



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

28 River Street – Zoning Amendment Application Supplementary Report

Date:	April 19, 2017
To:	City Council
From:	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning
Wards:	Ward 28 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale
Reference Number:	16 268409 STE 28 OZ

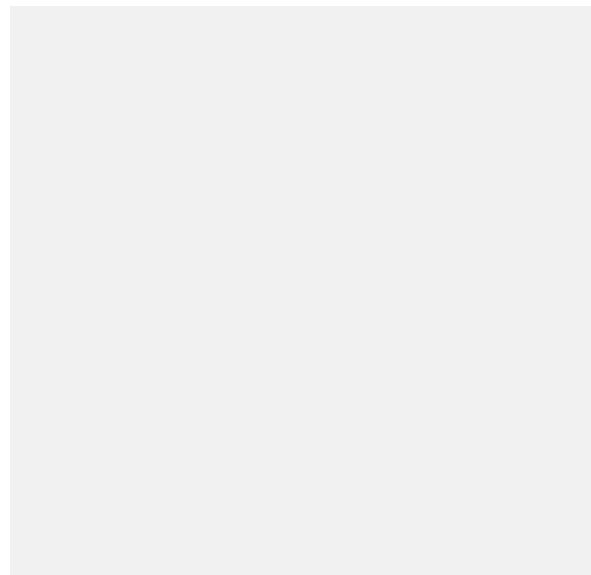
SUMMARY

Toronto and East York Community Council adopted staff recommendations to refuse a rezoning application for 28 River Street at its meeting on April 4, 2017, as per a Refusal Report dated March 16, 2017. This Supplementary Report provides a summary of the feedback received from the community at the Community Consultation Meeting held on March 23, 2017, as well as written comments received both before and after the meeting.

Overall, the community is opposed to the proposed development citing concerns about the lack of fit with the existing low-rise character of the surrounding area and will cause significant negative impact on the adjacent and nearby homes on River Street and Wascana Avenue in terms of shadow, sky view, privacy, private trees, and on-street parking.

DECISION history

On April 4, 2017, Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) adopted staff's recommendations contained in the Refusal Report dated March 16, 2017, item no. TE23.15. A complete record of TEYCC's recommendations is provided at:



<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.TE23.15>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Proposal

The proposed development is a 15-storey mixed-use building with 162 dwelling units and retail space on the ground floor that is currently planned to be occupied by a Beer Store. A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in the Refusal Report dated March 16, 2017.

Community Consultation

A Community Consultation Meeting was held on March 23, 2017, at the Regent Park Community Centre and was attended by approximately 50 members of the local community.

At the meeting the applicant described a potential alternative proposal for a 12-storey building with 118 dwelling units but advised they will not be formally submitting a revised plan to the City as part of this rezoning application.

Written comments were received from 63 local residents, including representatives of the T.C. Douglas Housing Co-Operative, and the Corktown Residents and Business Association.

The following provides a summary of the comments received from the public both at the meeting and individually submitted to City Planning, generally in order from most to least prevalent topics.

Height -- Context and Character

The proposed height is excessive and represents over-development of the subject property considering the neighbouring low-rise houses. The proposed development has virtually ignored both the Tall Building Design Guidelines and the mid-rise building design guidelines and will detract from the existing character of the neighbourhood. There is a lack of transition between the proposed 15-storey building and the surrounding buildings.

The relatively immense scale of the proposed building does fit within the existing context of low-rise houses that have a distinct 19th century character. The building would overwhelm and ruin the existing character. The proposed building is also too close to River Street.

Many comments suggested that a building of approximately six storeys would be potentially appropriate.

Shadow Impact

The proposed building would cause excessive shadow impact on nearby houses, private rear yards, front yards, and nearby sidewalks. The proposed building would result in the adjacent rear yards being in shadow for most of the day. Loss of sunlight will prevent most gardening opportunities in the rear yards adjacent to the subject property. The T.C. Douglas Housing Co-op, which includes the adjacent townhouses, has an active Gardening Committee that finds the proposed development would be detrimental to the existing gardens, which are used for growing a variety of plants including flowers, fruits and vegetables.

Privacy

Overlook from balconies and windows on the north side of the proposed building would be excessive and significantly reduce the privacy of nearby houses and their private rear yards, especially the adjacent rear yards. Overlook would be exacerbated by the harm to the existing tree canopy over some of the adjacent rear yards.

Existing Trees

The proposed injury and removal of several private trees located in the rear yards adjacent to the subject property would harm the appearance of the neighbourhood. The trees provide shade, greenery and privacy for the existing houses. The applicant did not consult the owners of the private trees on the proposed injury or removal of the trees. The shadow impact from the proposed building will further harm or destroy the existing trees. The city's tree canopy is important for human health and for a city to grow sustainably. The two street trees being proposed on River Street is insufficient to compensate for the injury or removal of several existing private trees.

On-street Parking

The existing on-street parking in the vicinity is already at capacity. The proposed building does not provide enough parking for its residents and visitors, which will lead to additional on-street parking that will displace the vehicles of existing residents who have no alternative place to park. Residents of the proposed building should not be permitted to have street parking permits.

Publicly Accessible Landscaped Open Space

There is a lack of publicly accessible green space in the proposed development. New green space should be provided for the local community and adjacent houses that are losing sunlight on their green space. Publicly accessible open space should be provided on the subject property adjacent to River Street.

Construction Management and Impact

Local residents expressed a variety of concerns about construction impacts.

Sky View

The proposed building would cause substantial loss of sky view from nearby houses and private rear yards. The view from the Vinegar Lofts at 19 River Street would also be negatively impacted.

Traffic Impact

The proposed development would significantly increase traffic and congestion on River Street, which is also a safety concern.

Density

The increase in local population that would result from the proposed development would impact the availability of existing community and recreational facilities in the area. Local parks, including the Sumach Street Parkette, would become less enjoyable and less safe for children and existing residents as the new building would result in an increase in both dogs and children

while there are no off-leash dog parks in the neighbourhood. There is no local high school for teenaged residents of the proposed development.

One person commented that they were supportive of the proposed development as it seemed more pedestrian friendly and less car-focused than the existing parking lot, would contribute to local housing stock, and could potentially provide for a local grocery store.

Property Maintenance

The proposed building will make it difficult to access the townhouse walls and fences adjacent to the subject property to conduct routine maintenance.

Wind

The proposed building will negatively impact wind conditions in the neighbourhood.

Transit Capacity

There is already insufficient capacity on nearby transit (i.e. 501/502 Queen streetcar and 505 Dundas streetcar) during rush hour. A transit study that addresses the cumulative impact of potential future developments should be provided.

Heritage

The Heritage Impact Assessment did not sufficiently address the heritage of Corktown. Consider creating a Heritage Conservation District in the neighbourhood to help protect heritage assets from incompatible, out-of-scale, development proposals.

Beer Store

The proposed development should provide a designated space for those with shopping carts and garbage bags full of returns to wait for the Beer Store to open in the morning.

COMMENTS

The feedback received from the community aligns with and reinforces staff's position that a 15-storey building is inappropriate for the subject property due to a lack of transition in scale to the adjacent *Neighbourhood*, which would cause excessive negative impact on the adjacent townhouses with regard to shadow, sky view, and overall character of the *Neighbourhood*.

CONTACT

Thomas Rees, Planner
Tel. No. 416-392-1791
E-mail: thomas.rees@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Jennifer Keesmaat, MES, MCIP, RPP
Chief Planner and Executive Director
City Planning Division