

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY REPORT
Zonix Inc.
Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, to permit the development of 27 and 6 storey residential buildings on the lands located at 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48 Steeles Avenue East and 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49 Highland Park Boulevard (Ward 1)
File No. PLAN 19 114290

PREPARED BY: Marty Rokos, MCIP, RPP, ext. 2980, Senior Planner

REVIEWED BY: Ron Blake, MCIP, RPP, ext. 2600, Senior Manager, Development

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled “PRELIMINARY REPORT, Zonix Inc., Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, to permit the development of 27 and 6 storey residential buildings on the lands located at 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48 Steeles Avenue East and 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49 Highland Park Boulevard (Ward 1)” be received.

PURPOSE:

This report provides preliminary information on the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications (the “Applications”) submitted by Zonix Inc. (the “Owner”) to permit the development of 27 and 6 storey residential buildings on the lands located at 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48 Steeles Avenue East and 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49 Highland Park Boulevard (the “Subject Lands”), as shown on Figures 1 and 2. This report contains general information regarding applicable Official Plan (OP) or other policies as well as other issues and should not be taken as Staff’s opinion or recommendation on the application.

Process to date

The Applications were submitted on March 5, 2019 and deemed complete on March 27, 2019. The 120 day period set out in the *Planning Act* before an applicant can appeal an application to the Ontario Land Tribunal (the “OLT”) for a non-decision has expired. This period ended on July 25, 2019, and the applicant is now in a position to appeal for a non-decision to the OLT. However, the Owner has been working with staff to address the various matters related to the proposed development.

The next steps in the planning process include:

- Statutory Public Meeting to be held when deemed appropriate;
- Recommendation Report;
- If supported by the Committee, approval of the Official Plan amendment and enactment of the proposed zoning by-law; and
- Future submission of a site plan application.

BACKGROUND:**Site and Area Context**

The Subject Lands are comprised of 14 properties located on the north side of Steeles Avenue and the south side of Highland Park Boulevard, east of Dudley Avenue (see Figure 1). The Subject Lands have an area of approximately 0.91 ha (2.26 acres) and a frontage of approximately 199.1 m (653.2 ft) on the north side of Steeles Avenue, 213.5 m (700.5 ft) on the south side of Highland Park Boulevard, and 85.6 m (280.7 ft) on the east side of Dudley Avenue. Each property is currently developed with a single detached dwelling, some of which include businesses (see Figure 3).

The surrounding land uses are as follows:

North:	Highland Park Boulevard and Low Density residential
East:	Low Density residential
South:	Steeles Avenue East and Low Density residential in the City of Toronto
West:	Dudley Avenue and residential and commercial uses

Proposed Development

The Owner proposes to amend the Official Plan and rezone the Subject Lands to facilitate the development of a mixed use residential and commercial development (see Figures 4-6).

A conceptual site plan has been submitted to demonstrate how the subject lands will develop (see Figure 7). The Owner is proposing 27 and 6 storey residential buildings with a total of 533 apartment units, 513 vehicle parking spaces, 397 bicycle parking spaces, and an overall Floor Space Index (FSI) of approximately 5.1. Staff note that the FSI of 5.32 identified in the Owner's drawings and reports includes the underground parking garage. The 27 storey building (Building A) is located on Steeles Avenue while the 6 storey building (Building B) is located on Highland Park Boulevard.

A driveway from Dudley Avenue is proposed to provide vehicle access to the buildings, including pickup/drop-off areas, loading spaces, and access to the underground parking in the interior of the development. The building ground floor along each street frontage is proposed to include individual unit entrances, building entrances and lobbies, and indoor and outdoor amenity space.

The balance of the block bounded by Steeles Avenue, Willowdale Avenue, Dudley Avenue, and Highland Park Boulevard is not part of the subject applications and no future phases on the rest of the block are proposed.

Provincial and Regional Policy Framework**Provincial and Regional Policy Conformity**

In considering the Applications, Staff will assess consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (the “PPS”), conformity with a Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2020, as amended (the “Growth Plan”), and conformity with the York Region Official Plan, 2010 (the “YROP 2010”).

