

1881 Steeles Avenue West – Zoning Amendment Application – Preliminary Report

Date: February 13, 2020

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, North York District

Wards: Ward 6 - York Centre

Planning Application Number: 19 262484 NNY 06 OZ

Current Use(s) on Site: Two storey retail/office commercial plaza with surface parking.

SUMMARY

This report provides information and identifies a preliminary set of issues regarding the application located at 1881 Steeles Avenue West. Staff are currently reviewing the application. It has been circulated to all appropriate agencies and City divisions for comment. Staff will proceed to schedule a community consultation meeting for the application with the Ward Councillor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Staff schedule a community consultation meeting for the application located at 1881 Steeles Avenue West together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within 120 metres of the application site, and to additional residents, institutions and owners to be determined in consultation with the Ward Councillor, with any additional mailing costs to be borne by the applicant.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City Planning Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in the report in the current budget year or in future years.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Application Description

This applicant proposes to demolish the existing two storey retail/office building and amend the Zoning By-laws to permit residential uses and to provide development standards for the proposed mixed use buildings for the property at 1881 Steeles Avenue West. The application proposes the redevelopment of the existing office/retail plaza with two 12 storey commercial/residential buildings, two 27 storey residential buildings and, one 11 storey residential building. The application also proposes a new public street along the south and east property lines. The application proposes a total gross floor area of 95,435 square metres (91,819 square metres of residential and 3,502 square metres of commercial) with a Floor Space Index of 3.99 times the lot area. The application proposes 1,171 residential units and 1,206 parking spaces (1,192 within underground parking structures, and 14 short term surface spaces on an internal private road). A total of 897 bicycle parking spaces for both long and short term users is proposed. A 941 square metre public park is proposed central within the site adjacent to the proposed new public street linking Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West. A Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Open Space is proposed between the two 12 storey buildings at the intersection of Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West.

Detailed project information is found on the City's Application Information Centre at:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/application-information-centre/>

See Attachment 1A and 1B of this report, for a three dimensional representation of the project in context. See Attachment 3 of this report for a site plan.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Land use planning in the Province of Ontario is a policy led system. Any decision of Council related to this application is required to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) (the "PPS"), and to conform with applicable Provincial Plans which, in the case of the City of Toronto, include: A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (the "Growth Plan") and, where applicable, the Greenbelt Plan (2017). The PPS and all Provincial Plans may be found on the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website.

The Growth Plan contains policies pertaining to provincially significant employment zones (PSEZ). PSEZ are areas defined by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the purpose of long-term planning for job creation and economic development. The conversion of PSEZ can only occur during a municipally-initiated MCR.

The Growth Plan defines PSEZ as "areas defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of long-term planning for job creation and economic development. Provincially significant employment zones can consist of

employment areas as well as mixed-use areas that contain a significant number of jobs."

Toronto Official Plan Policies and Planning Studies

The City of Toronto Official Plan is a comprehensive policy document that guides development in the City, providing direction for managing the size, location, and built form compatibility of different land uses and the provision of municipal services and facilities. Authority for the Official Plan derives from The Planning Act of Ontario. The PPS recognizes the Official Plan as the most important document for its implementation. Toronto Official Plan policies related to building complete communities, including heritage preservation and environmental stewardship may be applicable to any application.

The Urban Structure policies contained in Chapter 2 contain policies addressing Compatibility/Mitigation of sensitive land uses including residential uses where they are proposed or permitted outside of and adjacent to lands designated *Employment Areas*. The Compatibility/Mitigation policies 2.2.4.5 to 2.2.4.10 require the applicant to submit a Compatibility/Mitigation Study as part of this application.

The Built Form policies contained in Chapter 3 require that new development will be located and organized to fit with its existing and/or planned context. The Built Form policies also contain policies with additional built form principles to be applied to evaluating the location and design of tall buildings. The Built Form policies are used to evaluate proposals to ensure they are appropriate for the site and the existing and planned context.

