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May 10, 2021

(Sent by email to etcc@toronto.ca)

From: Martin Green, PhD
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Re: Item EY24.4: **250 Wincott Drive and 4620 Eglinton Avenue West -
Zoning By-law Amendment Application - Final Report**
Etobicoke York Community Council, May 17, 2021

Dear Councillors,

Implications of Eglinton West Planning and Streetscape Study

I have provided, in a separate submission, comments related to the Final Report by Community Planning on the subject application.

Agenda item 2021.EY24.5, Eglinton West Planning and Streetscape Study - Final Report was made public after my other comments were completed. The Final Report prepared by Community Planning on this topic provides only a limited, high level overview of the Planning and Streetscape Study (the Study) report. That 394-page report has been provided to Council as an attachment (in ten parts). The Community Planning report includes the recommendation (emphasis added):

“2. City Council direct City staff to use the Eglinton West Planning and Streetscape Study (prepared by Perkins + Will and dated January, 2020), included as Attachment 2 to this report, when undertaking Capital Projects and reviewing development applications within the study area.”

Although it has been available since January 2020, **there is no evidence that the Eglinton West Planning and Streetscape Study report was used when reviewing the present development application for 250 Wincott Drive and 4620 Eglinton Avenue West, which is within the Study area.**

In fact, the present development site is the most significant remaining potential development site along this stretch of Eglinton Ave. West. Proper consideration of the findings of the Study could quite reasonably be expected to result in significant changes to the analysis and recommendations of Community Planning in regard to the present application.

I will highlight just two relevant and significant considerations from the Study report that relate to **complete streets** and **safe cycling infrastructure**. For convenient reference, the Appendix has copies of relevant pages from the Study (with yellow highlighting).

Complete Streets

The Study states, on page 260:

“6.4 As Eglinton West transforms into a complete street to support the LRT implementation, the City will promote the design of new built environment which encourages travel by walking, cycling and transit usage. The design of the street will be directed by the City’s Complete Street guidelines.”

The Final Report on the present application acknowledges the Official Plan requirement for complete streets, but there is no evidence given to indicate that the application fulfills that requirement. The proposed new (private) street is projected to have a traffic level comparable to a minor arterial road, but there is no consideration given in the application or the Final Report to safety risks that would be faced by cyclists and pedestrians. I have submitted to the assigned Planner comments and supporting analysis that demonstrate that **the proposed new street fails to consider the needs of all users and would be unsafe for pedestrians, cyclists and especially seniors and people with mobility challenges**. These comments and analysis are neither acknowledged nor addressed in the Final Report.

If the new street had instead been proposed as a **public street** then it would have been subject to all of the analysis normally required for public streets, including the City’s Complete Street guidelines, that might be affected by a development. In that case the new street would, I believe, have been found deficient from multiple perspectives, including safety. The proposed buildings would then also have been subject to (3 metre) setback requirements from the 20 metre right-of-way of the public street, allowing more suitable space for street furniture and other elements that help make a complete street meet the needs of all users.

Safe Cycling Infrastructure

Pages 157, 245 and 260 of the Study provide multiple considerations relevant to safe cycling in the immediate neighbourhood of the development proposed in the present application.

Wincott Drive and Bemersyde Drive are designated cycling routes in the City’s Cycling Plan: bike lanes are proposed for Wincott, while Bemersyde is a proposed quiet street route. Intersections generally are the most unsafe area in a cycling route – ways to

improve intersections, such as Wincott / Bemersyde / Eglinton, are proposed and illustrated in the Study. The Study states (emphasis added):

- “6.13 **The existing lack of north south cycling infrastructure is a large barrier to connectivity. To complement the strong east west function of the multi-use trail, north south cycling and pedestrian connections shall better integrate with this corridor to create a more permeable network.** It will be enhanced with new connections as per the new **City-wide Council approved Cycling Plan (2016), which recommends upgrades to Martin Grove Road, Wincott Drive, Lloyd Manor Road, and Scarlett Road.** Beyond these identified routes, additional upgrades that should be implemented include: closing the gap of the bike lane along Royal York; and extending the bike lane along Lloyd Manor, and along Widdicombe Hill as well as across Richview Park.
- 6.14. **As some cycling routes have no identified specific infrastructure, it is recommended that the intersections that connect with Eglinton Avenue and the connections with the multi-use trail are strengthened with improvements including but not limited to: ingress lanes leading to the intersection; advanced stops; and egress lanes pavement markings across the intersection.”**

