

High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines – Final Report

Date: June 15, 2018

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District

Ward: 13 – High Park

Planning Application Number: 17 243796 WPS 00 TM

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study Urban Design Guidelines and to recommend that City Council approve the Guidelines for use in the evaluation of all current and new development applications within the study area. The Urban Design Guidelines have been developed as a companion document to Official Plan Amendment No. 419 which includes the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Site and Area Specific Policy No. 551.

The Urban Design Guidelines have been developed through a process of research, analysis and public consultation undertaken in conjunction with the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study and the area specific Official Plan policy development. The Urban Design Guidelines have been made available online for public consultation on the City of Toronto Planning Studies website specific to the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study. They can be found at the following link:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/high-park-apartment-neighbourhood-area-character-study/information-reports-high-park-apartment-neighbourhood-study>

The High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study involved extensive community consultation and provided an evidence based approach and analysis to identifying the neighbourhood characteristics and attributes that define the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood. The findings of the study enabled staff to identify which character defining attributes required localized policies and guidelines to augment the direction of the City's Official Plan and various City-wide Guideline documents.

The High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines are predicated on the study's findings, guiding principles and results from community consultation and will further implement Official Plan Amendment No. 419 (OPA 419) and Site and Area

Specific Policy No. 551 (SASP 551) for this area. The Urban Design Guidelines will provide greater direction for the area to guide change and compatible infill development within the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area that is sensitive to the character of the neighbourhood.

This report recommends the approval and adoption of the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines and that staff be directed to use these Guidelines in the evaluation of all current and new development applications in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve and adopt the "High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines" and direct staff to use these Guidelines in the evaluation of all current and new development applications located within the area covered by Site and Area Specific Policy No. 551.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

Council Direction for High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study

City Council requested staff to undertake an area character study of the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area in April 2017 as a result of recent development activity in this area including two significant development applications. One of the applications (35, 41-63, 65 and 95 High Park Avenue and 66 and 102-116 Pacific Avenue) proposed 1,031 units in four apartment buildings ranging in height from 8 storeys to 39 storeys. The other application (111 Pacific Avenue, 255 Glenlake Avenue and 66 Oakmount Road) proposed to add two blocks of townhouses, two apartment buildings, one with 33 storeys and a three storey base, and the other with 29 storeys with an eight storey base with a total of 768 units. The combined number of units for both of these applications is 1,799.

The purpose of the area character study was to identify existing area characteristics and develop appropriate Official Plan policies and area specific principles and guidelines to provide direction when considering change and compatible infill for the area, as well as potential community improvement opportunities.

City Council also requested that staff report back to Etobicoke York Community Council on the findings of the character study and anticipated Site and Area Specific Policy no later than the second quarter of 2018, but prior to, or concurrent with any Recommendation Report on any site specific applications within the study area. The April 2017 staff reports and City Council decisions can be found at the following links:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EY21.4>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EY21.5>

Status Report for the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study

On April 4, 2018, Etobicoke York Community Council considered a Status Report on the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study dated March 13, 2018, from the Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District. The Status Report outlined the study program, public consultation process and provided an overview of community feedback to date. In addition, the Status Report provided the Character Defining Elements to be examined in the study along with the Draft Guiding Principles.

Etobicoke York Community Council adopted the recommendations of the report, authorizing the City Clerk to provide Notice of a Statutory Public Meeting under the *Planning Act* and to bring forward the proposed Official Plan Amendment based on the findings of the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study. Etobicoke York Community Council also directed staff to bring forward the associated draft Urban Design Guidelines. The March 13, 2018 Status Report can be found at the following link: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EY29.3>

Final Report for the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study

On June 6, 2018, Etobicoke York Community Council considered a Final Report for the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study dated May 22, 2018, from the Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District and held a Statutory Public Meeting, with notice given in accordance with the *Planning Act*, for the proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 419 and Site and Area Specific Policy No. 551.

Etobicoke York Community Council adopted the recommendations of the report, which included direction for the Director of Community Planning, Etobicoke York District, to further consult with the community and stakeholders on Draft High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines and report back to Etobicoke York Community Council on July 4, 2018 with finalized Urban Design Guidelines for the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood. The May 22, 2018 Final Report and City Council decisions on the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Character Study can be found at the following link:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EY31.4>

COMMENTS

Issue Background

The High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines are intended to serve as a companion document to the Site and Area Specific Policy No. 551 (SASP 551) to provide further direction in implementing the Official Plan policies pertaining to development within this apartment neighbourhood that respects and reinforces the existing physical character of the buildings, streetscapes and open space patterns in the area.

An extensive analysis of the existing character of the area was completed through the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study and important characteristics have been identified, evaluated and confirmed as valuable to the community. A statement of area character, developed through the study, is included as an introduction to SASP 551 to provide an overview of the defining characteristics of the area, why those characteristics are important and to inform the intent of the policy direction for the SASP. The statement of area character notes that the area is an established, stable residential apartment neighbourhood with strong visual and physical connections to the natural environment and amenity of High Park.

The High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines are organized around five themes: Natural Environment; Public Realm; Open Space; Built Form; and Site Servicing, which follow the policy goals set out in SASP 551 and the guiding principles established through community consultation during the Area Character Study.

Key character-defining attributes reinforced through SASP 551 and the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- The natural environment connections with High Park;
- The 'park-like' setting for tall apartment building development;
- Mature tree-lined streets with significant views and vistas;
- Generous landscaped setbacks, open space amenity and separation between buildings;
- Access to sunlight and sky views;
- The prevailing 'tower in the park' era development character juxtaposed with an early twentieth century Toronto residential neighbourhood context; and
- The extensive network of mid-block pedestrian walkways.

The Urban Design Guidelines will help ensure that any proposed changes to the area and proposed new development will represent compatible infill that is sensitive to the existing character of the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood and its attributes.

Conclusion

The High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines have been developed through the Area Character Study in a collaborative and consultative process initiated through the guiding principles that were developed through extensive public consultation. The main objective of the Guidelines is to provide clear direction with

regard to change and new development that will respect and reinforce the existing physical character of buildings, streetscapes and open space patterns in the area.

This report recommends that City Council approve and adopt the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Urban Design Guidelines and direct staff to sue these Guidelines in the evaluation of all current and new development applications located within the area covered by Site and Area Specific Policy No. 551.

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SIGNATURE

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