

7 Laxton Avenue – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications – Decision Report – Approval

Date: January 8, 2024

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

Ward: Ward 4 - Parkdale-High Park

Planning Application Number: 23 166287 STE 04 OZ

SUMMARY

This application proposes to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to allow for the construction of a new 6 storey residential building at 7 Laxton Avenue with 19 rental dwelling units.

The proposed development is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and conforms with A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020).

This report reviews and recommends approval of the applications to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The residential building is an appropriate scale for the site, will provide appropriate transition down to the lower scaled Neighbourhood areas to the east, and will provide a new supply of rental housing units for the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Community Planning Toronto and East York District recommends that:

1. City Council amend the Official Plan for the lands at 7 Laxton Avenue substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment 6 to this report.
2. City Council amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013 for the lands at 7 Laxton Avenue substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment attached as Attachment 5 to this report.

3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment and/or Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

On August 15, 2018 the Committee of Adjustment approved a Minor Variance application (A0220-18TEY) for this site to allow for the construction of a new 4 storey residential building on this site.

A pre-application consultation (PAC) meeting was held on February 20, 2020. The Planning Application Checklist Package resulting from the PAC meeting is available here: www.toronto.ca/7LaxtonAve. The current application was submitted on June 26, 2023 and complete upon submission. A Notice of Complete Application letter was issued on July 26, 2023.

Staff conducted a Community Consultation Meeting for the application on October 17, 2023. Community consultation is summarized in the Comments section of this Report.

PROPOSAL

This application proposes to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit a 6 storey (18.72 metres) mixed-use building containing 19 rental dwelling units. The proposal includes a gross floor area of 846.6 square metres which represents a density of 2.37 times the lot area. Two surface parking spaces are proposed at the rear of the site and a total of 23 bicycle parking spaces are also proposed. Refer to Attachment No. 1 for project data.

The proposed 19 dwelling units include: 1 (5%) bachelor unit, 15 (79%) one-bedroom units and 3 (16%) two-bedroom units.

The site is located on the south side of Laxton Avenue, two properties west of Jameson Avenue. Laxton Avenue is a one-way street that runs west to east from Dowling Avenue to Jameson Avenue and is located one block south of Queen Street West. The site is rectangular in shape and has an area of 490 square meters. It has a frontage of 12 meters along Laxton Avenue and a depth of 40 meters. The site is currently occupied by a 2.5 storey detached residential dwelling.

The site is located at the edge of the residential Neighbourhood along Laxton Avenue. To the west, south, and north of the site are primarily low-rise residential buildings, between 2-3 storeys in height. Directly adjacent to the east, there is an 8 storey residential apartment building. Northeast of the site is a 4 storey apartment building, fronting onto Laxton Avenue, and a 12 storey apartment building at the corner of Laxton Avenue and Jameson Avenue.

Reasons for Application

An amendment to City of Toronto Official Plan is required to permit the scale of development that is proposed. The Neighbourhoods designation permits low scale residential buildings up four storeys in height.

The Zoning By-law Amendment Application proposes to amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013 to introduce performance standards, including: building height; building setbacks; gross floor area; floor space index; amenity space; and vehicular parking space requirements.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Application Requirements

The following reports/studies were submitted in support of the application:

- Application Checklist
- Application Form
- Arborist Report
- Architectural Plans
- Civil and Utilities Plans
- Cost Estimate for Landscaping
- Cover Letter
- Draft Official Plan Amendment
- Draft Zoning Bylaw Amendment
- Energy Efficiency Report
- Geotechnical Study
- Green Standard Statistics
- Hydrogeological Report
- Hydrological Review Summary
- Landscape and Lighting Plans
- Planning Rationale
- Project Data Sheet
- Public Consultation Strategy Report
- Stormwater Management Report
- Survey Plans

- Toronto Green Standards Checklist
- Tree Preservation Plan

Agency Circulation Outcomes

The application, together with the applicable reports noted above, have been circulated to all appropriate agencies and City Divisions. Responses received have been used to assist in evaluating the application and to formulate appropriate Official Plan Amendments and Zoning By-law standards.

Community Consultation

A Virtual Community Consultation Meeting was held on October 17, 2023 and was attended by 9 people and the Ward Councillor. At the meeting City staff and the applicant's team gave presentations on the site and surrounding area, the existing planning framework, and the proposed development. Following the presentations, City staff led a question and answer format discussion. Comments and questions provided by the meeting attendees included:

- Concerns about how well the proposal fits in with the character of the neighbourhood along Laxton Avenue;
- The overall height of the building should be reduced to mitigate impacts on properties to the south on Leopold Street and the site to the east on Laxton Avenue;
- The rear setback of the property should be increased to mitigate impacts on the rear yards on Leopold Street;
- Whether this proposal would destabilize the larger neighbourhood character and create additional opportunities for a similar degree of intensification further west along Laxton Avenue; and
- What the traffic and parking impacts will be for the neighbourhood and generally what other impacts may be on surrounding properties.

Statutory Public Meeting Comments

In making their decision with regard to this application, Council members have been given an opportunity to view the oral submissions made at the statutory public meeting held by the Toronto and East York Community Council for this application, as these submissions are broadcast live over the internet and recorded for review.

POLICY & REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Land-Use Policies

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), and shall conform to provincial plans, including the Growth Plan (2020) for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Official Plan

The land use designation for the site is Neighbourhoods. See Attachment 3 of this report for the Land Use Map. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making.

The Official Plan can be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>.

Zoning

The site is zoned R (d1.0) (x988) under Zoning By-law 569-2013. The R zoning category maximum permitted density is 1.0 times the lot area and allows residential buildings, including apartment buildings, built to a height of 10.0 meters (or 3 storeys). See Attachment 4 of this report for the existing Zoning By-law Map.

Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines have been used in the evaluation of this application:

- Midrise Buildings Performance Standards and Addendum;
- Growing Up Guidelines - Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities;
- Best Practices for Effective Lighting; and
- Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines.

Toronto Green Standard

The Toronto Green Standard (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.

Site Plan Control

Site Plan Control applies to this site. A Site Plan Control application (20 204886 STE 04 SA) was submitted to the City and is currently under review.

COMMENTS

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Staff's review of this application has had regard for the relevant matters of provincial interest set out in the Planning Act. Staff has reviewed the current proposal for consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and conformity with the Growth Plan (2020). Staff find the proposal to be consistent with the PPS and conforms with the Growth Plan.

Land Use

This application has been reviewed against the Official Plan policies described in the Policy and Regulation Considerations Section of the Report as well as the policies of the Official Plan as a whole. The application contemplates a more intensive form of development on the site than what would be permitted in the site's current Neighbourhoods Official Plan designation.

Given the existing 8 storey building immediately adjacent to the east of the site (within an area designated as Apartment Neighbourhoods), the proposed 6 storey building will create a transition down to other adjacent Neighbourhoods designated properties.

Staff also note that the proposal, while exceeding the 4 storey overall height requirement applied to Neighbourhoods designated lands, provides a relatively modest increase to this height requirement with a massing that is an appropriate scale for to fit within the overall context of the area.

Based on the above analysis, staff are of the opinion that the proposed development is appropriate given the context of the surrounding area and will provide a positive addition of new rental units to the community.

Density, Height, Massing

This application has been reviewed against the Official Plan policies and design guidelines described in the Policy and Regulation Considerations Section of the Report. Through comprehensive review Staff have found that the proposed built form and massing will fit within the existing and planned context and provide appropriate transition down to the lower scaled Neighbourhoods designated properties to the west of the site.

The proposed building has an overall height of 18.72 metres, a front yard setback of 6.1 metres and rear yard setback of 11.6 metres. The application proposes a building which steps back at levels 3 to 6 to limit the length of this building to 18.34 metres at levels 5 and 6, 19.87 metres at level 4, 21.39 metres at level 3, and 22.52 metres at levels 1 and 2 (not including rear balcony projections). The existing rear setback condition for the 8 storey apartment building at 3 Laxton Avenue on the adjacent site to the east extends beyond the proposed building depth close to its south property line.

Based on this, staff can accept the proposed building length and depth and are of the opinion that these figures are satisfactory and appropriate for a 6 storey midrise apartment building on the subject site.

The existing building at 9 Laxton Avenue is set back from the shared property line by 0.9 metres. With the 1.22 metre west setback for the proposed building, the separation distance between buildings will be approximately 2.12 metres. The ground floor of the proposed is set back an additional 1.88 metres to provide a 3 metre driveway to access to the rear of the building. While this driveway is substandard for the minimum 6.0

metres required for two-way traffic, given the existing and constrained condition of the site, and the scale of the parking proposed City staff have accepted the proposed access location and configuration.

The existing 8 storey apartment building at 3 Laxton Avenue is set back from the shared property line by 4.65 metres to a mostly blank side wall containing some vents. The proposed side setback for this application is 5.81 metres to the south of this blank wall. The separation distance between the proposed building at 7 Laxton Avenue and the existing building at 3 Laxton Avenue will be 5.87 metres to the blank wall and balcony guards, and 7.07 metres to the side wall containing existing window openings.

While staff acknowledge that the proposed separation distance of 5.87 metres between the proposed building's east facing primary windows and the balcony guards at 3 Laxton Avenue could create privacy and overlook potential, staff note the use of translucent glazing on the west facing windows in order to mitigate these impacts.

Staff have also suggested recessing or angling side facing window openings or introducing projecting 'fins' through the Site Plan process to block or turn away views from existing window openings and balconies at the adjacent buildings.

Based on the above, staff are of the opinion that the built form and massing for this proposal are appropriate, will fit within the existing and planned context and will not negatively impact surrounding properties.

Streetscape and Public Realm

This application has been reviewed against the Official Plan policies and design guidelines described in the Policy and Regulation Considerations Section of the Report.

As previously noted, the proposed building has an overall height of 18.72 metres a front yard setback of 6.1 metres and will be maintaining the existing 1.58 pedestrian clearway. These proposed front yard setback and sidewalk clearance are consistent with the 8 storey apartment building to the east and low rise detached dwelling to the west.

The required minimum 2.1 metre wide pedestrian clearway within the site frontage has not been provided. Due to the width of the site frontage, City staff do not require the construction of the new sidewalk at this time. However, a payment-in-lieu is required for the future construction of an AODA compliant sidewalk. One replacement tree is also proposed on site following the removal of one existing tree during the construction process.

The main entrance to the building will be accessed off of Laxton Avenue and the ground floor windows proposed will allow for a view of Laxton Avenue and the open space at the rear of the property. The existing trees located along the southeast property line will be maintained.

Staff are of the opinion that the proposal conforms with the applicable Official Plan policies with respect to streetscape and public realm and that the proposed

development fits in with the character of the area through the provision of consistent front yard setbacks and locating the building entrance on the front façade.

Housing Issues

The Official Plan directs that a full range of housing in terms of form, tenure and affordability be provided to meet the current and future needs of residents. This proposal is for a midrise rental housing building. With 19 units proposed, the Growing Up Guidelines do not apply, however there are 3 two bedroom units proposed (16% of the total 19 units), which is a positive attribute of the proposal.

Amenity Space

The application proposes to locate an indoor amenity space in the basement level of the new building and provide a soft landscaping space in the rear of the lot, requesting a reduction to the amenity space requirements of Zoning By-law 569-2013. Due to the size constraints of the site and the relatively small number of units being proposed, staff are willing to accept this deficiency.

