

Leaside Residents Association Incorporated

**1601 Bayview Avenue
P.O. Box 43582, Toronto, Ontario M4G 3B0**

September 7, 2023

North York Community Council
Attention: Matthew Green
Email: nycc@toronto.ca

RE: NY7.5 - 1779-1787 Bayview Avenue - Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications - Appeal Report

Dear Chair Councillor Pasternak and Members of North York Community Council,

This application proposes development of three properties: 1787 Bayview Ave. (overbuild of Leaside Station), 1783-85 Bayview Ave. and 1779-81 Bayview Ave. (two quadraplex apartment buildings).

The application comprises:

- OPA for the re-designation of 1779-81 and 1783-85 Bayview from Neighbourhoods to Mixed Use, and
- ZBA for 1779-81, 1783-85 and 1787 Bayview Avenue

The applicant has appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal; no date has been set for a hearing.

In summary, the application:

(1) lacks consideration and integration with its Leaside context including the Talbot Park to the east, and the built heritage on two of the three properties on site, and to the south;

(2) lacks design ambition - an unimaginative and mediocre proposal as rated by the design community¹

The LRA and SEDRA have requested (twice – first in March, and then again in August, 2023) that this application be referred to the City's Design Review Committee. The request (see attachment) has not been acknowledged or responded to.

Issues with the Building Proposal

1. Excessive Height and massing

¹ Note the generally disparaging comments by members of the design community in the Urban Toronto entry for the application.

<https://urbantoronto.ca/database/projects/1779-1787-bayview.50023>

Although the Bayview Focus Area Plan (2015) and OPA 405 both indicate the Focus Area will include hi-rise development, especially close to the station. However the NW corner is the most suitable given its large property size and without green space/recreation impacts and heritage concerns that are endemic in the SE corner.

2. Lack of Respect for Leaside LRT Station as a Public Building

The proposed over-build of the Leaside LRT Station does not respect that the LRT Station is a **public** building. As submitted, the building's podium envelopes and overpowers the Station building. Instead the podium should be re-designed to preserve the Station's independence/separation from the overbuild..

3. Lack of respect for its location next to Talbot Park

The proposed building design is formulaic and lacking in originality or contextual sensitivity to Talbot Park. The Howard Talbot Park, immediately adjacent to all three properties is an important green space and community recreation area. It has playing fields serving Leaside High School and has two actively used baseball diamonds. It is also located two storeys below grade adding to the shadowing effect of adjacent Bayview development.

The design needs to be improved with a view to reducing the shadow impact on Talbot Park. The location next to baseball diamonds create unique impacts (beyond shadows) for example the need for protection from possible damage from fly balls, and perhaps legal challenges for the Leaside Baseball Assn?

4. Building Materiality

The materials are poor quality, "cheap". The developer and their architect should be requested to provide material options.

5. Disregard of Quads' Cultural Heritage Status/Values

While 1783-85 Bayview is heritage designated, 1779-81 Bayview is not. GBCA, the Applicant's heritage consultants agree that both 1779-81 and 1783-85 deserve heritage status, but feel that they can be sacrificed for no reason other than that there are (8) quads remaining!.

This finding fails to "see the big picture" – the integrity of the Talbot Quads as an intact set of ten four plexes forming a unique and pleasant streetscape from just south of Eglinton to just north of Parkhurst..

And the importance of Henry Howard Talbot as the key builder in Leaside across multiple housing forms (singles, quads and multiplexes). It fails to notice or learn from the facing (approved) development across the road, i.e. (1710-1736 Bayview) where the mid-rise development is really an updated vision of the Talbot designs.

If allowed, to demolish the quads this "thin edge of the wedge" strategy would inevitably lead to further erosion of the Talbot Quads south of the current site.

6. Geotechnical and Hydrology Issues

Hydrology was previously an issue with the development application for 660 Eglinton Ave. (Sunnybrook Plaza) and LRT construction (1740 Bayview) and likely will be a major issue here.

7. Quads Rental Replacement Status

- The ten Bayview quads all contain rental apartments, except for one which was converted to a condominium in the 2000's. 1779-81 and 1783-85 Bayview have 6 units and 4 units respectively. Each building may be considered as "affordable housing" due to them being rent controlled, and to most units having had long term tenancies.

