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**AVENUE STUDY MEETING WITH RITCHIE TRIANGLE RESIDENTS**  
**Tuesday, February 17, 2009, 6 p.m.**  
**High Park Public Library**  
**Main Floor, Community Room**

Meeting notes

**Councillor Perks' welcome and overview**

**Review of community meetings to date:**

- 3 Local Advisory Committee meetings (including a walking tour)  
Meeting 1 – Thursday, June 26, 2008  
Meeting 2 – Tuesday, September 3, 2008  
Meeting 3 – Wednesday, November 5, 2008
- 1 Design Workshop  
September 20, 2008
- 3 Open House Meetings  
Tuesday, July 8, 2008  
Tuesday, November 18, 2008  
Monday, January 26, 2009

**Corwin Cambray, Senior City Planner** – City of Toronto has 2.48 million people according to the 2006 census, forecasted to grow to 3 million by 2031.

- Approximately 75% of City's land mass is not planned to accommodate significant new growth i.e. stable neighbourhoods, apartment neighbourhoods, parks / open space and utility corridors. The remaining 25% of the City's land mass is where the majority of growth will occur. This includes Mixed Use areas such as the Loblaws site.
- Loblaws site can accommodate new growth, new housing opportunities, new and job opportunities.
- Re-developing these sites in an appropriate fashion can allow people to age in place, create new jobs, complete communities, and maintain the character of the neighbourhood.
- Mixed commercial/residential (MCR) zoning has different rules from neighbourhoods. The question becomes what the interface will be between MCR and neighbourhoods.

**Councillor Perks** - Loblaws has indicated no interest to re-develop this site. We want to set in place some ground rules and parameters in case they do decide to develop this site.

**Corwin** – This site has 4 distinct frontages: North has an institutional frontage (school) and playing field (underutilized asset) with Bloor Street beyond, West frontage is Dundas Street (main street frontage,

would encourage retail uses), East frontage is the rail corridor, South frontage interfaces with stable neighbourhood. We can address each frontage differently. For example, a retail plaza on the southern boundary is not something we would want to see, may want to see low-rise residential compatible with the existing neighbourhood. The site's relationship to Dundas Street means that we would not want to see low-rise facing Dundas, but rather a mid-rise form with retail / commercial uses that strengthen the main street function. Similarly, on the east side of the site – we don't want to see low-rise next to the railway corridor.

- This “opportunity site”, which includes the Loblaws site and some smaller parcels on the Dundas frontage, is approximately 4.3 hectares, 10.3 acres in size.
- Institutional frontage may be less sensitive than the stable neighbourhood frontage. For the rail frontage, a 30m setback is required from the rail corridor (not the tracks) for residential uses, less of a setback for commercial. The 30m setback was determined years ago by the rail companies as this is the average length of a railcar.

What Corwin has heard from the community since the Avenue Study process began:

1. The grocery store should stay.
  2. New public greenspace, range of activities for the public. Area has low parkland provision according to Map 8B in the Official Plan.
  3. Provide front-door community (meaning front doors at grade, attractive to families).
  4. A range of housing opportunities.
- Corwin asked the City's consultants, Brook McIlroy, to take community feedback and put them together into images (Demonstration Plans) – these are not actual proposals.

**Question:** mentioned that Loblaws wasn't interested but there was a proposal for the Zellers site.

**Councillor Perks:** Every time I hear something, I call Loblaws. They looked into shifting around the stores but have consistently re-iterated to me that they are not interested. Its worth noting, again, that the Avenue Study makes us ready just in case they change their minds.

**Question:** What was the point of closing Zeller and then re-opening it?

**Councillor Perks:** You'll have to ask them.

**Question:** Are there similar plans for other large mall sites like Galleria Mall or Dufferin Mall that also front onto Avenues, or is Loblaws the only one?

**Corwin:** Galleria Mall site actually has approvals for buildings from 3 to 20+ stories, based on the old Official Plan.