Traffic Impact, Access, Parking

Access to the site will continue to be provided via a north-south driveway connection to Laxton Avenue along the western edge of the site. The site driveway is 3.0 metres in width, which is substandard for the minimum 6.0 metres required for two-way traffic. However, given the existing and constrained condition of the site, and the scale of the parking proposed, City staff accept the proposed access location and configuration.

The application proposes to provide a total of two vehicular parking spaces, no visitor or accessible parking spaces, and 21 bicycle parking spaces. While the proposal does not meet the minimum by-law requirement for visitor parking spaces, due to the site constraints and proximity to transit City staff are supportive of the proposed parking provisions.

Servicing

The applicant has submitted a Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report, Civil and Utilities plans, a Hydrogeological Report and Geotechnical Study all in support of the subject application. Engineering and Construction Services (ECS) staff have reviewed the findings of these reports and have accepted the conclusions.

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). There is one privately owned tree proposed to be removed on the site and all other trees are proposed to be retained. The development will require the injury to one City-owned tree.

Removal of the private tree from 7 Laxton Avenue will be compensated in the form of either planting replacement trees in 3:1 ratio or in the form of cash in lieu payments in accordance with municipal standards.

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 is required to meet Tier 1 of the TGS. The applicant is encouraged to achieve Tier 2 or higher to advance the City's objectives for resilience and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040 or sooner.

Conclusion

The proposal has been reviewed against the policies of the PPS (2020), the Growth Plan (2020) and the Official Plan. Staff are of the opinion that the proposal is consistent with the PPS (2020) and does not conflict with the Growth Plan (2020). The proposal has been designed to fit within the existing and planned context of the area. Staff worked with the applicant and the community to ensure the proposal will fit within the neighbourhood and to mitigate impact on properties to the west and to the south. Finally, the proposal will provide a new supply of rental dwelling units. Staff recommend that Council support approval of the application.

CONTACT

Patrick Miller, Senior Planner, Community Planning, Tel. No. 416-338-3002, E-mail: Patrick.Miller@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carly R', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Carly Bowman, M.Sc.Pl., MCIP, RPP, Director
Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

City of Toronto Data/Drawings

- Attachment 1: Application Data Sheet
- Attachment 2: Location Map
- Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map
- Attachment 4: Existing Zoning By-law Map
- Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment
- Attachment 6: Draft Official Plan Amendment

Applicant Submitted Drawings

- Attachment 7: Site Plan
- Attachment 8-11: Elevations
- Attachment 12-13: 3D Models in Context

Attachment 1: Application Data Sheet

Municipal Address: 7 LAXTON AVE Date Received: June 26, 2023
Application Number: 23 166287 STE 04 OZ
Application Type: OPA & Rezoning
Project Description: Proposed 6 storey residential building containing 19 rental dwelling units

Applicant	Agent	Architect	Owner
MPLAN INC		HIGH PARK ARCHITECTS	UMAIMA HASAN

EXISTING PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	Neighbourhoods	Site Specific Provision:	
Zoning:	R (d1.0) (x988)	Heritage Designation:	N
Height Limit (m):	10	Site Plan Control Area:	Y

PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq m):	490	Frontage (m):	12	Depth (m):	40
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Building Data	Existing	Retained	Proposed	Total
Ground Floor Area (sq m):	107		220	220
Residential GFA (sq m):	257		1,158	1,158
Non-Residential GFA (sq m):				
Total GFA (sq m):	257		1,158	1,158
Height - Storeys:	3		6	6
Height - Metres:	10		18	18

Lot Coverage Ratio (%)	44.8	Floor Space Index:	2.36
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Floor Area Breakdown	Above Grade (sq m)	Below Grade (sq m)
Residential GFA:	1,158	
Retail GFA:		
Office GFA:		

Industrial GFA:

Institutional/Other GFA:

Residential Units by Tenure	Existing	Retained	Proposed	Total
Rental:	3		19	19
Freehold:				
Condominium:				
Other:				
Total Units:	3		19	19

Total Residential Units by Size

	Rooms	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3+ Bedroom
Retained:					
Proposed:		1	15	3	
Total Units:		1	15	3	