The Application acknowledges that the rental units have to be replaced but has not proposed affordability options.

Recommendations

The LRA makes the following recommendations

- **That the City demand major improvements to the building design, height , massing, materiality;**
- **That the City immediately assess 1779-81 Bayview Ave. for designation under Section 4 of the Ontario Heritage Act;**
- **That the City demand incorporation/retention of the Talbot quads as required by the designation status;**
- **That the application be examined by the City's Design Review Committee;**
- **That the City have an architect and architectural renderer illustrate a conceptual alternative to the submitted proposal.**

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Kettel

Geoff Kettel

Co-President with Carol Burtin Fripp

Attachment: LRA/SEDRA request for DRP review

c.c. Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
David Sit, Director, Community Planning, North District
Emilia Floro, Acting Director, Urban Design
Tamara Anson-Cartwright, Manager, Heritage Planning

Michael Seaman, Manager, Heritage Planning
John Andreevski, Manager, Community Planning, North District
Angela Zhao, Senior Planner, Community Planning Division, North District
South Eglinton-Davisville Residents Association (SEDRA)
Broadway Area Residents Association (BARA)

Attachment 1

Leaside Residents Association Incorporated **1601 Bayview Avenue** **P.O. Box 43582, Toronto, Ontario M4G 3B0**

March 9, 2023

Design Review Panel

Urban Design, City Planning
11th floor, East Tower, City Hall
100 Queen St. West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
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Re: 1779-1787 Bayview Avenue

Dear Mr. Gordon Stratford, Chair, Toronto Design Review Panel

We are writing to bring to the attention of the Design Review Panel (DRP) a current development application at 1779-1787 Bayview Avenue. The project involves a 35-storey residential over-build of the Leaside Station (Bayview) on the Eglinton Crosstown LRT. The Application is for both an Official Plan Amendment and a Zoning By-law Amendment. The Application was submitted to the City on October 28, 2022, and is currently under review by City Departments. A Community Consultation Meeting was held by City Planning on March 1, 2023.

We believe the project meets the applicability requirement for the Design Review Panel (DRP), specifically the following criteria:

“Applications with significant public realm impacts as a result of their location, scale, form or architectural quality and if they are located along: an avenue, a major street, or a surface transit priority corridor” (DRP Website, Private Developments Thresholds)

This project represents the first overbuild of a station on the new Eglinton Crosstown LRT, and as such establishes itself as precedent setting. The Application has not had an external design review, nor has it been seen by the Metrolinx Design Review Panel. However, we are of the opinion that since it is a private development under the jurisdiction of the City of Toronto, the DRP is the appropriate place for review. We believe that a DRP review of this project would

assist in setting expectations for a high level of design excellence for private developments adjacent to, or in close proximity to transit hubs; on Eglinton Avenue, and elsewhere in Toronto.

We don't believe that currently this project exhibits a high level of design competency, nor do we believe it is respectfully placed on top of Leaside Station. The illustrations submitted by the Applicant show that the Leaside Station as a public asset is diminished, largely obscured, and greatly out-scaled by the Application.

The project proposes to demolish the two immediately adjacent heritage quadraplexes, and does not address in scale or materiality the rest of the intact row to the south, known as the Talbot Quadraplexes. 1783-85 and 1775-77 Bayview Avenue are currently heritage designated structures, but 1779-81 Bayview has not been designated by the City.

<https://leasidelife.com/will-the-leaside-station-overbuild-be-allowed-to-destroy-the-bayview-quads/>

In addition, the project has not received high praise from online media devoted to urban planning in Toronto (such as Urban Toronto). On the contrary, it has been heavily criticized for its poor quality of design and integration with both the community and the Station.

<https://urbantoronto.ca/database/projects/1779-1787-bayview.50023>

As residents associations we wanted to bring this project to your attention ASAP. We believe that the Design Review Panel has an important role to play in improving the quality of design in Toronto, and submit that it would be in the public interest for the DRP to review this project, which is of great interest to the community, and to the City as a whole. We remain available for any further discussions if needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Kettel for

Geoff Kettel, Co-President, Leaside Residents Association (LRA)

Jane Auster, Co-President, South Eglinton Davisville Residents Association (SEDRA)

Jeff Latto, Chair, Tall and Midrise Working Group (SEDRA)

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