The application is located on lands shown as *Mixed Use Areas* on Map 16 (see Attachment 4: Official Plan Map). *Mixed Use Areas* are made up of a broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses, in single use or mixed use buildings, as well as parks and open spaces and utilities. The Official Plan contains policies for assessing development in *Mixed Use Areas*. Development in *Mixed Use Areas* will, amongst other matters:

- create a balance of high quality commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses that reduces automobile dependency and meets the needs of the local community;
- locate and mass new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale, as necessary to achieve the objectives of this Plan, through means such as providing setbacks and/or a stepping down of heights, particularly towards lower scale Neighbourhoods;
- locate and mass new buildings to frame the edges of streets and parks with good proportion and maintain sunlight and comfortable wind conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets, parks and open spaces;
- provide an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment;
- have access to schools, parks, community centres, libraries and childcare;
- provide good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors; and

- locate and screen service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences.

Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West are identified as Major Streets on Map 3 of the Official Plan. Dufferin Street is identified as a Transit Corridor on the Higher Order Transit Corridors Map 4 of the Plan. Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West are identified as Transit Priority Corridors on the Surface Transit Priority Network, Map 5 of the Official Plan.

Staff will evaluate the proposed development against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan. Toronto Official Plan policies may be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

Zoning By-laws

The subject site is zoned Local Commercial Area Zone (C2) under the former City of North York Zoning By-law 7625. The site is also subject to former City of North York By-law 28482 which provides specific provisions for the site. By-law 28482 permits a limited range of commercial uses including retail, offices and professional medical offices. The By-law permits a maximum gross floor area of 7,920 square metres and requires a minimum of 1,642 square metres of office space, of which a maximum of 821 square metres can be used for medical offices. The By-law requires a minimum of 452 parking spaces, and includes a schedule showing the building and parking locations and minimum yard setbacks for the building.

Former City of North York By-law 28482 may be found here:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/pre1998bylaws/north%20york%20-%20city%20of/28482.pdf>

The site is zoned Commercial Residential CR 0.4 (c0.4; r0.0) SS3 (x209) by By-law 569-2013. This zone permits commercial uses with a maximum density of 0.4 times the lot area. The zone does not permit residential uses. Exception 209 states that former North York By-law 28482 is a prevailing By-law, as such the provisions of this By-law stated above supersede those of By-law 569-2013.

Zoning By-law 569-2013 may be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/zoning-by-law-preliminary-zoning-reviews/zoning-by-law-569-2013-2/>

Design Guidelines

The following design guideline(s) will be used in the evaluation of this application:

- City-Wide Tall Building Design Guidelines;
- Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards;
- Growing Up: Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities;
- Complete Streets Guidelines;

- Pet Friendly Design Guidelines and Best Practices for New Multi-Unit Buildings;
- Design Guidelines for Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space; and,
- Bird-Friendly Guidelines.

The City's Design Guidelines may be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/design-guidelines/>

Site Plan Control

The application is subject to Site Plan Control. A Site Plan Control application has not been submitted.

COMMENTS

Reasons for the Application

The application is required as residential uses on the site are not permitted by either the City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013 or former North York Zoning By-law 7625. The proposal also requires amendments to the zoning, including but not limited to height, density, setbacks, parking provisions and performance standards.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

The application has been circulated to City divisions and public agencies for comment. At this stage in the review, the following preliminary issues have been identified:

Provincial Policies and Plans Consistency/Conformity

The application will be evaluated against the Planning Act and applicable Provincial Plans to establish the application's consistency with the PPS and conformity with the Growth Plan, especially with regard to ensuring that the development recognizes the local context in terms of appropriate development, the promotion of well-designed built form, providing for a range of housing options and whether the proposal complies with the municipal direction for growth.

While the PPS encourages intensification and efficient development, it recognizes that local context is important and that well-designed built form contributes to overall long-term economic prosperity. The PPS indicates that the Official Plan is the most important vehicle for implementing the PPS and planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations for intensification and redevelopment.

The Growth Plan emphasizes the importance of complete communities where a range of housing options are to be provided and that new development should provide high quality compact built form and an attractive and vibrant public realm. The Growth Plan provides municipalities the authority to define the location and nature of growth that will occur in intensification areas in a flexible manner suitable to the local context, while still meeting the overriding objectives of the Growth Plan.

The application is located within a PSEZ under the Growth Plan. PSEZ are identified in the Growth Plan as areas defined "for the purpose of long-term planning for job creation and economic development". The proposal is being reviewed by staff to determine if the proposed mix of uses conform to the Growth Plan, are appropriate for a PSEZ and if the proposed introduction of residential uses where the full floor area of the existing commercial and office uses are not replaced is appropriate within a PSEZ.