Parking and Loading

Parking Spaces:	2	Bicycle Parking Spaces:	21	Loading Docks:
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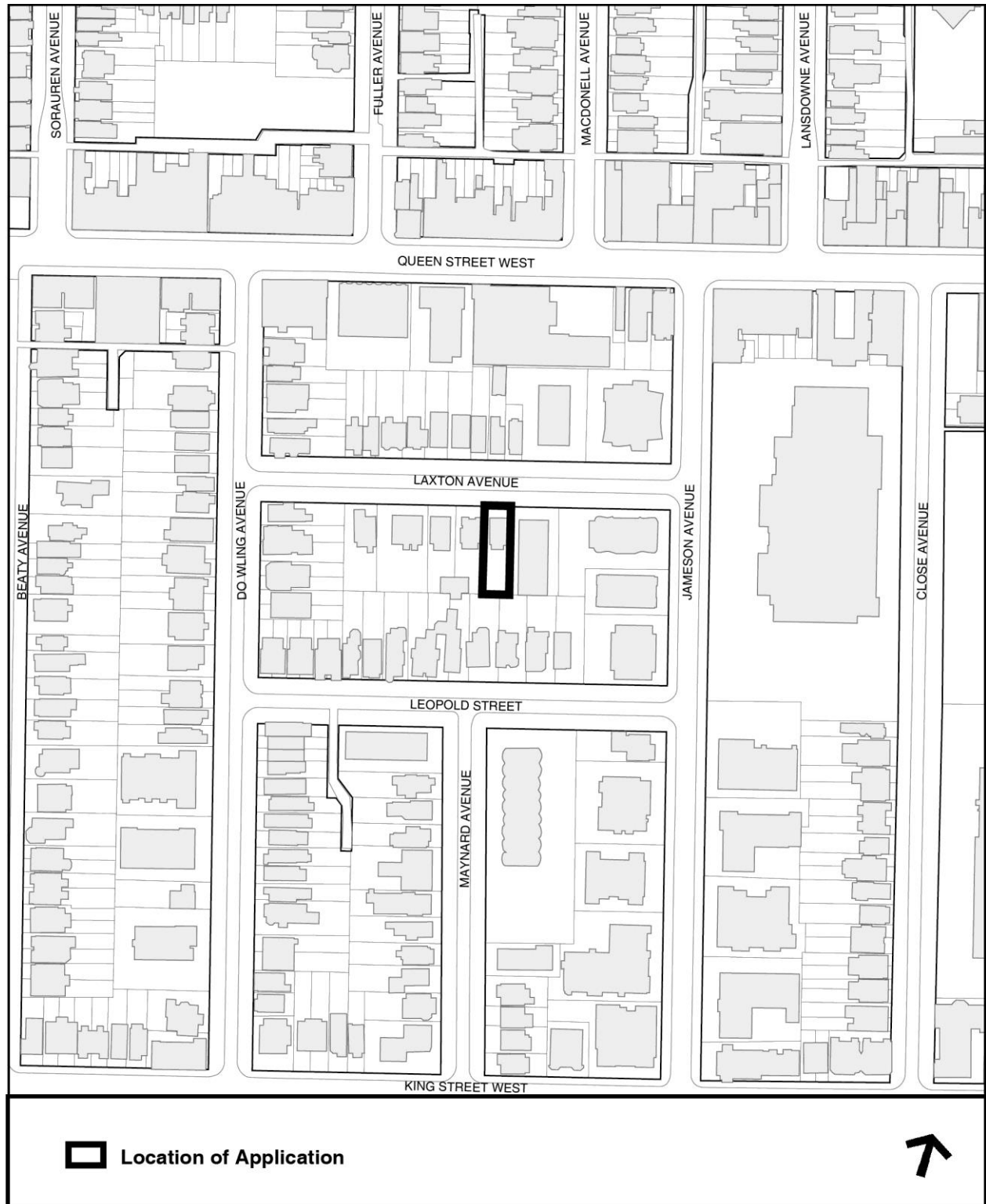
CONTACT:

Patrick Miller, Senior Planner, Community Planning

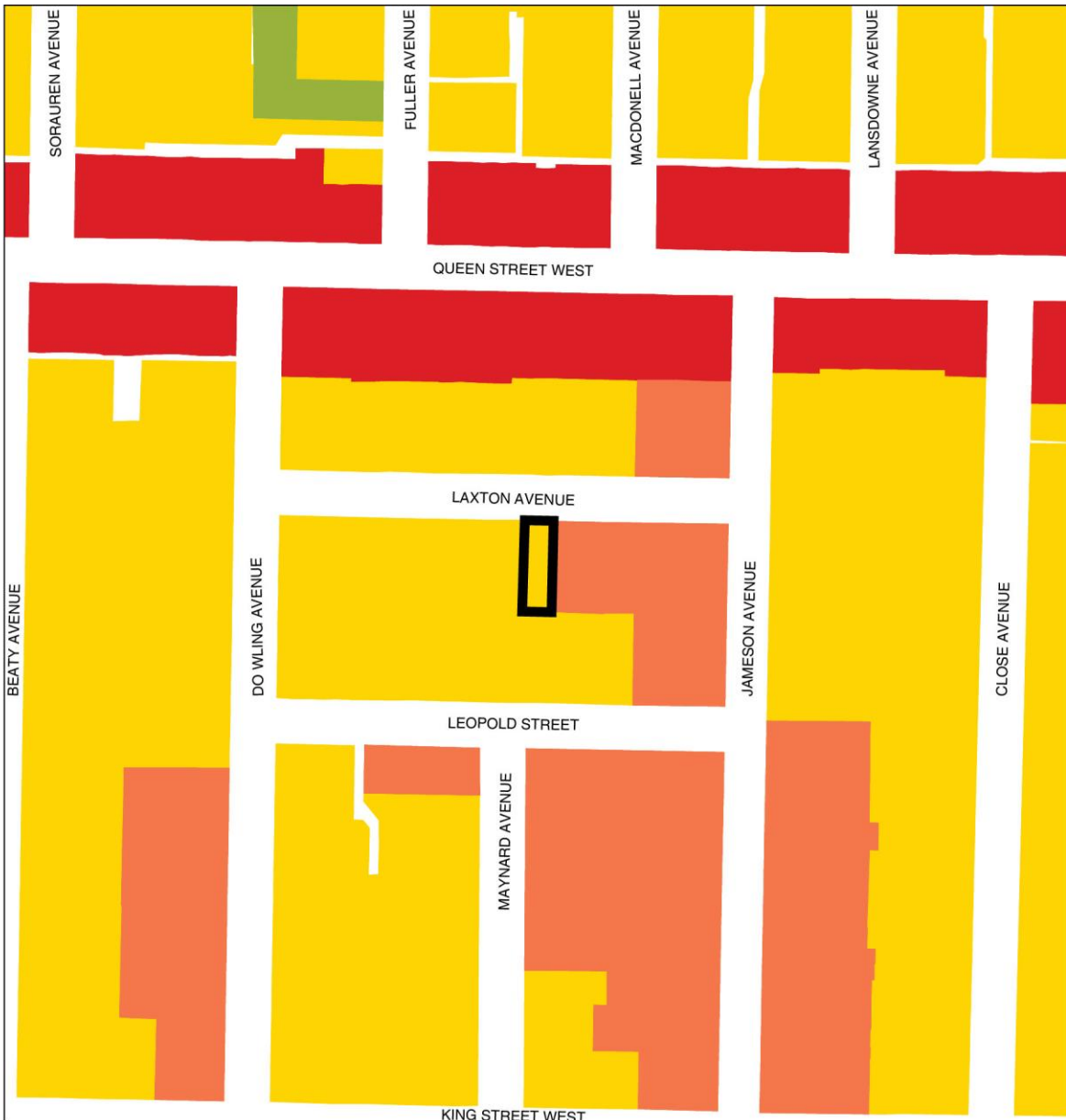
416-338-3002

Patrick.Miller@toronto.ca

Attachment 2: Location Map

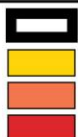


Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map



Official Plan Land Use Map 18

7 Laxton Avenue
File # 23 166287 STE 04 02



Location of Application

Neighbourhoods

Apartment Neighbourhoods

Mixed Use Areas



Parks



Not to Scale
Extracted: 07/04/2023

[illegible]

Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Draft Zoning By-law Amendment will be available on or before January 24, 2024.

Attachment 6: Draft Official Plan Amendment

CITY OF TORONTO BY-LAW XXX-2023

To adopt Amendment 707 to the Official Plan for the City of Toronto respecting the lands known municipally in the year 2023, as 7 Laxton Avenue.

Whereas authority is given to Council under the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended, to pass this By-law; and

Whereas Council of the City of Toronto has provided adequate information to the public and has held at least one public meeting in accordance with the Planning Act;

The Council of the City of Toronto enacts:

1. The attached Amendment 707 to the Official Plan is hereby adopted pursuant to the Planning Act, as amended.

Enacted and passed on XXX XX, 2023.

Frances Nunziata, John D. Elvidge,
Speaker City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

AMENDMENT 707 TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN

LANDS MUNICIPALLY KNOWN IN THE YEAR 2022 AS 7 LAXTON AVENUE

The Official Plan of the City of Toronto is amended as follows:

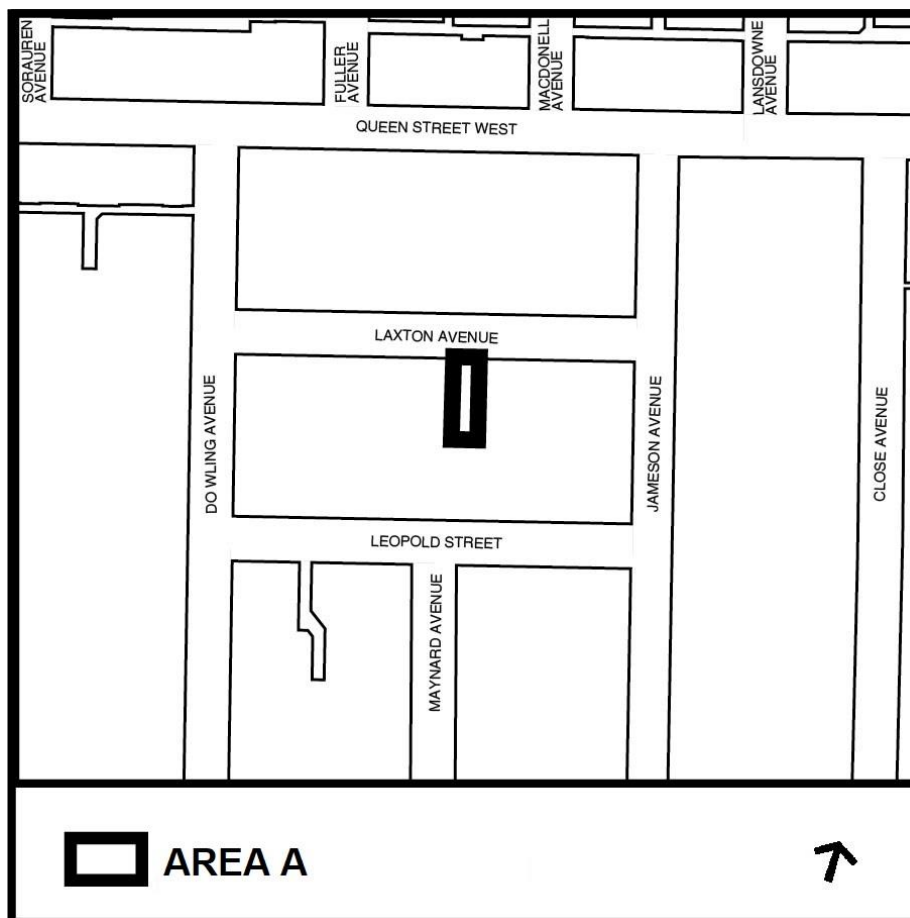
1. Chapter 7, Map 29, Site and Area Specific Policies, is amended by adding the following to Site and Area Specific Policy No. 876 for lands known municipally in 2023 as 7 Laxton Avenue as follows:

876. 7 Laxton Avenue

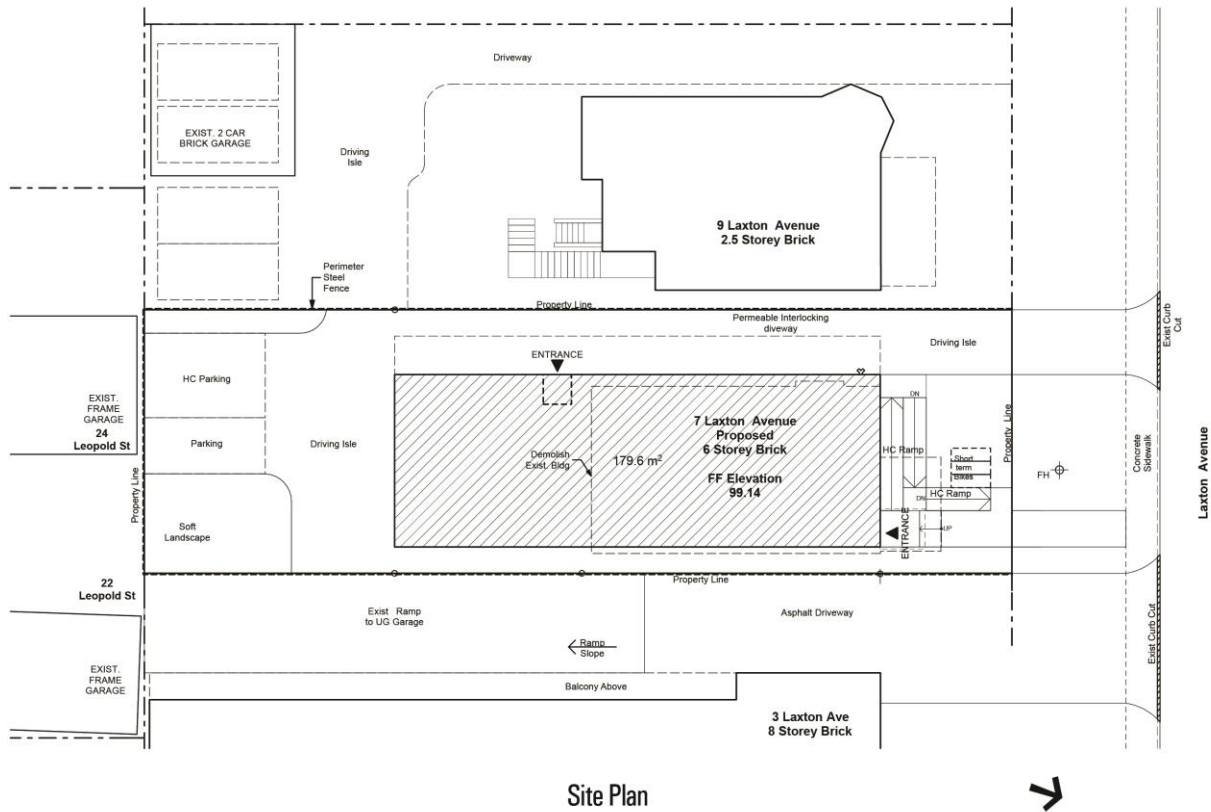
For the lands known municipally in 2022 as 7 Laxton Avenue and shown as Area A in the map below, the following apply:

The maximum building height is permitted to be 6 storeys

Schedule 1



Attachment 7: Site Plan

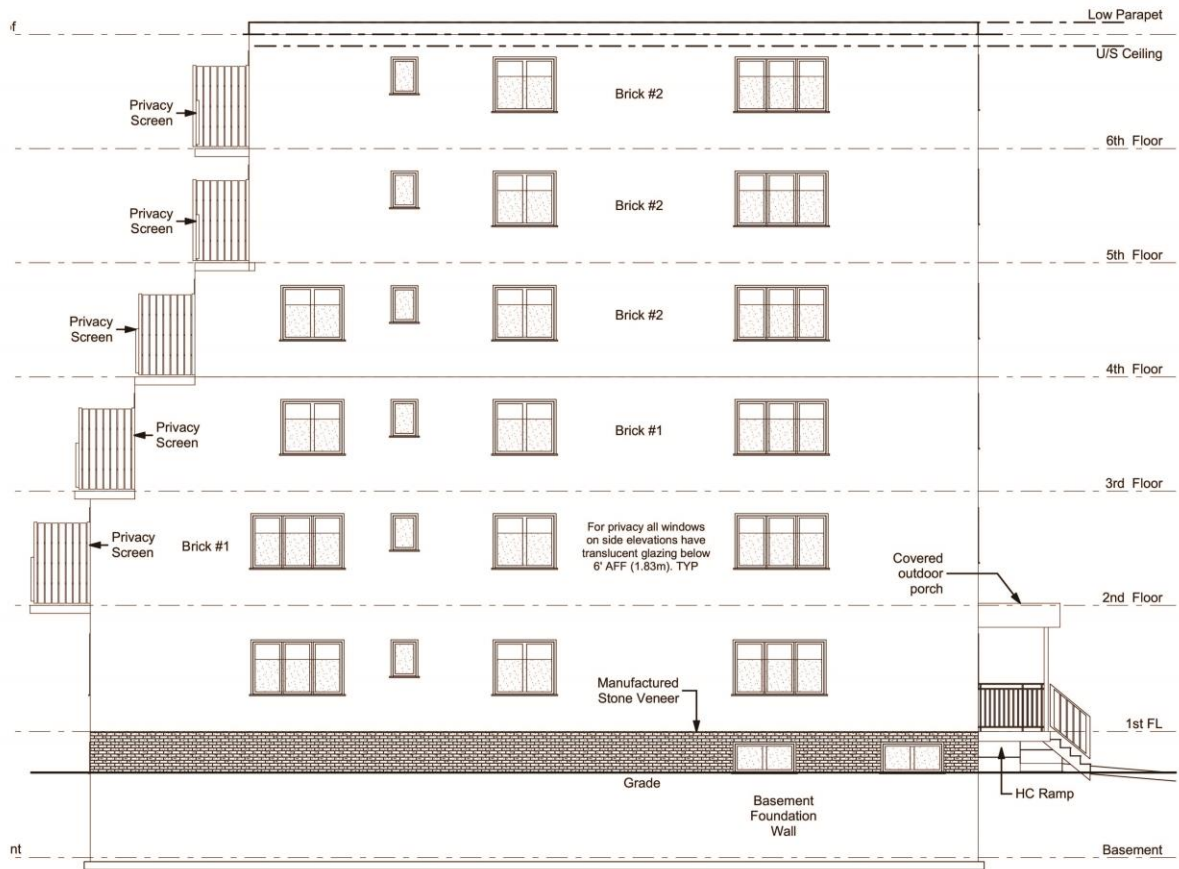


Site Plan



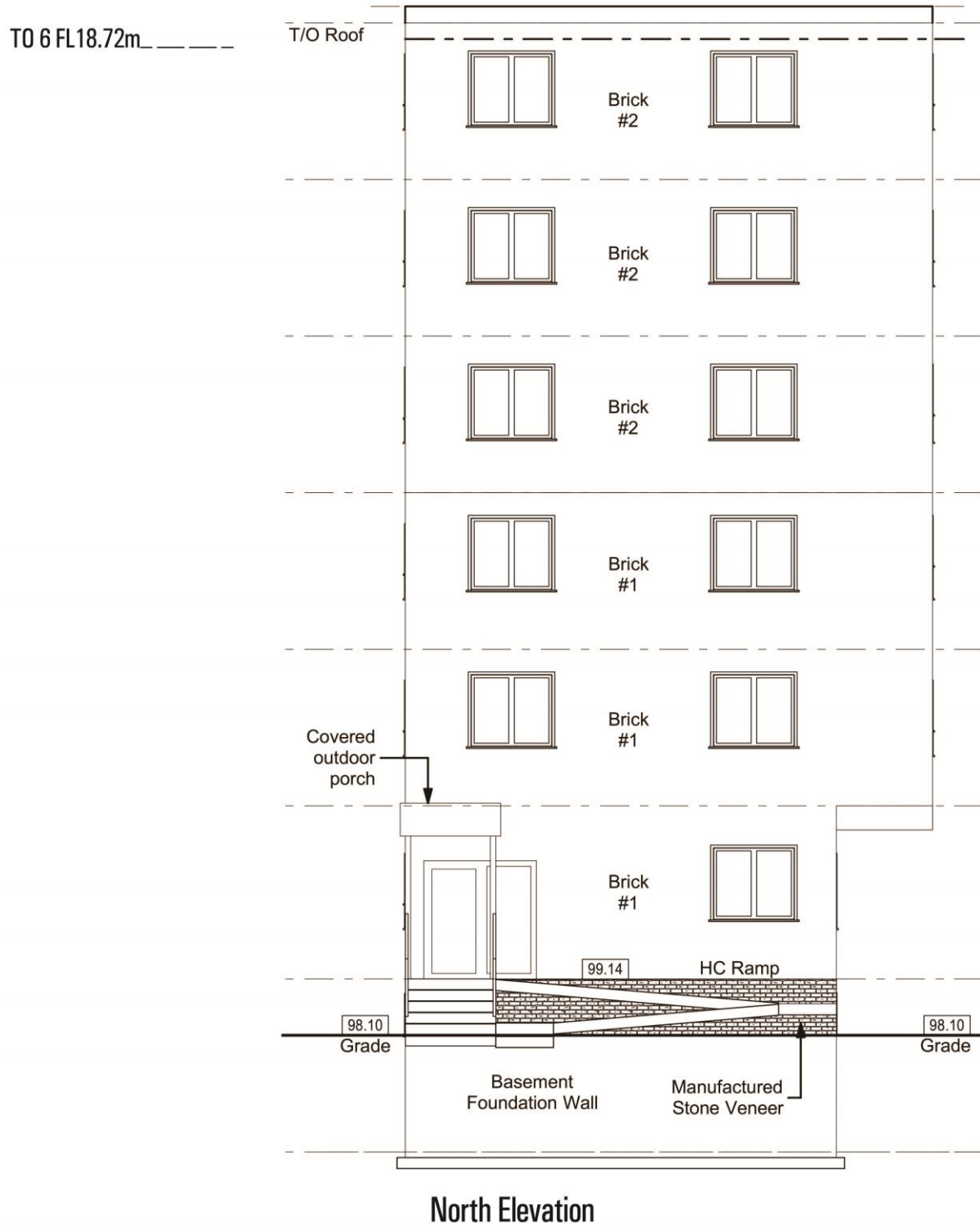
Attachment 8: Elevations

TO 6 FL 18.72m



East Elevation

Attachment 9: Elevations