**Councillor Perks:** Malls have particular risks and pressures.

**(At this point, Debbie presented an alternate plan, see attached)**

- Appreciate that Councillor Perks made the time to meet with this community.
- Concern about community input – 2 recent meetings allowed people to stand up in the room but no opportunity for measuring consensus. This made us feel powerless.
- Key issues (**see attached**).

**Councillor Perks:** Let's proceed with a guiding principles discussion to help this conversation move forward:

1. **Harmonious integration with the neighbourhood to the South – do not overwhelm.**

2. **A public space park or square that is inviting and commodious, to serve as a gathering and or recreational space for wider the community, not just residents or workers in the site.**
3. **A plan that will pass the test at the OMB – the constraints it places on development are reasonable and defensible.**

**Comment:** important to plan this in the context of the OMB, 3 storeys will be rejected if across site.

**Councillor Perks:** someone can appeal the entire Avenue Study to the OMB as well. Big applications get approved at the OMB despite City refusals i.e. West Queen West, M5V. Rules can work as soon as they are in line with Provincial policies.

**Corwin:** OMB also likes a current, up-to-date process/framework.

4. **Mix uses for living, working, shopping, dining and entertainment.**

**Comment:** needs to be location specific.

5. **A community with it own integrated character and integrity, works as a neighbourhood itself.**

**Comment:** integrated into existing neighbourhood and beyond the Ritchie neighbourhood. Also integrates with surrounding communities.

6. **The ability to fold in public services such as a community centre.**

**Councillor Perks:** not a community centre, maybe daycare, satellite multi-disciplinary clinic.

**Question:** Why can't a community centre be part of the Avenue Study? We have no swimming, no track and 2000 people may be moving in.

**Councillor Perks:** Proximity to Sorrauren Park may be a factor; also Bishop Morocco playing field is land-locked. In Parkdale I have negotiated several shared-use agreement for playing fields, maybe this is something to look at in the future for this playing field. We may want to remove the community centre from this principle for a number of reasons:

1. Trade-offs to built community centre means much more density. Let's say a community centre is \$25 million, we're looking at a trade off in towers, plural, like Yonge and Eglinton.
2. Costs money to operate facilities. Operating costs alone are very high.
3. Corwin: City can ask for 5% dedication for parks. City often negotiates cash-in-lieu payments when space is not available. This consolidated "opportunity site" is approximately 4.6 hectares, we can ask for up to 15% parkland under the alternative parkland policies in the Official Plan. Parkland: recent examples were the City has acquired new parks through large site redevelopments are 50 St. Joseph (St. Mike's) and former hospital site at Sherbourne and Wellesley. Both instances parkland secured in exchange for additional density / height.

**Comment:** Developer will want to maximize this by putting the greenspace in the centre, to make it look and feel 'private'.

**Corwin:** Design of a larger park itself can be about 1 million, we need to develop this park, not just acquire it.

**Councillor Perks:** This is where consultation comes in. A developer can ask you if you want a park with waterslides etc. Planners are also actively involved in these conversations. We should maintain a principle that we want recreation opportunities.

**Comment:** I think there are two principles:

1. Percentage of open space should be consolidated into one large space.
2. Avoiding the Columbus parkette model –needs to be accessible from Right-Of-Way and have opportunities for eyes on the park.

We should also think about a park that backs onto people's backyards and the noise issues that this might create. What about back alleys so we create a backyard to backyard situation?

**Question:** I know you oppose the Giraffe development, but say you were ok with it, can funding from that building go towards this park that can be accessible to both neighbourhoods?

**Councillor Perks:** Can do a s.37 agreement to contribute to the park, but I am certainly not in agreement with this now because I am opposed to this current development proposal.

**Councillor Perks:** Everyone living in your neighbourhood has an as-of-right permission of 4 storeys (12 metres). That is what the current permission is. That is where the 4 storeys in the demonstration plans comes from.

**Question:** Where does that 4 storeys apply, across the ward?

**Corwin:** Dundas Street has different height limits but neighbourhoods in this area have 4 storey limits (12 metres). It should be noted as well that backyards in the demonstration plans have approx 11m; only 7.5m is required in MCR zone. I believe this meets some of the principles of transition.

