

## Midtown Planning Group Meeting #1: Midtown Implementation Initiatives

### MINUTES

June 4, 2020:

Location: Virtual Teleconference (WebEx Event)

**Next Meeting:** June 11, 2020: 3:00 – 4:30 PM (via WebEx Event)

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### Introduction and Opening Remarks:

Cassidy Ritz, City Planning, hosted the WebEx session and welcomed the attendees to the MPG meeting. She started with an overview of the agenda and invited councillors to give their opening remarks. Ms. Ritz then facilitated introductions of the planning team and the attendees. A total of 27 MPG members participated in the meeting.

Councillors Mike Colle (Ward 8) and Josh Matlow (Ward 12), and Rachel Van Fraassen (Ward 15, on behalf of Councillor Jaye Robinson) shared their thoughts and concerns about planning in the area. They highlighted potential issues in the provincial amendments to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan and in Bill 108, noise by-law exemptions and community consultation. COVID-19 was mentioned as an important factor towards considering the needs of vulnerable people and to prioritize planning for parks and open spaces.

### Midtown Implementation Initiatives and Midtown Zoning Review:

Ms. Ritz provided an update on the statuses of the Midtown Implementation Initiatives and the impact of COVID-19.

Heather Oliver, City Planning, presented on the work being completed for the Midtown Zoning Review and the phased approach to implementing zoning amendments in Midtown. She also shared some of the work in progress on the Built Form Study and the Broadway & Erskine Block Study.

Ms. Ritz then covered the implementation components of the Midtown Infrastructure Strategy.

A copy of the agenda is provided in Appendix A. A list of staff and MPG members who attended the meeting is provided in Appendix B.

### Questions & Answers:

Following the presentation, attendees were able to ask panellists follow-up questions: This was facilitated through using the WebEx “raise hand” function or typing questions in the chat. Ms.

Ritz invited attendees to follow up and send questions directly to staff if they were not addressed.

**Q:** We need to pause and ask if it makes sense to add more people at Y & E. In some cities they aim for 15 minute live/work/play communities. Does the YE area need more offices and parks instead of condos? Time to pause and rethink. How will those now living at YE get around if not using transit?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- The objective in OPA 405 was focused on good mix of office space, which was being lost in Midtown
- The policies within the original secondary plan required 100% office space replacement and to increase office supply, but province removed the requirement for increasing supply
- Something being studied is if implementing minimum and maximum office requirements may be included as part of zoning

**(Councillor Matlow)**

- A developer asked if office space still required during COVID-19
- COVID-19 is a fluid situation with uncertainty, so we can adapt with new details over time but not radically change direction before determining if it is responsible
- Walkable and complete communities remain a priority, with the relation to office spaces to be figured out over time

**Q:** Does a zoning study have to undergo an approval process similar to a secondary plan (and its appeals)? And when can it be applied to a site-specific application and can it be applied to one in progress?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- A zoning review is an amendment under s. 34 of Planning Act
- This is studied and proposed by staff, then approved by Council, then notice of a passing of by-law opens this up to appeal at LPAT
- However, the study does not need to be approved by the province
- The zoning review may be used to inform a development application in progress, but it can't be retroactively used for applications made before the new secondary plan

**(Oren Tamir)**

- The by-law is still subject to legal challenges and can be appealed by anybody (including residents)

**Q:** If report is not available for a year, will development proposals exceeding current City guidelines try to get approvals before the new by-laws are in effect?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- This is context-specific depending on the application intake date: some recent applications in 2020 can be done alongside zoning review
- Although the final report may not come out until April, some study findings can be released earlier

**Q:** How do we avoid a similar intervention from the provincial government that overrides the city's work?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- Technically the province isn't the approval authority for the zoning by-law – it is the city, though it can be appealed to the LPAT
- However, the City is still a "creature of the province" and may be subject to provincial actions

**(Councillor Matlow)**

- Suggesting two approaches for responding to this concern:
- A city charter providing more authority to the municipality
- Voting in provincial elections

**Q:** The Broadway-Erskine Block Study is due to be complete by June/July, but developers for St. Monica's are going to the LPAT. Is there a point to completing the block study or is it moot?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- The City is using an existing in-force policy for applications that came in after OPA 405
- Policy 2.4.1.4 of the Official Plan: If there is significant intensification in neighbourhood/apartment neighbourhood, at the earliest opportunity, the City will decide whether to do a block study or area-wide zoning review
- This is not a foolproof policy but other similar policies have been successfully defended at the LPAT
- Staff are continuing to work quickly to advance and plan to begin consultations soon

**(Jason Brander)**

- There was an LPAT appeal and staff will be reporting on this at the next community council meeting
- Although an appeal is significant, the affected site is only a small part of the whole block

**Q:** We face mediation for a site this summer for a big site. In the absence of firm design guidelines, how do we handle the vacuum? What can we point to when the plan is emergent?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- For the particular application being discussed, this was before the secondary plan was implemented so it isn't subject to the zoning review and would follow the old secondary plan

**(Al Rezoski)**

- Not much guidance in terms of coming from the current processes

**Q:** Since cities are “creatures of the provinces”, is there wisdom in releasing parts of the results during the election season?