Through its Official Plan, the City has identified appropriate locations and opportunities for intensification.

Official Plan Conformity

Staff are reviewing the application to determine its conformity to the Official Plan. Key Official Plan policies that will be used to evaluate this application include, but are not limited to: Urban Structure and Compatibility/Mitigation policies in Chapter 2; Built Form, Public Realm, and Parks and Open Space policies in Chapter 3; and the development criteria for *Mixed Use Areas* in Chapter 4. The applicant has been requested to provide additional compatibility, noise and odour information to form a complete application in order to address the Compatibility/Mitigation Policies of the Plan. These reports will be reviewed by staff and peer reviewed if necessary to aid in determining conformity of the proposal with the Official Plan.

Built Form, Planned and Built Context

Staff are assessing the suitability of the proposed site organization, building placement and setbacks, height, massing, and transition based on the City's Official Plan including Healthy Neighbourhoods Section 2.3.1, Public Realm Section 3.1.1, Built Form Section 3.1.2, Built Form - Tall Buildings 3.1.3 and Mixed Use Areas Section 4.5.

Staff will also be assessing the proposal against the Tall Building and the Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards and Addendum. The proposed setbacks and stepbacks, including the relationship to Dufferin Street, Steeles Avenue West and abutting properties will be evaluated through the processing of the application. The two proposed 12-storey (42.45 metres) mixed commercial-residential buildings and 11-storey (37.2 metres) residential building are considered to be tall buildings as their heights exceed 36 metres for the 12-storey buildings, and the 11-storey building exceeds the width of the proposed right-of-way in which it fronts (18.5 metres).

On a preliminary basis, issues of concern with regards to built form and context include:

- Demonstrating how the proposed buildings and site design relate to the existing and/or planned context, including the proposed density and scale of development;
- Demonstrating how the proposed tall buildings and their introduction to this area and location on site is appropriate and whether the heights of the proposed tall buildings are appropriate;
- Whether the size and massing of the proposed buildings are too large with respect to their massing along Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West, including their height;

- Massing new development to define edges of streets, park and open spaces at good proportion; and,
- Configuration of proposed new public street including configuration of new intersections with Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West.

The applicant has submitted a Sun/Shadow Study and a Pedestrian Level Wind Study in support of the application that are currently being reviewed by City staff.

Ravine Protection

The subject lands are within a TRCA Regulated Area. The application has been circulated to the TRCA for their review and assessment of any permits which may be required for the development to occur should the application be approved.

The subject site is within the City of Toronto Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law area. Staff are reviewing the proposal to determine if the application conforms to the By-law.

Natural Heritage Protection

The subject lands are adjacent to a Natural Heritage Area as identified on Map 9 of the Official Plan. The applicant has submitted a Natural Heritage Impact Study which is being reviewed to determine if the environmental features adjacent to the site will need protection. Through the review of the application it will be determined if a comprehensive ecological restoration plan, which secures improvements to the natural heritage system in the area, both on and off site, will be required as part of both the City's and the TRCA's permit processes.

Tree Preservation

The application is subject to the provisions of the City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813 Articles II (Street Trees By-law) and III (Private Tree By-law).

The applicant has submitted an Arborist Report/Tree Preservation plan which is currently under review by City staff. Of the 47 trees inventoried for the proposed development, 24 trees are on the Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West road allowances, 17 private trees and 3 trees on public property identified are within the Ravine and Natural Features Protection Area and 3 trees are on private property outside the Ravine and Natural Features Protection Area. The Arborist Report identifies 5 City owned Street Trees, and 3 private trees identified as potential hazard trees which are proposed to be removed as part of the application. No permit is required for the removal of a terminally diseased, dead or imminently hazardous tree. The applicant will be required to compensate for the loss of the removal of 5 City-owned trees with the planting of shade trees on the City-owned street allowance abutting the site at a ratio of 1:1.

Growing Up: Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities

In July 2017, Toronto City Council adopted the Growing Up Draft Urban Design Guidelines, and directed City Planning staff to apply the "Growing Up Guidelines" in the evaluation of new and under review multi-unit residential development proposals. The objective of the Growing Up Draft Urban Design Guidelines is that developments deliver tangible outcomes to increase liveability for larger households, including families with children at the neighbourhood, building and unit scale.