I and other members of the public have raised concerns regarding the inadequacy and safety of the Wincott / Bemersyde / Eglinton intersection in written submissions to the assigned Planner. My submissions have emphasized the need for bicycle lanes along Wincott to protect cyclists from the greatly increased traffic volumes that would result from the proposed development. The extensive use of Wincott Drive by many students at Richview Collegiate on their way to / from school, and to access the Richview Square plaza highlights the importance of upgrading pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to compensate for the greatly increased traffic that this development would cause. The coming LRT will further increase both pedestrian and cyclist traffic. **In order to support the addition of required driving lanes, wider sidewalks and bicycle lanes, the Wincott right-of-way would need to be widened, and bicycle lanes should be extended through the intersections at Waterford Drive and across Eglinton. But that would not be possible with the building geometry as specified in the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment.**

Although the Final Report acknowledges certain Official Plan requirements for safety, it does not acknowledge or address the pedestrian and cyclist mobility and safety concerns raised by members of the public. Indeed, the Final Report does not consider the safe mobility of pedestrians or cyclists in any way.

Appendix

See the following pages from the Eglinton West Planning and Streetscape Study.

B

Special Condition: Gas Station at Lloyd Manor Road

There are not many driveways along Eglinton. This condition should be maintained to reduce the risk driveways present when they intersect with cycling infrastructure, and more particularly with bidirectional bikeways. It is recommended to:

- Consolidate multiple entrances into one access point only;
- Reduce the width of curb cuts to force vehicles to slow down accessing driveways; and
- Straighten the access angle to result in a more frontal crossing for better visibility.

This approach is recommended for all current and future driveways off Eglinton.

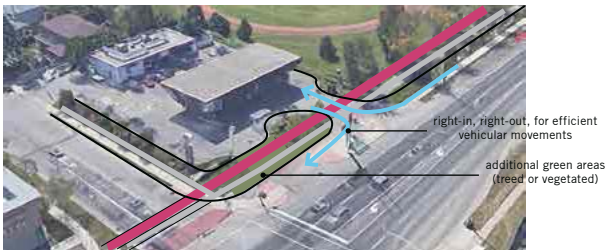
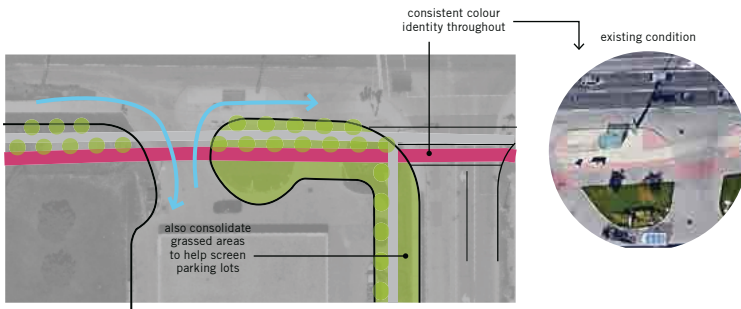


Figure 289. Diagram of the consolidation of driveways for access to the gas station

Special Condition: Improved intersections for designated cycling route crossings

Wincott Drive, Bemersyde Drive, Martin Grove Drive, and Lloyd Manor Road are designated cycling routes in the City's Cycling Plan: Wincott and Martin Grove are proposed bike lanes, while Bemersyde and Lloyd Manor are proposed quiet street routes.

The timeline for implementing any type of cycling infrastructure on these routes is unknown. Nonetheless, in the interim and as part as the LRT implementation, several improvements could be proposed at the intersections. Intersections generally are the most unsafe area in a cycling route, and as such the following improvements are proposed as illustrated below:

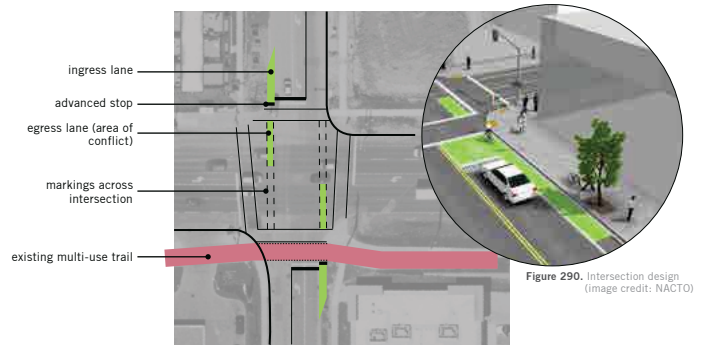


Figure 291. Intersection improvements proposed at Lloyd Manor Road/ Widdicombe Hill Boulevard

