

St. Clair Place Community Update Meeting (Built Form)

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

Zoom

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Summary

Project Team:

- Michelle Dagnino, LURA Consulting
- Amitai Zand, LURA Consulting
- Heather Grey-Wolf, Capital Developments
- Amanda Milborne Ireland, Capital Developments
- Michael Leckman, Diamond Schmitt Architects

Community Attendance: Approximately 26 attendees

Agenda:

1. Introduction/welcoming remarks by Michelle Dagnino, Heather Grey-Wolf, and Amanda Milborne Ireland
2. Presentation by Michael Leckman on built form changes in the revised application
3. Question & Answer session, facilitated by Michelle Dagnino with supporting expertise from Michael Leckman
4. Adjournment/closing remarks by Michelle Dagnino and Heather Grey-Wolf

Q&A:

How will you configure the Heath/Yonge intersection? Will it be closed to traffic between Yonge and Alvin? How will delivery vehicles access the buildings in the development?

The realignment of Heath is taking place within the existing roadway allowance. The building on the southwest corner of Heath and Yonge has been purchased by Wittington and will be demolished to allow the realignment to take place. The new configuration will provide a shorter distance for pedestrians to cross and make vehicular turning movements much clearer and more intuitive, increasing safety for pedestrians.

The development will be served by two entrances for vehicles: One on Alvin and one on Heath St near the corner with Alvin (it is best practice to have two points of egress for underground parking garages). The multiple driveways for loading and parking off Alvin today will be consolidated into one entrance on Alvin. Deliveries currently taking place curbside on Yonge will be moved underground. This means that there will be no large trucks making deliveries at street level, improving the public realm experience and reducing congestion.

Will there be a signal at Alvin and St. Clair Ave E?

We are proposing that one should be installed and believe it would be a benefit to both the development and the wider community. We are working with our transportation consultants at BA Group and the planning staff at the City of Toronto, as well as the TTC, to study the feasibility of installing this signal.

Currently there is no dedicated right turn lane on Alvin at St. Clair. We are proposing in this project's application that there be two turn lanes going southbound on Alvin (one for eastbound traffic on St. Clair and one for westbound) to mitigate any backups along Alvin.

I think the proposed tower heights are too high and would negatively affect access to sunlight.

We have heard this point loud and clear from the community throughout the consultation process, and we are doing our utmost to keep as much sunlight as possible. Our most recent design for St. Clair Place actually provides more sunlight than any of our previous proposed configurations.

What are the latest proposed tower heights? What will the building height be like at the corner of Alvin and Heath?

The shortest tower is proposed to be 27 storeys followed by 41 and 49 storeys for the other two towers. At Alvin and Heath, the podium building starts at two storeys and steps back one floor at a time until it reaches the twelfth floor.

Will the building's finishes be comparable to other developments in the city?

The lower levels of the buildings will use masonry to lend character and embody Frank Lloyd Wright's style of using elongated bricks. We are still in the early stages for the finishes, but in our current renderings we are proposing that the podium buildings use elongated bricks along their Yonge and Alvin facades.

Because we are also targeting Tier 2 of the Toronto Green Standard at minimum, we are exploring how to make the building well-insulated with generous windows and solid walls (the latter of which could be thin-set stone, solid glass, or metal).

Would the Deer Park library branch currently on St. Clair Ave E move onto Yonge St?

We are certainly interested in potential civic uses of St. Clair Place. If an agreement can be reached to place a library in the development, it would be located either at the corner of Heath and Alvin or at the corner of Heath and Yonge. Those conversations with Toronto Public Library are still ongoing, but as to whether the space becomes a civic use or a commercial use, both are possible.

Are the proposed townhomes located along Alvin or Yonge?

As proposed, the townhomes would be located exclusively along Alvin Avenue for almost the full length of the building and in different configurations. They would allow for live-work opportunities and would be two storeys high with options for access from the street and/or an interior corridor.

Yonge Street is such an important destination for retail, so we are proposing that the ground-level frontage on Yonge be exclusively retail.

Will there be affordable residential units?

There are 30 existing rental units on the project site (mostly along Heath), all of which will be replaced. 12 of the units currently have rents that are considered affordable by the City of Toronto, and the other 18 will have rents equivalent to today's market rates.

Additionally, we are considering designating one of the towers to feature rental units only, so St. Clair Place may not be an exclusively condominium development.

Have you done shadow studies for the new tower configuration?

We have not conducted new shadow studies yet, but they would be done before the application resubmission or any further adjustments.

What is the revised density for St. Clair Place?

The first submission had 1.5 million square feet of density, and the current scheme is closer to 1.36 million square feet. This reduction came from sculpting the ground plane as well as the podium.

I am concerned that adding an extra lane on Alvin at the Alvin/St. Clair intersection will make the crossing wider for pedestrians and take away some of the existing sidewalk space on Alvin where there is bike parking.

We have learned through our work with BA Group (the transportation consultant for St. Clair Place) that we can achieve a strong improvement to safety at that intersection by moving the centreline between 800 cm and 1 m to accommodate an additional turning lane. By alleviating the single-lane backups of turning vehicles and improving traffic flows, it improves safety by discouraging drivers from driving on the sidewalk to manoeuvre around the backup to make their turn.

How will St. Clair Place be connected to St. Clair subway station?

The Winter Garden will have access to the subway via an underground concourse connection to the same station entrance that exists today in the underground concourse of the St. Clair Centre.

Have wind studies been conducted? Have they taken into account the approved tower at 1 Delisle? I am concerned that the proposed towers will create wind tunnels.

Each design that we submit to the City must have an engineer review it for safety. The edges of the building are deliberately rough in texture because they reduce the windspeed. Additionally, the towers are significantly set back from the front of the podiums along Yonge Street and Alvin Avenue to allow the wind to both be slowed and redirected so it does not create a wind tunnel effect on the sidewalk.

The height and shape of the 1 Delisle tower will be incorporated into the St. Clair Place wind studies of the next submission. The original wind studies for St. Clair Place did not include 1 Delisle because at the time that development had not been approved yet.

I am concerned that Alvin will become a busy thoroughfare with all the delivery traffic. Can you explain how this will be handled?

All loading, deliveries, and TPA parking will be consolidated underground so most traffic will not stop along the street. There will be laybys along Alvin, however, which will allow passenger vehicles to perform quick pick ups and drop offs (such as for the daycare on Alvin). We are also looking into having future conversations about implementing traffic calming techniques around the development.

Will the townhouses have elevator access to the garage or the retail concourses? Will the residential garage be separate?

There will be both access into the townhome from a front door along Alvin, as well as potentially a rear door that connects to a corridor leading to the elevators to the subway and parking. The garage will be the same garage for visitors and residents, but the top floors will be reserved for TPA parking.

How many townhomes will there be in St. Clair Place?

Approximately 16 townhomes.

Will there be meeting room space for the community?

Discussions for community meeting space are still ongoing. We have heard from the community that this is something we should look into.

Will the TPA parking spaces be replaced?

Yes, all approximately 213 TPA parking spaces will be replaced as part of the St. Clair Place garage (the top two levels). They will be accessible to the public. The entire garage will have 514 stalls (TPA plus residential spaces combined). We are looking into potentially increasing the number of parking spaces built for residents

of the towers, however the City has been continually reducing parking space requirements for developments located on or close to rapid transit, such as St. Clair Place. This is partly an effort to reduce resident-generated traffic congestion. We are looking at ratio of three residential units per stall for St. Clair Place. Capital Developments' Yorkville development has a ratio of five residential units per stall by comparison.