The proposed two-bedroom and three-bedroom unit mix would support the unit mix objectives of the Growing Up Draft Urban Design Guidelines. The applicant is proposing to provide a unit mix as follows:

- 790 1-bedroom units (67.5%)
- 255 2-bedroom units (21.8%)
- 126 3-bedroom units (10.7%)

The applicant has not provided detailed information on the sizes of the units within the building. The Growing Up Guidelines recommend unit sizes for each unit type. Staff will be requesting the applicant to provide additional information regarding the unit sizes for review against the Growing Up Guidelines. Other matters of the Growing Up Guidelines will be considered in the review of this proposal.

Archaeological Assessment

The applicant has submitted a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment for the site. This is being reviewed by staff to determine if further investigation is required prior to any redevelopment of the site occurring.

Community Services and Facilities

Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) are an essential part of vibrant, strong and complete communities. CS&F are the lands, buildings and structures used for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by the City or other public agencies, boards and commissions. They include recreation, libraries, childcare, schools, public health, human services, cultural services and employment services, etc. The timely provision of community services and facilities is as important to the livability of the City's neighbourhoods as "hard" services like sewer, water, roads and transit. The City's Official Plan establishes and recognizes that the provision of and investment in community services and facilities supports healthy, safe, liveable, and accessible communities. Providing for a full range of community services and facilities in areas experiencing major or incremental growth, is a responsibility shared by the City, public agencies and the development community.

There are limited existing residential uses in the area surrounding the site. The applicant has submitted a Community Services & Facilities report which is being reviewed by staff to determine whether any new facilities, capital improvements or opportunities for expansions to existing facilities have been identified by the applicant and to identify other issues that need to be addressed to support the proposal.

Section 37 Community Benefits

The Official Plan provides for the use of Section 37 of the *Planning Act* to pass by-laws for increases in height and/or density not otherwise permitted by the Zoning By-law in return for the provision by the applicant of community benefits in the form of capital facilities. It is standard to secure community benefits in a Section 37 Agreement which is then registered on title.

As the proposal is more than 10,000 square metres and exceeds the density permissions in the zoning by-law by more than 1,500 square metres, the proposal is subject to Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

Transportation/Parking

The applicant is proposing a new "L" shaped public street along the south and east boundaries of the site with a right-of-way width of 18.5 metres connecting Dufferin Street with Steeles Avenue West. Staff are reviewing the appropriateness of this new public street and the right-of-way requirements for a new street. Staff are reviewing whether the proposed intersections with Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue West will require signalization or turn restrictions to function acceptably. Staff are also reviewing the requirements for bicycle infrastructure adjacent to the site and potential High Occupancy Vehicle lanes on Dufferin Street which is identified as a transit priority segment in the Official Plan.

The applicant is proposing to meet the Policy Area 4 parking rate and meet the required bicycle parking requirements of Zoning By-law 569-2013. The applicant has submitted an Urban Transportation Considerations report which concludes that "Site-related traffic activity can be acceptably and appropriately accommodated on the area street network with relatively small changes on the operation of the area intersections". Staff are reviewing the submitted report and the proposed site circulation and loading.

Toronto Green Standard

Council has adopted the four-tier Toronto Green Standard (TGS). The TGS is a set of performance measures for green development. Applications for Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision and Site Plan Control are required to meet and demonstrate compliance with Tier 1 of the Toronto Green Standard. Tiers 2, 3 and 4 are voluntary, higher levels of performance with financial incentives. Tier 1 performance measures are secured on site plan drawings and through a Site Plan Agreement or Registered Plan of Subdivision.

The applicant has indicated that they plan to achieve Tier 1 of the Performance Levels. Staff are reviewing the submitted checklist and materials for compliance with Tier 1 performance standards of the TGS.

Parkland Dedication

Parks, Forestry and Recreation division has identified that the subject lands are not in a parkland acquisition priority area, as identified in Map A-7 of Chapter 415, Article III of the Toronto Municipal Code. The proposal includes a 941 square metre public park located central to the site on a new public street proposed to be created through the redevelopment of the site. In accordance with Chapter 415, Article III of the Toronto Municipal Code the alternative rate would be applicable for this site.

