half site in the middle of four thriving historic communities. Whatever happens on the Honest Ed's site will have a huge impact on the existing neighbourhoods. It is a challenge and an opportunity.

The development here and along Bloor, Spadina and College, will determine whether our neighbourhoods can be enhanced rather than damaged by more intensive development along our major streets.

If it is the case that the City values the stable neighbourhoods in the north end of Wards 19 and 20, then it needs to act now to protect them.

Harbord Village has developments along all four of our borders. 42 storeys proposed on Madison at Bloor, 15 storeys approved on Spadina and College, 25, 17 and 27 storeys along College, University of Toronto developments along Spadina at 13-15 and 21 storeys, the rezoning of the St. George campus, the intersection of Bloor and Spadina, and now Honest Ed's at 29-22-21 storeys. And here height carries both shadowing impacts and with small footprints, creates crowded streets at the front with jarring transitions into low-rise neighbourhoods at the rear. I suggest you look at the south of 245 College and see the 'transition' afforded onto Glasgow Street.

To date, the residents of the four neighbourhoods at the Four Corners of Bloor and Bathurst have had a plethora of meetings with the developer, and it, in turn, has embarked on an unprecedented public relations campaign to the wider city. So far, we have seen virtually no change in the project that we can attribute to our advice.

Instead of competing in a war of us versus them, Harbord Village would like to propose a number of standards for you as councillors to apply to the development, so we can all approach this in a rational way. We advise you to consider this and projects like it, as having two constituencies: how does the city at large feel, and how do the people most impacted feel?

The planning mandate aims at change, yet stability. We believe if neighbourhood issues are adequately addressed, City issues will be largely solved—a bottom-up approach.

Here are what we think are some of the questions for your consideration:

- Does it fit the surrounding context? Is the demographic profile similar to the surrounding neighbourhood? Does the development address housing needs for a full income/age range?
- Are the uses compatible with the neighbourhood—will they create levels of noise and activity that will negatively affect the adjacent neighbourhood? Does the project contribute to the direct neighbours? Does it address the immediate social and infrastructure needs of the surrounding neighbourhoods, as well as the additional demands produced by the project itself? Have these been properly identified and can we address them?
- Does the project physically integrate into the neighbourhood, is there adequate transition to the houseforms that surround it?

- How can the project mitigate traffic congestion, is transit adequate to meet the demands of an additional population of 2500 people, how will movement to and from the site be smoothly accommodated?
- Finally, if granted, what density would act to dampen developer expectation in this part of the City, rather than drive the demand for more?

If it goes ahead, how will life change for adjacent neighbours and will that level of change be tolerable, or will you get the project and, site by site, begin to lose the neighbourhoods, as has been the case in innumerable sites downtown?

Yours,

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