Official Plan 1987

The Subject Lands are designated “Urban Residential” in the 1987 Official Plan. The “Urban Residential” designation provides for housing and related purposes including accessory apartments and rooming and boarding houses, public uses, institutional uses, recreational uses, and neighbourhood commercial centres subject to other policies within the Official Plan.

Thornhill Secondary Plan (OPA 1)

The Subject Lands are designated “Urban Residential – Low Density Housing” and “Urban Residential – Low Density Housing Special” in the Thornhill Secondary Plan (OPA 1) as approved on June 6, 1997. The “Low Density Housing” designation applies to the properties on Highland Park Boulevard and provides for low density forms of housing with direct frontage on a public road, a range of public, institutional and recreational uses, and day care centres. The “Low Density Housing Special” designation applies to the properties on Steeles Avenue and enables Council to permit expanded residential and limited office uses.

Yonge Steeles Corridor Study

The Yonge Steeles Corridor Study was completed in September 2008 and was intended to inform the preparation of a new secondary plan for the Yonge Steeles Corridor. The study establishes a vision, planning framework, and urban design principles and guidelines for the development of the Yonge Street corridor between Steeles Avenue and Elgin Street with an additional block on the north side of Steeles Avenue between Dudley Avenue and Willowdale Avenue. The study envisions the corridor to be developed as an urban, high density corridor following Yonge Street, with a pedestrian scaled built form, retail uses along Yonge Street and Steeles Avenue, and a coordinated system of parks and plazas. Development would have a maximum FSI of 3.0 FSI and maximum height of 100 m (328 feet, approximately 30 storeys) along the Yonge Street frontage and fall within a 2:1 angular plane from the surrounding low density residential neighbourhoods east of Dudley Avenue. The Study recommends residential redevelopment of the subject lands with a maximum FSI of 2.5 along Steeles Avenue and 1.5 along Highland Park Boulevard. At grade retail is encouraged but not required on Steeles Avenue.

Official Plan 2014

The subject lands are designated “Residential Mid Rise” in the 2014 Official Plan (as partially approved on November 24, 2017 and further updated on April 9, 2018). It is also within the Yonge Steeles Corridor Key Development Area.

The “Residential Mid Rise” designation provides for townhouses, back-to-back townhouses, multiplex buildings with 3-6 units, stacked townhouses, apartment buildings,

day care centres, places of worship, and public schools. Heights range from 3-6 storeys at a maximum FSI of 2.0. The Yonge Steeles Corridor Key Development Area is intended to develop with a diversity of residential, retail, office, and public uses at transit supportive densities.

The Official Plan states that a new secondary plan shall be established for the Yonge Steeles Corridor, to be informed by the Yonge Steeles Corridor Study. Until a new secondary plan is approved, the provisions of the 1987 Official Plan and the Thornhill Secondary Plan apply. Certain area specific policies of the 2014 Official Plan are also applicable, including the requirement for the preparation of a comprehensive block plan.

A new secondary plan has not been approved for the Yonge Steeles Corridor. As directed by Council, a Land Use Built Form Study has been undertaken for the Yonge Steeles Corridor to begin the process of establishing a new secondary plan for the corridor. The interim findings of the Land Use Built Form Study were presented to the Development Services Committee on October 25, 2021. The Yonge Corridor Secondary Plan process will be initiated following completion of the Land Use Built Form Study.

Proposed Official Plan Amendments

The Owner proposes to amend the 1987 Official Plan, the Thornhill Secondary Plan, and the 2014 Official Plan.

The proposed amendment to the 1987 OP adds amendment numbers to the text of the Official Plan to identify that OPA 1 is being amended. No other changes are proposed to the 1987 OP. The proposed amendment to OPA 1 would re-designate the subject lands from the “Low Density Housing” designation to a “High Density II Housing” designation.