At the alternative rate of 0.4 hectares per 300 units specified in Chapter 415, Article III of the Toronto Municipal Code, the parkland dedication requirement is 15,613 square metres or 85.48% of the site area. However, as the site is between 1 to 5 hectares in size, a cap of 15% of the development site is applied to the residential use while the non-residential use is subject to a 2% parkland dedication. In total, the parkland dedication requirement is 2,754 square metres. The park as proposed is in an acceptable location and configuration, however the park is undersized by 1,813 square metres. The applicant will be required to provide revised plans that demonstrate the correct on-site parkland dedication size.

Other Matters

Additional issues identified on a preliminary basis include:

- The existing site specific zoning requires the provision of a minimum of 1,642 square metres of office space. The current plans do not show any office space. As the site is located in a PSEZ it would be appropriate to maintain the existing office space in the proposed redevelopment.

Additional issues may be identified through the review of the application, agency comments and the community consultation process.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

City of Toronto Drawings

Attachment 1A & 1B: 3D Model of Proposal in Context

Attachment 2: Location Map

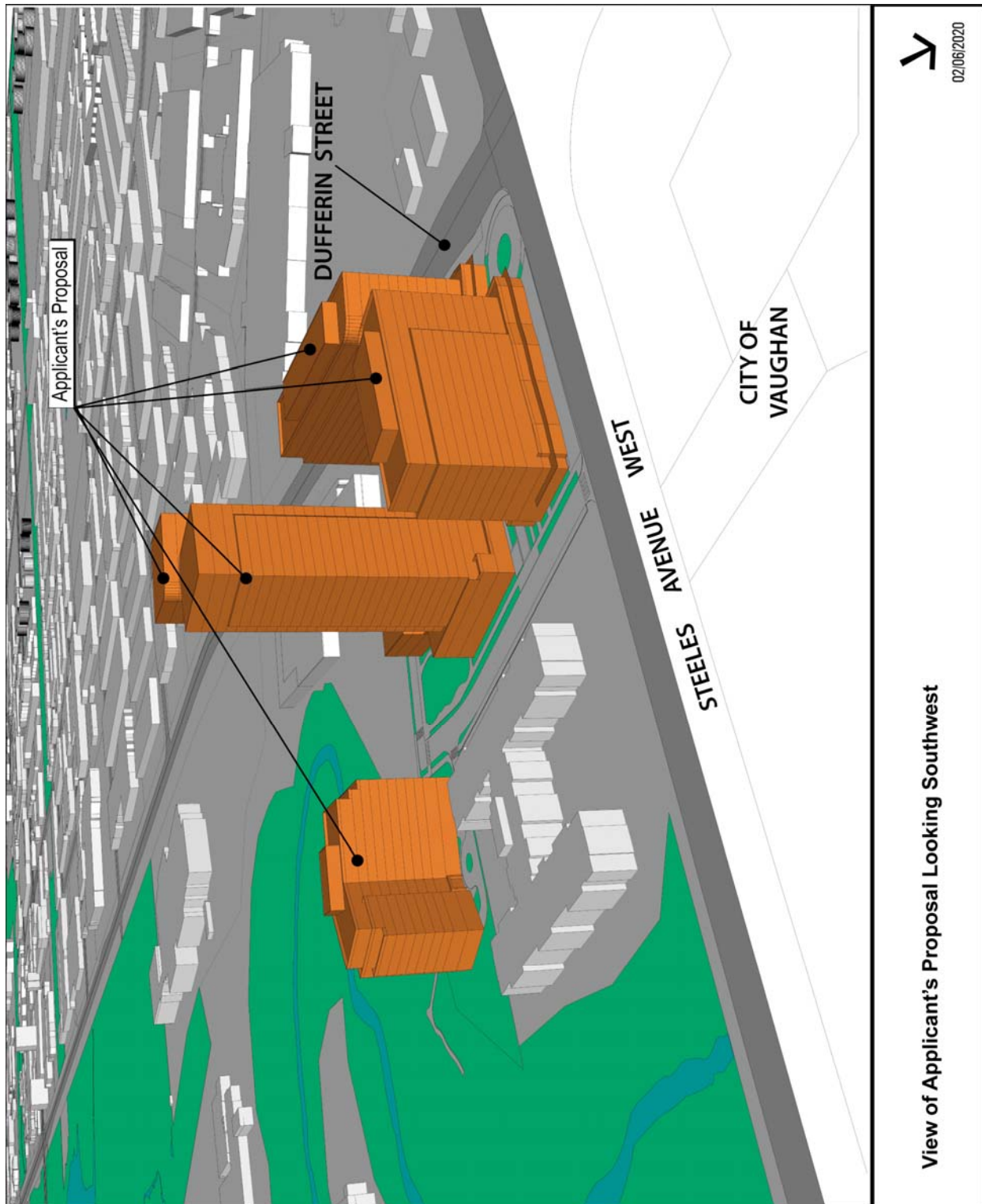
Attachment 3: Site Plan

Attachment 4: Official Plan Map

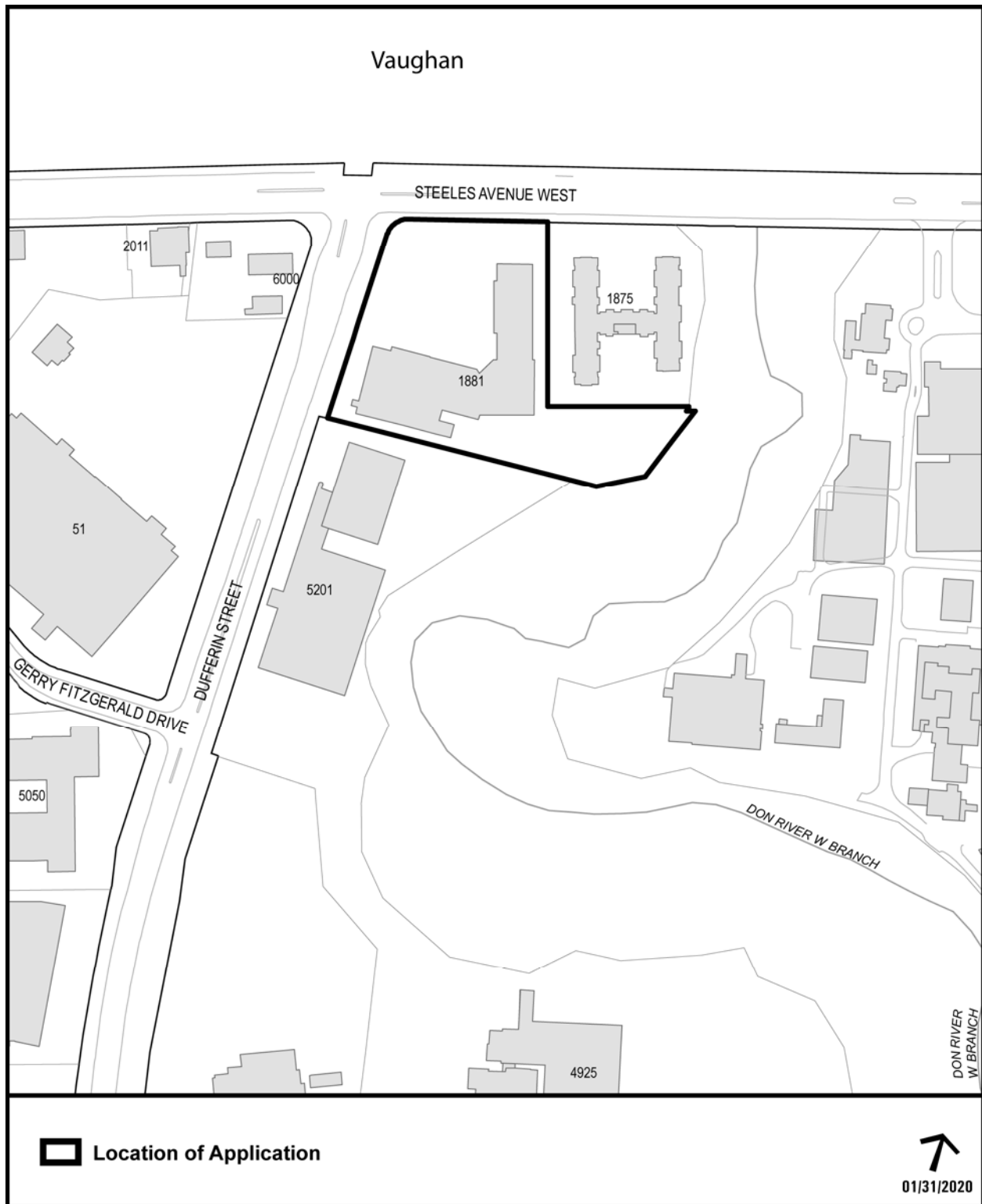
Attachment 1A: 3D Model of Proposal in Context



