



June 17, 2020

To: The Toronto and East York City Council

From: The Casa Loma Residents Association

Re: Proposed development at 1470 Bathurst St. and Request to Amend the Zoning By-laws
Application Number 17 278700 STE 21 OZ

The Casa Loma Residents Association (“CLRA”) is a volunteer organization of residents living in the Casa Loma area of Toronto committed to strengthening and preserving the distinctive character, heritage and quality of life in the Toronto neighbourhood bounded by Bathurst to Spadina and St. Clair to Davenport. Our goal is to represent our shared ideals of protecting our heritage neighbourhood and fully participating within our dynamic city of Toronto.

The development proposed for 1470 Bathurst St. consisting of three towers, a public daycare, indoor community space and retail shops is the first of several high rise projects planned for St. Clair Ave. West between Bathurst St. and Spadina Ave along the northern border of our residential neighbourhood. The development at 1470 Bathurst St. will add 824 apartment units of 1 – 3 bedrooms and will be the continuation of major intensification of our area already preceded by 4 hi rise towers at the intersection of Bathurst & St. Clair.

We recognize that we are adjacent to a major transportation hub with the Spadina subway, St. Clair street car and Bathurst buses connecting or to be connected upon completion of 1470 Bathurst and that development near transportation is critical to servicing the growth of Toronto. Further, through the process of public consultation organized by the City’s planning department several of the concerns of the original proposal for this site have been addressed. The open spaces now incorporated into the plan, the width of the St. Clair sidewalk and other setbacks are more aesthetic and suited to a residential development. Although the density proposed is higher than we would like, we accept that it is hard to argue against density at this location.

We are concerned about the traffic and congestion that this development will bring into our residential neighbourhood if not addressed at the outset. That is why on October 29, 2019 City Council passed a

motion on the advice of the Toronto and East York Council and led by our Councillor Josh Matlow to request a comprehensive Traffic Management and Mitigation Plan for the St. Clair Avenue West and Bathurst Street Planning Framework Area. We have not yet received notice of this transportation study nor has there been any community input to date. We believe that no further approvals should be given to this development prior to the completion and dissemination to the neighbourhood and interested parties of the full traffic study.

Prior to the reduction in traffic attributed to the restrictions of Covid-19, we were living with intolerable traffic congestion westbound along St. Clair during rush hours. The only westbound access to our neighbourhood from St. Clair is from Wells Hill Ave. During rush hour, traffic would be stalled all the way from Bathurst St. to Tweedsmuir Ave, a distance of about 700 metres and would impede access to our neighbourhood. Further, and perhaps more importantly, instead of using the left hand turn from St. Clair at Bathurst, traffic would turn at Wells Hill Ave. into our residential neighbourhood to circumvent the congested intersection of Bathurst and St. Clair.

There are many reasons for this congestion but one of the major reasons is that traffic turning right at Bathurst and St. Clair would have to wait for pedestrians to cross Bathurst before making a turn. This would block all traffic on the curb lane from proceeding westbound. The situation is compounded by a bus stop on Bathurst just north of the intersection which further blocks traffic from making a right turn.

We understand that the revised plans call for a bus bay to be incorporated into the development plans on Bathurst north of St. Clair. Confirmation of that would be good news and will be critical to the improvement of traffic flow. A further step would be the addition of a long right turn lane on St. Clair, likely stretching the full length of the development, coupled with a right turn arrow so that traffic will not be continuously blocked by pedestrian traffic. If a right turn lane is not feasible, prohibition of Right Turns at the north east corner during rush hour from St. Clair to Bathurst is another option. The planned development will bring 901 more vehicles into our area (the number of planned parking spots) and will thereby increase the traffic congestion along with the traffic attracted by the retail shops, day care and future development for the Bathurst St. Clair corridor.

Improvement of the traffic flow at Bathurst and St. Clair is an initial step before further evaluation of traffic flowing into our neighbourhood can be studied.

It is imperative that this congestion be addressed at the outset of the development.

We have no information relating to wind or shade studies. The high-rise developments on the northwest and southeast corners of St. Clair and Bathurst substantially increased the constant wind at that intersection. Often, the wind exceeds tolerable limits and even causes panes of glass to be ripped from the streetcar stop at that intersection. We urge the City of Toronto to review the wind study and to the extent possible, insist on incorporating elements on the proposed site that may correct the wind issues at that intersection

The CLRA also supports area residents who have formed an Environmental Group led by Barbara Chernin. This group has discovered that the soil and groundwater on the proposed site and adjacent properties are contaminated from leaks caused by the Petro Canada gas station previously located on the proposed site. We echo this group's concerns that the site and adjacent lands, including Wells Hill Park and the Nordheimer ravine, may not have been properly remediated. We urge the City of Toronto

to obtain appropriate environmental reports to uncover the extent of contamination, and to insist upon a comprehensive remediation plan for both the proposed site and adjacent lands, before approving any application for development.

Robert Levy
President
Casa Loma Residents Association