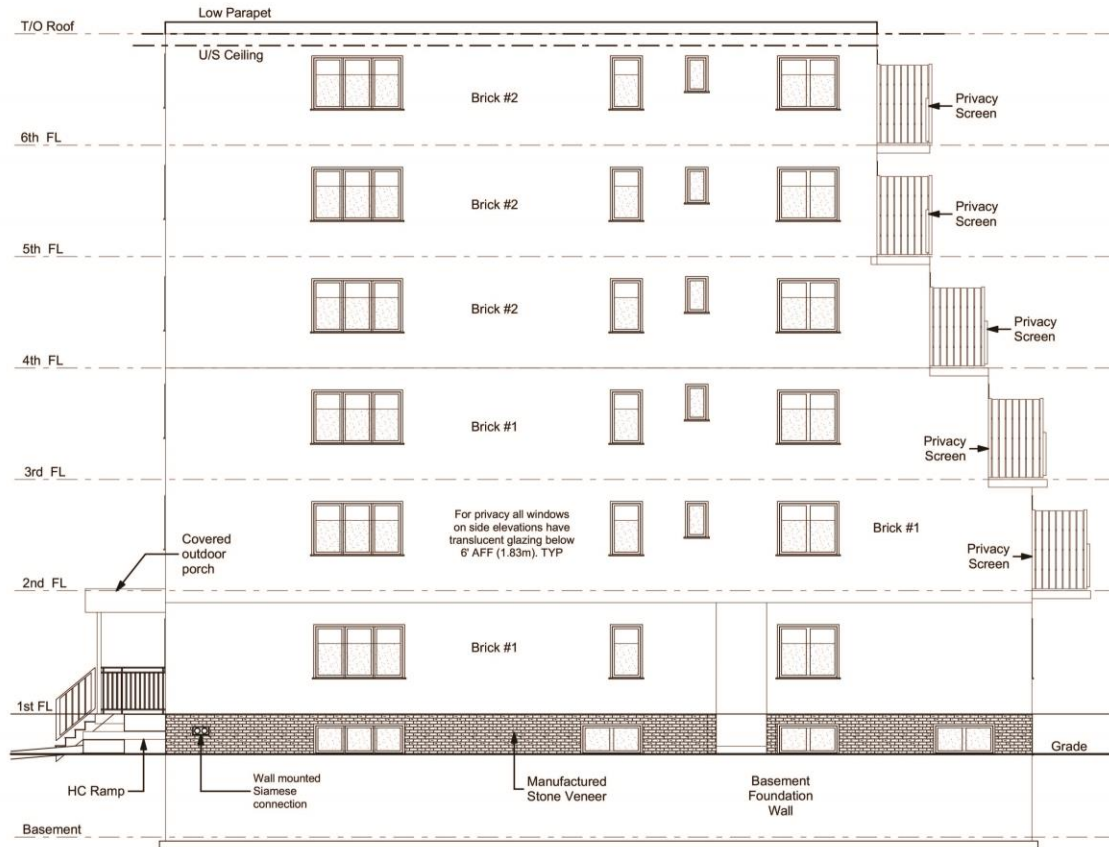
Attachment 10: Elevations



South Elevation

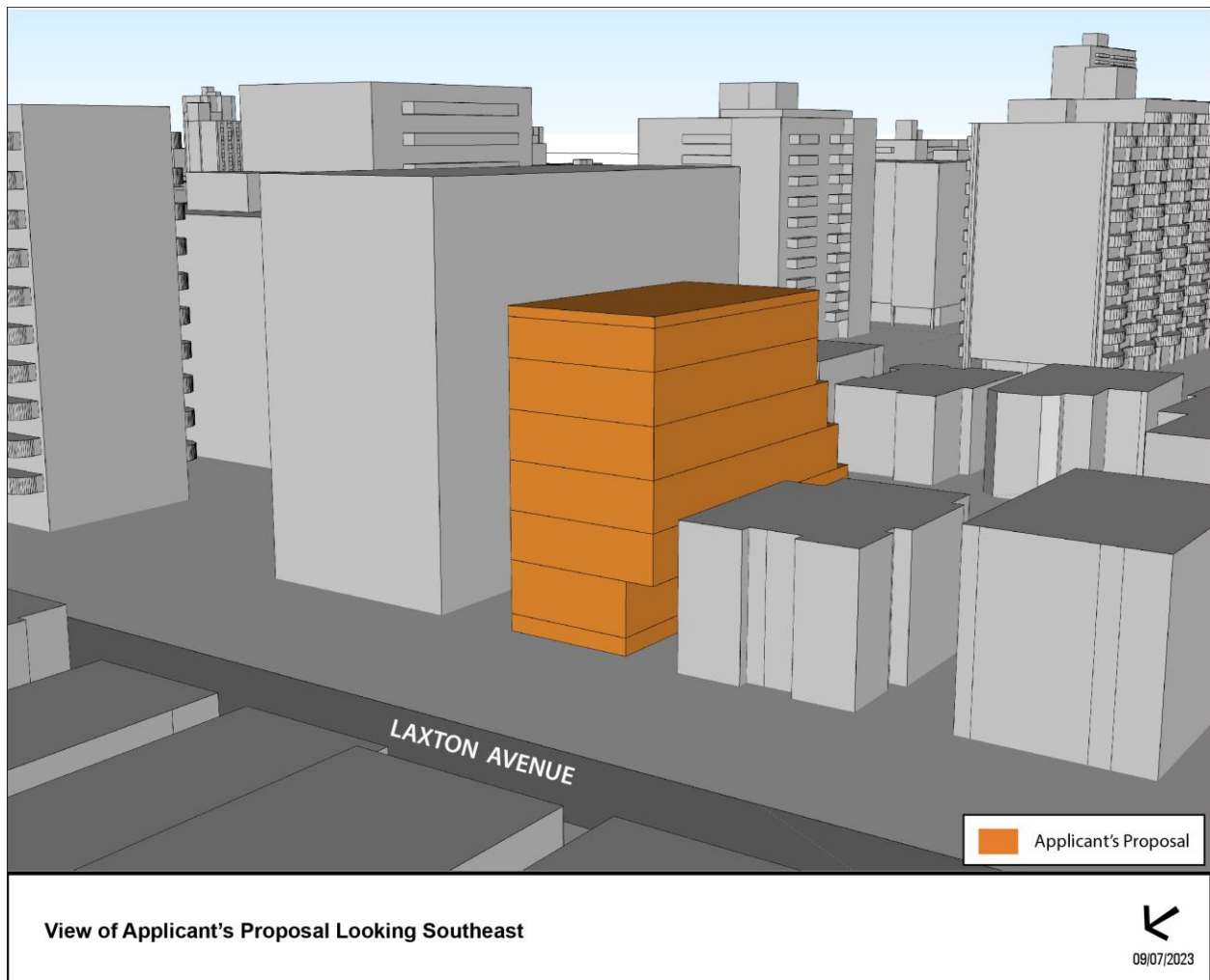
Attachment 11: Elevations

TO 6 FL 18.72m _____



West Elevation

Attachment 12: 3D Model in Context



Attachment 13: 3D Model in Context

