



TEYCC

The Irwin Project Proposed by Kingsett

To:
TEYCC
Toronto City Hall Second Floor
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Toronto ON
M5H 2N2

Deputation of:
Kathryn Holden, BCCA Development Committee
62 Wellesley Street West, Suite 701
Toronto ON M5S 2X3

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

Re: Planning Application Numbers: 22 241865 STE 13 OZ and 22 242933 STE 13 RH
SUMMARY

646-664 Yonge Street and 2-4 Irwin Avenue — Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment,
and Rental Housing Demolition Applications —

Hereafter, Site is referred to as the 'Irwin Project'.

To TEYCC Councillors:

My question to you, our TEYCC Councillors for Downtown Toronto is this:

What is your vision of and for Yonge Street, the main street of Toronto, the largest city in Canada, a street whose name is recognized by most in Canada and many around the world.

The Yonge Street look that had been evolving in this area is height nodes at main transit intersections (Bloor/Yonge, Wellesley/Yonge, Carleton and College/Yonge). What will be between these nodes has not been determined.

This Kingsett application has the potential to change the look of the main street of our city forever.

At this exact moment, Toronto needs to make a decision for its main street.

If the city of Toronto does not make that decision, developers like Kingsett will impose an irreversible decision for you and for all of us.

Toronto is distinguished as one of a very few major North American cities with downtown neighbourhoods that are vibrant and alive. Yonge Street is the physical centre of those downtown neighbourhoods. Yonge Street is the vital connecting link that joins downtown neighbourhoods together and weaves them into the social fabric of the city. Yonge Street enjoys a history and a mind-share that is unmatched in all of the rest of Canada.

I say that all of this makes Yonge Street a very special street in Toronto!

I live in Downtown Toronto in the catchment area known as the Bay Cloverhill Community, (hereafter the BCCA). This proposed Irwin Project falls within our BCCA catchment area.

For 20 years, our community has been actively involved in development projects. We have had good communication and working relationships with developers and planners. We have been able to reach agreement on numerous tower developments. Until recently, Downtown Toronto communities were able to have a connection with a developer who took the project from the application process right through to the end of construction.

Kingsett, this land assembler and the applicant for the Irwin Street Project, has been found to have but a temporary interest in our small downtown communities. Kingsett assembles the land and applies for the RZA and Site Plan Approval. That accomplished, the city approvals leave Kingsett. The RZA and Site Plan approvals are put in the hands of a construction firm.

I say that this proposal, The Irwin Project, takes our community into a new and inflexible world of development based on very tall towers without responsibility for the project to its completion. In this instance, the concern for the surrounding low-rise communities is not really addressed. Yet, all of these small low-rise communities will be forced to live in their low-rise homes with a 75 storey tower as their new neighbour.

I do not support this Irwin Project as it has been presented in the RZA.

Why??

- too tall height for its location,
- shadow impact on its neighbours will be significant
- no transition to its neighbours (See OPA 183)
- park dedication land is one half kilometer from the development site and very inconvenient for the hundreds of residents living at the Irwin Street Project

- the Yonge Street road and the sidewalks of Yonge Street are narrow (by comparison to well planned intensification projects/streets elsewhere in the city. example Bay Street).
- This section of Yonge Street has had HCD status and protection since 2012.(currently under appeal).

Kingsett has unilaterally determined an approach to the heritage requirements; they do not maintain the street wall, a critical aspect of the heritage structures.

FYI: In 2012, the section of Yonge Street from Charles Street to College/Carleton Streets was designated as a Heritage Conservation District.

Some of the reasons cited were

1. the nature of the very low rise buildings which were mainly residential properties--houses of 2 to 4 storeys with retail on the ground floor and living space above; street wall was consistent on the front property line.
2. they were original structures in many instances dating back to 1885 in general.
3. It was the only remaining section of Downtown Yonge Street that exhibited this style of structures.

At this exact moment, Toronto needs to make a decision for Yonge Street, its main street.

If the city of Toronto does not make that decision, organizations like Kingsett will make the decision for you and for all of us.

I say that this application before you is a precedent for extreme tower height without relief for the full length of this historic section of Yonge Street. do not accept this future for our city's main street.

Toronto needs to have a Vision for Yonge Street before it is too late.

***Councillors, I implore you to either refuse or defer this application.
Do not ignore your power to enact a Vision for Yonge Street.***

Sincerely,

Kathryn Holden, BCCA Development Committee Chair

Cc: Oren Tamir, Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
 Kerri Voumakis, Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director
 Alex Texerias, Manager, Community Planning, Downtown Section
 Tamara Anson-Cartwright, Manager, Heritage Preservation Services
 Chris Moise, Councillor, Ward 13, Toronto Centre
 Diane Saxe, Councillor, Ward 11, University, Rosedale