In addition, the following policies are proposed to be added to both OPA 1 and the 2014 OP:

- Maximum height of 27 storeys or 88 metres for Building A;
- Maximum height of 6 storeys or 23 metres for Building B;
- Maximum of 533 residential units;
- Maximum FSI of 5.32; and
- New Implementation and Interpretation sections.

Zoning

The subject lands are zoned “Fourth Density Single Family Residential (R4) Zone” under By-law 2237, as amended (see Figure 2). The R4 Zone does not permit the proposed development concept.

The owner proposes to rezone the subject lands to a site specific “Community Amenity One (CA1) Exception Zone” of By-Law 177-96. The proposed CA1 Exception Zone includes uses and development standards that differ from the parent CA1 Zone as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Zone Standard	Proposed CA1 Exception Zone
Front lot line	Steeles Avenue
Maximum FSI	5.32
Maximum height	88 m along Steeles Avenue 23 m along Highland Park Boulevard
Minimum vehicle parking	Bachelor & 1 bdr: 0.7 spaces/unit 2 bedroom: 0.9 spaces/unit 3 bedroom: 1.0 spaces/unit Townhouse (ground related units) 1.0 spaces/unit Visitor 0.15 spaces/unit
Maximum vehicle parking	1.25 spaces/unit
Minimum bicycle parking, residential	Long term 0.5 spaces/unit Short term 0.2 spaces/unit
Minimum amenity space	4.0 m ² per apartment unit
Minimum drive aisle	6.0 m
Other	By-law to apply for whole of the lands. Structural elements may project above maximum height, including elevator equipment, railings, ladders, etc.

Additional revisions to development standards may arise following a detailed review of the applications.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The Applications have been circulated to internal staff and external agencies and are under review. The following is a brief summary of the matters raised to date. These matters, and others identified through the circulation and detailed review of the proposal, will be addressed in a final report to the Committee:

1. York Region submitted comments stating that the applications are not able to demonstrate how the development aligns with the Yonge Steeles Corridor Study (2008) and have concerns regarding transportation and water and waste water servicing. York Region staff are of the opinion that the Applications are premature pending the preparation of a Secondary Plan;
2. Compatibility with surrounding development, including height, massing, shadowing, and wind impacts. The proposed height of Building A extends beyond a 1:1 angular plane to the low density residential neighbourhood to the north.
3. Urban Design staff have asked the Owner to reduce the height of Building A so that it does not protrude beyond a 1:1 angular plane, reduce the height of Building B to 19.5 m, provide an urban parkette on site, and increase the setback from Steeles Avenue to 3.0 m to allow for sufficient landscaping;
4. The Applications need to be considered in the context of the Secondary Plan Review. The preliminary work for the review has begun as described in the Official Plan 2014 section of this report. A staff recommendation on the Applications will

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- not be brought forward until Council has adopted a vision for the Yonge Steeles Corridor as part of the Yonge Steeles Corridor Secondary Plan Review process;
5. Provision of affordable housing;
 6. Details of the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications; including but not limited to the ideal zone category and the appropriateness of parking standards based on the number of bedrooms;
 7. Resolve any issues resulting from the review of the conceptual site plan as well as technical studies including, but not limited to, the Planning Justification Report, Tree Assessment and Preservation Plan/Arborist Report, Transportation Mobility Plan, Functional Servicing Report, and engineering drawings; and
 8. Confirm any outstanding financial obligations, including but not limited to parkland dedication, Section 37, and development charges.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The proposed Applications are to be evaluated in the context of growth management, environmental, and strategic priorities of Council.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Applications have been circulated to various City departments and external agencies and are currently under review.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Biju Karumanchery
Director, Planning and
Urban Design

Arvin Prasad
Commissioner, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

- Figure 1 – Location Map
Figure 2 – Area Context/Zoning
Figure 3 – Aerial Photo
Figure 4 – 1987 Official Plan Land Use
Figure 5 – Thornhill Secondary Plan Land Use

Figure 6 – 2014 Official Plan Land Use

Figure 7 – Conceptual Site Plan

AGENT:

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