**Question:** Affordable housing – is there a certain percentage required? This can affect our property values.

**Corwin:** For sites that are 5 hectares or greater, approximately 20% has to be affordable. This does not mean subsidized housing.

**Councillor Perks:** I think it is very important to aim for a mix of income sizes.

**Comment:** What 'harmonious integration' means is difficult in this situation. If 4 storeys means people looking down on our properties, then this raises questions. Harmonious integration and then transition so far down the list is problematic.

**Corwin:** Integration and transition means things like building heights, shadow impacts, overlook / privacy. It should be noted that properties to the north do not shadow properties to the south. Four storeys would also not create significant overlook. What I will do is shoot some models from four storeys looking south and three storeys looking south and send them to Debbie to distribute. Does this work?

**Question:** Is there also a possibility of creating additional guidelines to accommodate four storeys i.e. stepback at fourth storey, etc?

**Corwin:** the south end of the site can be zoned to a maximum. We've shown four storeys because we felt that it met the principles. Like I said, I will shoot the models and send them to Debbie.

**Councillor Perks:** I also want to remind everyone that this meeting will provide feedback for consultants but is not a decision-making meeting. Also, we should be looking at the overall density on this site.

**Corwin:** We actually didn't start with density numbers, we looked at what the community wanted to achieve and worked densities that way. When I walk down the street, I can't tell the density of a

particular building. What I see is the character, built form, responsiveness to frontages, etc.

Essentially, does a building complement its surroundings?

**Question:** is there a minimum required density for this site? We could say that the community would be thrilled with additional density providing that it met these requirements etc.

**Question:** What does 1.5x look like? Can you break down densities in grid-type scenarios, and map out graduated densities?

**Corwin:** Yes, this is what we would want to do. For example, direct non-residential uses to Dundas Street frontage.

**Comment:** Densities should be lower at Ritchie/Herman and then going up to the north end of the site.

## 7. General conformation to the principles of the visioning study.

### Road Network:

**Comment:** Can't see Ritchie and Herman opened up to 2-way traffic.

**Comment:** I see people cutting through our streets to avoid the light. Also, parking bump-outs in plans are nightmares for bikes.

**Councillor Perks:** We are not designing exact roads right now.

**Corwin:** One of the ways to integrate large sites into the surrounding urban fabric is to extend the public realm into the site. This includes the public street network, which is the backbone of the city. If I understand it correctly, the two areas of concern about extending the street network into the Loblaws site are traffic infiltration, including safety, and parking. A site specific planning application would be when road network would be discussed. Developer has to do an extensive traffic study and parking study that are reviewed by all relevant City staff. How roads are laid out is a conversation for the future. Also worthy to note is that just because people have cars does not mean they will use them every day. They may use them for big grocery shops etc but often store their cars.

**Comment:** Herman and Ritchie cannot accommodate additional traffic and traffic can also impede TTC service.

**Councillor Perks:** Again, we don't get into this level of detail now, now is when we discuss how connections work in general terms.

**Question:** Is there a requirement to do connections?

**Comment:** We want to ensure that this community is not isolated as well.

**Comment:** But if it only benefits the larger development and not our neighbourhood, we take issue with this.

**Councillor Perks:** ok, so guiding principles for this are: We don't want a rat race, we don't want a situation that would negatively impact or create safety concerns for these neighbourhoods. The challenge for the consultants is to frame this in the Avenue Study so that it can guide future development.

**Comment:** Large trucks on Golden Avenue are also an issue.

### **Next steps:**

- Corwin will do the shots of the 3 storey vs. four storey models.
- Another LAC meeting will be set up and information about it will be sent to all of you. This meeting will be open to the public, and if you would like your comments to be heard or further questions, you can provide them to Eric (Turcotte), RMRA representative, or through Harry (Cornelius).
- Consultants will draft a report in early spring; final report will be posted on the City's dedicated website.

- Staff report will go to Toronto and East York Community Council in May or June.
- comments can be received any time, call or write to Corwin (416-397-0244 or by email [ccambra@toronto.ca](mailto:ccambra@toronto.ca))

**Adjournment – 8:30 p.m.**