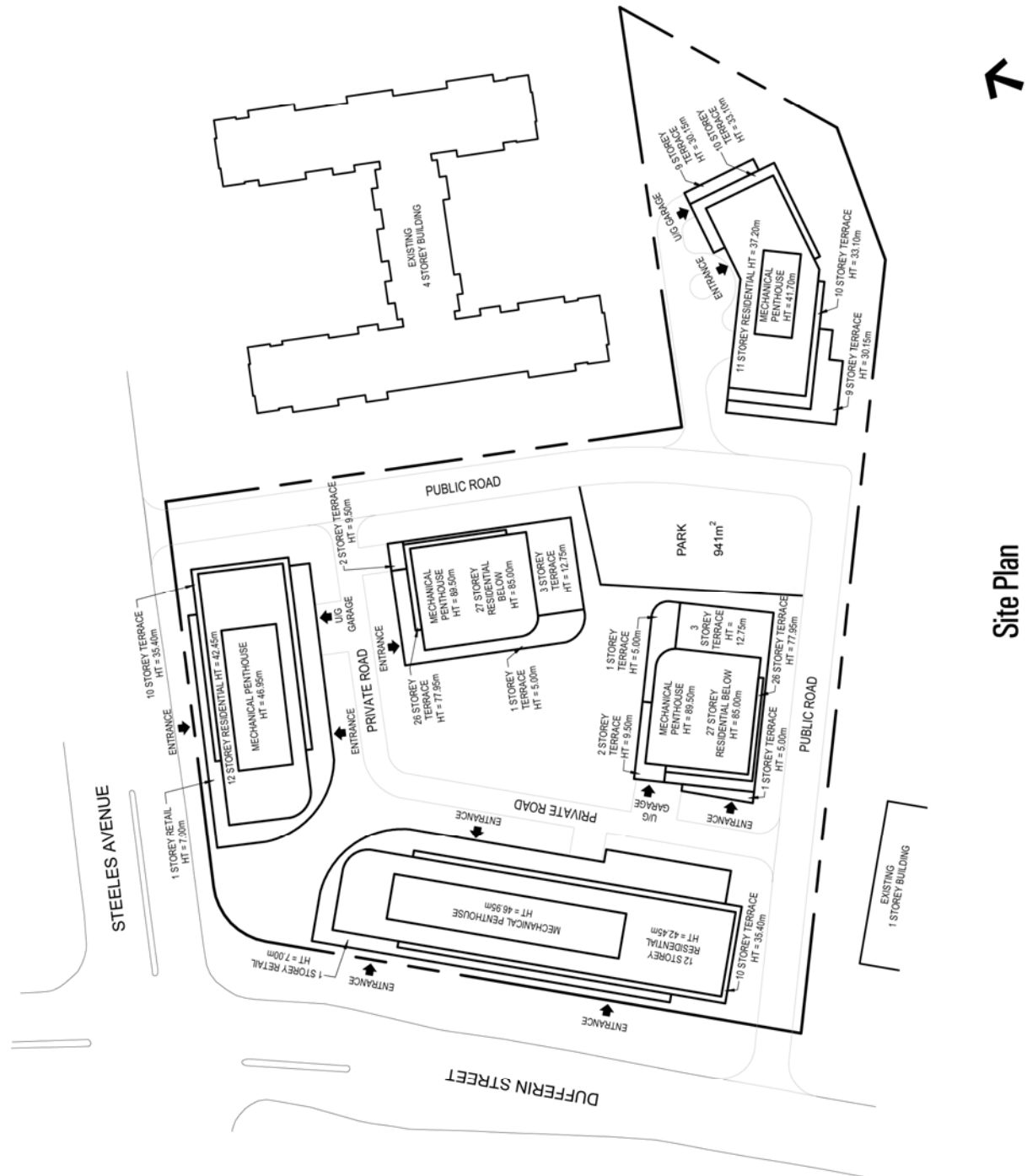
Attachment 1B: 3D Model of Proposal in Context