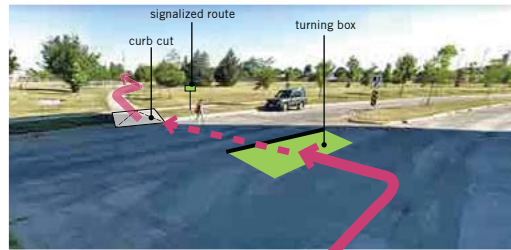


Figure 292. Diagram of the potential continuation of the Lloyd Manor Road cycling route through Richview Park

It is recommended that the existing route along Lloyd Manor Road is extended along Widdicombe Hill Boulevard and across Richview Park, as a means of increasing the north-south connectivity across the corridor. This pathway through the park should connect to the future proposed bike lanes running along Martin Grove Road as well.

points, particularly east of Scarlett Road, sidewalks bring people walking in close proximity to vehicular traffic. A large number of parcels fronting Eglinton are back-lotted, meaning that there are few mid-block pedestrian destinations. This lack of commercial or residential frontage on Eglinton Avenue West makes for an sensation of isolation for people walking.

Bicycle Network

Multiple designated bicycle routes run along, and through, the study area. A multi-use trail runs on the south side of Eglinton Avenue West from Jane Street all the way to Mississauga, and provides safe and direct east-west bicycle connectivity along the corridor. There are very few driveways off Eglinton, which ensures a direct, mostly uninterrupted cycling route. There are points where the trail is substandard, either due to the lack of sufficient separation from vehicular traffic - from the western hydro corridor to Highway 427 - or from pedestrians - at the Humber Bridge. The City is currently extending the multi-use trail from Jane Street to Pearen Street, which is planned to be completed in 2019.

There are off-street multi-use trails running north-south along Mimico Creek, at the west end of the study area, and along the Humber River at the east end.

There is minimal on-street bicycle infrastructure within the study area. Royal York Road and Martin Grove Road have painted on-street bicycle lanes, though the bike lanes on Martin Grove Road only extend southward from Eglinton Avenue West, and the ones at Royal York Road are discontinued at the intersection with Eglinton. Lloyd Manor Road, Wincott Drive and Bemersyde Drive have been identified as quiet road streets in the City's cycling map, but no bicycle improvements have yet been implemented on these streets. The City is in the process of developing a proposal for a road diet for Scarlett Road south of Eglinton, which may result in some form of cycling infrastructure as well.

No other major north-south streets within the study area have on-street bicycle infrastructure, potentially limiting the ability of local residents to access Eglinton Avenue West by bicycle.

Street Geometry

Eglinton Avenue West is wide along its entire length in the study area. It is primarily comprised of two lanes per direction, with left-turn lanes and some right-turn lanes at intersecting cross streets and major driveways. The right of way (ROW), measured between property lines adjacent to Eglinton Avenue West, ranges from 26 meters to over 50 meters wide. For comparison, most major streets that intersect Eglinton Avenue West within the study area are between 15 and 20 meters wide while most local streets are ten meters wide. Eglinton Avenue West is widest between Highway 401 and Martin Grove Road and narrowest between Highway 401 and Matheson Boulevard East. Along most of its length in the study area, Eglinton Avenue West is approximately 20 meters wide between intersections, and 22 to 25 meters wide at intersections.

Planned Development

Ten new developments are proposed, approved, under construction, or going through Ontario Municipal Board Appeal along the corridor. These developments are predominately residential condominium towers and townhomes. Two of the developments are intended for older populations. A healthcare center, commercial space and childcare facilities (one paired with the retirement home) are also proposed. These will bring new residents, including many potentially transit dependent residents, to the study area and will add to the demand for mobility along the corridor. These developments are outlined below:

