

From: Jones/McKeating

Sent: Monday, February 03, 2020 11:39 AM

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Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments Regarding Proposed Victoria Park Secondary Plan - For Feb 3 PEC Mtg

Dear Councillors,

Apologies for sending these comments at the last minute. I hope that you will have time to read this email quickly prior to this afternoon's PEC meeting.

General

I was relieved to see, in Section 5.4, the statement that "The policies in the Victoria Park Secondary Plan are intended to support the conservation of significant cultural heritage resources." Although I'm a strong supporter of the London Plan's vision of intensification and "growing upwards, not outwards", intensification should not (in my view) result in the destruction or degradation of London's architectural and cultural heritage resources. The placement of high-rise and mid-rise buildings should be carefully considered, taking into account the potential impact on heritage buildings. Cities like the other London and the other Paris have skyscrapers, but they are not adjacent to iconic landmarks like Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, the Louvre, or Notre Dame. Should London, Ontario really be willing to place a high-rise building directly behind St. Peter's Basilica?

Protection of Views

Although the staff report includes thoughtful consideration of "view corridors", there is little mention of policies and potential zoning rules to protect "silhouette views". In contrast, the City of Toronto addresses views at some length in Chapters 4 and 7 of its Official Plan. As one example, Chapter 7 of the City of Toronto Official Plan states that " In particular, no building will interrupt or rise above the silhouette of the Ontario Legislature building at Queen's Park, when viewed from University Avenue, subject to a view corridor analysis completed to the satisfaction of the City." I would have liked to see a provision such as this included to protect the views towards St. Peter's Basilica from the south to the north, and also some general acknowledgement of the importance of the silhouette views from the park outwards in all directions. Even if taller buildings are constructed along some of the perimeters of the park, the resulting silhouette views - from the park - are important.

Permitted Heights for Towers and Bases

I would have preferred to see the following limitations:

- maximum 8 storeys in North A and West B
- maximum 12 storeys in West C
- maximum 15 storeys in Sout A
- maximum 20 storeys in East D and East E
- a required base of 2-3 storeys on all buildings (instead of the 4-5 storeys proposed for East and South)

Based on the diagrams in the report, I suspect that a 45 degree angling plane from 35 feet up in the air above the property line may not be sufficient to protect existing buildings from loss of sun and a loss of sky view. Why not consider a lower angle, perhaps 35 degrees starting from 15 feet above the property line?

Tower Plate Square Footage Limit

I think that the same limit should apply for mid-rise buildings as for high-rise buildings.

Required Distance Between Towers

I think that the required distance between towers should be 25 meters for all buildings, not 11 meters for mid-rise buildings. Those who will live or work in a mid-rise building should get the same opportunities for privacy and sky view as those who will live or work in high-rise buildings. Eleven meters would not provide sufficient privacy or view, particularly given that most apartments have windows on only one side of the unit.

Glazing

The requirement in Section 3.6.7 for glazing on 70% of the building does not preclude an absence of glazing on the lower floors that are most visible to pedestrians. I'd suggest a modification to address this issue, perhaps by requiring glazing of 70% (on average) on every 2 storeys of the building.

Other

One final observation is that, given that there are approximately 250 pages of material on this item in the PEC agenda package, the public wasn't given a lot of time to digest and react prior to this Public Participation Meeting.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Kelley McKeating
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