Attachment 2: Location Map

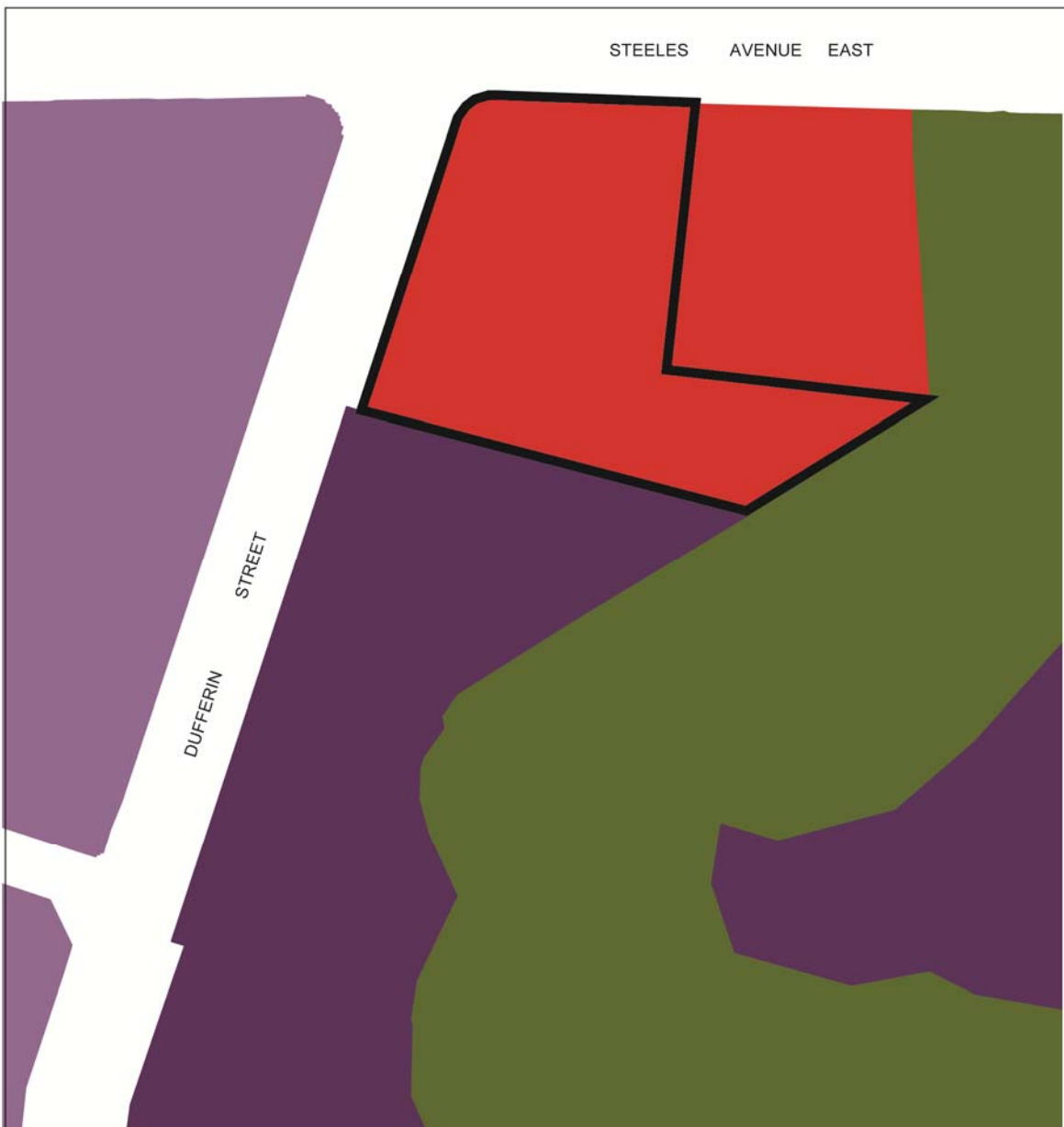


Attachment 3: Site Plan



Site Plan

Attachment 4: Official Plan Map



1881 Steeles Avenue East

Official Plan Land Use Map #16

File # 19 262484 NNY 33 0Z



Not to Scale
02/06/2020