6.0

Mobility

6 Mobility

- 6.1. Through the transformation of Eglinton Avenue to support the LRT and more sustainable travel modes, the transportation system as a whole will function as a well-connected and integrated network that provides a variety of travel choices. Mobility and accessibility for all users and abilities will be enhanced. Efficiency will increase for emergency services and critical movement of goods.
- 6.2. As Eglinton West transforms into a complete street to support the LRT implementation, the City will promote the design of new built environment which encourages travel by walking, cycling and transit usage. The design of the street will be directed by the City's Complete Street guidelines.
- 6.3. Future detailed planning for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) should acknowledge the unique context of Eglinton West by prioritizing:
 - 6.3.1. Public realm improvements, including direct sidewalk connections, to ensure comfortable and safe access to and from stations by pedestrians and cyclists;
 - 6.3.2. Interface between private development and stations by orienting people-servicing land uses and services at street level closest to station platforms, with supportive outdoor amenity space with seating, plantings, and lighting; and
 - 6.3.3. Infill development, with a mix of land uses, on vacant or under-utilized sites with good exposure and access to stations.
- 6.4. More sustainable transportation initiatives are encouraged within or around new developments such as car-sharing, bike parking, change rooms and bike maintenance stations, to minimize the potential incremental impact of vehicular traffic.
- 6.5. Multi-modal travel choices should be strongly supported, especially through designing for last-mile trips to and from transit stops. The area around future LRT stops should allocate sufficient space to support such alternative travel choices as included in 1.6.4. Specific spatial requirements for those choices include cycling parking, bike share docks, electric bike charging stations, carshare facilities and designated curb drop off areas.
- 6.6. Adjacent buildings and spaces to new transit stops or stations should be designed to maximize safe and efficient access as well as to provide comfortable areas for inter-modal transfers.
- 6.7. Transit stops should be designed for safe access and comfortable waiting experiences. The width of the platforms should be designed to allow for

enclosed shelters with temperature control.

- 6.8. As existing sidewalks are built to suburban standards, in all instances, they should be upgraded to at least the City minimum of 2.1 metres to promote walkability. Eglinton is designated as an *Avenue* in the Official Plan, a minimum boulevard width of 6 metres will be required along the corridor.
- 6.9. Streetscape initiatives will expand the public realm by creating stronger interface with built form and widening sidewalks. Landscaped or hardscaped buffers will be used strategically to reduce potential conflict between modes, or to reduce noise pollution.
- 6.10. Consistently a buffer between the sidewalk and vehicular traffic in the form of street trees, planting areas, street furniture, lighting, and/or low-impact development (LID) infrastructure should be provided. At a minimum, this buffer should be a 1 metre in width. However, this should be wider where possible for allocating the aforementioned uses.
- 6.11. The existing multi-use trail on the south side of Eglinton will be upgraded to become a high volume cycling route, as it provides an almost seamless east west linkage across Toronto, connecting to various other cycling trails and paths. While the multi-use trail should be maintained in its existing location where possible to reduce impacts to mature trees, in areas where the trail is being rebuilt, the width should be updated to 4 metres to comply with *Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18, section 2.3.2.1 – Active Transportation*.
- 6.12. A separate sidewalk should be provided in all scenarios along the corridor, with the exception of the pinch point under the highway underpass.
- 6.13. The existing lack of north south cycling infrastructure is a large barrier to connectivity. To complement the strong east west function of the multi-use trail, north south cycling and pedestrian connections shall better integrate with this corridor to create a more permeable network. It will be enhanced with new connections as per the new City-wide Council approved *Cycling Plan (2016)*, which recommends upgrades to Martin Grove Road, Wincott Drive, Lloyd Manor Road, and Scarlett Road. Beyond these identified routes, additional upgrades that should be implemented include: closing the gap of the bike lane along Royal York; and extending the bike lane along Lloyd Manor, and along Widdicombe Hill as well as across Richview Park.
- 6.14. As some cycling routes have no identified specific infrastructure, it is recommended that the intersections that connect with Eglinton Avenue

and the connections with the multi-use trail are strengthened with improvements including but not limited to: ingress lanes leading to the intersection; advanced stops; and egress lanes pavement markings across the intersection.

- 6.15. As the City is moving towards the implementation of protected intersections, it is recommended that the intersection of Royal York Road and Eglinton Avenue be advanced as one of the pilot testing sites to be developed in the short term. This project will allow for testing of the functionality and capacity of the intersection, to ultimately assess if these types of intersections should be generally applied along the Eglinton West corridor.
- 6.16. The impact of future autonomous vehicle technology should be further assessed in future phases of the project to understand its relation to the planning of the LRT stop areas.

7.0

Natural Heritage

7 Natural Heritage

- 7.1. To reduce alteration to fish habitat:
 - 7.1.1. Delineate work areas with construction fencing to minimize the area of disturbance;
 - 7.1.2. Restrict the use of heavy equipment on watercourse banks;
 - 7.1.3. Prohibit the use of heavy equipment in all watercourses;
 - 7.1.4. Place silt fence along margins in areas of soil disturbance;
 - 7.1.5. Monitor and maintain erosion and sedimentation control measures during construction to ensure their effectiveness;
 - 7.1.6. Apply seed and mulch, tackifier and/or erosion control blanket in areas of soil disturbance to provide adequate slope protection and long-term slope stabilization;