

February 19, 2025

Chair and Members of Council  
Toronto and East York Community Council  
[teycc@toronto.ca](mailto:teycc@toronto.ca)

By Email

**RE: TE 20.9: 1212-1220 Yonge Street - Zoning By-law Amendment Application - Decision Report – Approval (File Number 22198121 STE 12 OZ)**

Urban Strategies Inc. is the planning and urban design consultant for Medbers Limited (“Medbers” or “our client”) with respect to 10-12 Birch Avenue (the “Medbers Site”). The Medbers Site is located within the same block as, and in part directly abuts, the properties at 1212-1220 Yonge Street (the “Yonge-Alcorn Site”) and 1196-1210 Yonge Street and 2-8 Birch Avenue (the “Yonge-Birch Site”).

On behalf of our client, and in light of prior discussions with staff regarding development activity on this block, including the recent approval of the Yonge-Birch Site and the proposed development for the Yonge-Alcorn Site, we are writing regarding the recommendation to approve the rezoning application (ZBA File No.: 22198121 STE 12 OZ) for the Yonge-Alcorn development. **Specifically, we write to confirm our understanding that notwithstanding the relief that is being recommended from built form standards to permit the Yonge-Alcorn Proposal, that relief will not impose development constraints on, or impede the future development potential of the remaining lands on this block including the potential for another tall building through land assembly. In other words, it is our understanding that staff have concluded that this development will not in any way hinder the optimization of the other developable lands within this block or the Summerhill PMTSA. If that is not the case, and the approval of this built form will negatively impact the optimization of this block, then it should not be approved in its current form.**

## **THE MEDBERS SITE AND THE BIRCH-YONGE-ALCORN BLOCK**

The Medbers Site is located on the north side of Birch Avenue within close proximity to the Summerhill TTC subway, in the Yonge-St. Clair area just north of Downtown Toronto. It features low-rise retail buildings and is designated *Mixed Use Areas* and zoned for commercial-residential (CR) uses. The site is bounded by the Yonge-Alcorn Site and a public laneway to the north and the properties municipally known as 1196-1210 Yonge Street and 2-8 Birch Avenue (the “Yonge-Birch Site”) to the east.

**The Block/Mixed Use Block:** The Medbers Site is part of a larger cluster of *Mixed Use Areas*-designated properties that is an appropriate location for tall building intensification (referred to as the “Mixed Use Block”). This stems from both the *Mixed Use Areas* land use designation and high minimum densities identified in the Council-approved Summerhill PMTSA. The Council-approved PMTSA applies a high minimum density of 2.0 FSI to the entire *Mixed Use Block*, including both the 1212-1220 Yonge site and the Medbers site. While the Summerhill PMTSA has seen modest development compared to nearby transit station nodes like Yonge/Bloor and Yonge/St. Clair, the Block remains a key intensification area, particularly given its close proximity (~100m) to the Summerhill Line 1 subway station.

The *Mixed Use Block* has the potential to evolve into a more prominent series of transit-oriented developments while ensuring appropriate transition to the designated Neighbourhood areas to the west and north. The

block's unique physical and locational attributes provide significant opportunities for intensification, in contrast to typical narrow Mixed Use retail main street strip adjacent to designated Neighbourhoods on other parts of Yonge Street. This allows for the potential for tall buildings through land assembly, as has occurred with the 1212-1220 Yonge application and the recently approved Yonge/Birch tower. Existing land uses within the block create a natural buffer that allows for appropriate intensification while maintaining necessary separations from adjacent Neighbourhoods. The western edge of the Mixed Use Block features a 3-storey townhouse condominium on a designated *Mixed Use* site, adjacent to a 4-storey stacked townhouse complex on a designated *Neighbourhood* site. The northern edge includes a 3-storey commercial office building on a designated Neighbourhood site, and the southern edge abuts the rail corridor. Together, these existing land uses and building typologies provide an appropriate transition between the Mixed-Use Areas to the east and the adjacent Neighbourhood to the west.

#### **FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF THE REMAINING MIXED USE BLOCK**

Despite the fact that the Yonge-Alcorn tower provides tower setbacks that are less than those recommended by the Tall Building Guidelines, we understand that Community Planning is recommending approval of the Yonge-Alcorn Proposal. **The staff report concludes that “the setbacks and reduced tower floor plate mitigate the potential impacts of the proposed tall building and provide adequate separation distances to neighbouring properties, including those with future development potential.”**

**Given that the Yonge-Alcorn’s proposed tower relationships, including those to the Medbers Site, are deemed to be acceptable and to not have negative impacts on the development potential of the remaining lands on this Mixed Use Block, it is our understanding that there is no expectation for the Medbers Site to accommodate a disproportionate tower setback to achieve a 25-metre tower separation. Rather, a more flexible and contextual approach will be applied when considering a future development application for the remainder of the Mixed Use Block including the Medbers Site. This will lead to the optimization of this important block.**

In conclusion, we are pleased that staff’s recommendations have considered the impact on future development on neighbouring properties. This is consistent with past Block Plan discussions with staff that demonstrated tall building potential on the Medbers Site and assembled lands. Given the unique circumstances of the Summerhill Mixed Use Block, our client is also supportive of staff’s flexible and contextual approach to permitting development on the block. We trust that staff will apply a similar approach to future development applications for the block to fully unlock the potential of this key intensification area. If that is not the case, and the approval of this built form will hinder the optimization of this Mixed Use Block, then the form of the proposed building ought to be reconsidered.

Should you have any questions on the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,  
**URBAN STRATEGIES INC.**



Benjamin Hoff, MCIP RPP  
Partner