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- We could theoretically wait until election season, but a lot happens in Midtown within a year
- It may be in the best interest to focus on rolling out actions ASAP

**(Councillor Matlow)**

- It's best to have things done ASAP that staff can refer to at the LPAT
- Staff shouldn't be politicized and so their actions should be based on capacity
- However outside of the staff, possibly more room for actions

**Q:** Will the Canadian Tire / Oxford block development be part of MPG? That group is presently meeting with representatives in the Y&E area.

**A:**

**(Cassidy Ritz)**

- This is being dealt with separately (outside of the MPG) and has been flagged as a special study

**(Oren Tamir)**

- There are some conversations around consultation with encouragement to the developers to engage with residents
- This is still early in the process and details will be released to the community ASAP

**Emailed Feedback and Questions:**

- Question on how the Zoning Review and Built Form Study may apply to current applications, and whether there are time limits (e.g. Council approval, LPAT), with respect to:
  - Legacy applications currently under appeal (e.g. 141 Davisville Avenue, 1951 Yonge Street)
  - Applications currently under staff review (e.g. 733 Mount Pleasant Road, 155 Balliol Street)
- Question to confirm whether the presentations shared are confidential/limited to participants and association board members, or if they are open to the general public

# Appendix A: AGENDA

## Midtown Planning Group Meeting #1 – Midtown Implementation Initiatives

Thursday, June 4, 2020 | 3:30 – 5:00pm | WebEx Meeting

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<b>Discussion Item</b>	<b>Staff Lead</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1 Introduction and Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Terms of Reference</li><li>• Meeting format</li></ul>	Cassidy Ritz	15 mins
2 Councillor Remarks		10 mins
3 Update on Midtown Implementation Initiatives	Cassidy Ritz	15 mins
4 Midtown Zoning Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zoning Background Report</li><li>• Built Form Study</li><li>• City-led Zoning By-law Amendment</li></ul>	Heather Oliver	20 mins
6 Next Steps	Cassidy Ritz	10 mins
7 Q&A Session	All	20 mins

## **Appendix B: List of Attendees**

### **Midtown Planning Group Meeting #1 – Midtown Implementation Initiatives**

Thursday, June 4, 2020 | 3:30 – 5:00pm | WebEx Meeting

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#### **Councillors and Staff:**

- Councillor Mike Colle (Ward 8)
- Councillor Josh Matlow (Ward 12)
- Rachel Van Fraassen (Ward 15, on behalf of Councillor Jaye Robinson)
- Lola Dandybaeva (Ward 8 Councillor Staff)
- Denise McMullin (Ward 12 Councillor Staff)
- Tracy Luong (Ward 15 Councillor Staff)

#### **City Staff:**

- Cassidy Ritz, City Planning
- Heather Oliver, City Planning
- Al Rezoski, City Planning
- Oren Tamir, City Planning
- Alex Teixeira, City Planning
- Andrea Old, City Planning
- Svetlana Lavrentieva, City Planning
- Jason Brander, City Planning
- Sebastian Cuming, City Planning
- Anson Ma, City Planning
- Dessislava Simova, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

#### **MPG Members**

- Al Kivi, South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association
- Andrea Howard, 33 Holly/44 Dunfield Tenants' Association
- Andy Gort, South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association
- Ann King, Stanley Knowles Co-op
- Arlena Hebert, Lytton Park Residents' Association
- Daryle Hunt, Oriole Park Association
- Diana White, Quantum Owners and Residents Association
- Douglas Obright, Leaside Property Owners' Association
- Eli Aaron, Toronto Youth Cabinet
- Geri Berholz, Republic Residents' Association
- Heather Harris, Chestnut Park Real Estate Ltd.
- Henry Byres, Bayview-Leaside BIA and Midtown Yonge BIA
- Jane Auster, South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association
- Jane Fitzwilliam, West Keewatin Neighbours

- John Plumadore, Deer Park Residents Group
- Katie Bardyn, Oriole Park Public School
- Lais Fabricio, Eglinton Way BIA
- Lancelyn Rayman-Watters, Eglinton Park Residents' Association
- Lynne LeBlanc, Davisville Junior Public School
- Maureen Kapral, Lytton Park Residents' Association
- Maureen Sirois, Eglinton Way BIA
- Michael Szego, Cycle Don Valley Midtown
- Miria Ioannou, Republic Residents' Association
- Richard MacFarlane, Oriole Park Association
- Tom Cohen, Eglinton Park Residents' Association
- Tomi Mitrovic, Quantum Owners and Residents Association
- Yvonne Choi, Toronto Lands Corporation (TDSB)