



## Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: September 9, 2020

Report Number: SRPRS.20.106

Department: Planning and Regulatory Services

Division: Development Planning

**Subject: SRPRS.20.106 - Request for Comments – Site Plan Application – Urbacon Properties Limited – City File D06-19010**

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### Owner/Agent:

Urbacon Properties Limited  
750 Lake Shore Boulevard East  
Toronto, ON M4M 3M3

### Location:

Legal Description: \_\_Block 8 and Part of Block 6, Plan 65M-4114  
Municipal Address: \_10 Sofia Court

### Purpose:

A request for comments from Council with respect to a Site Plan application to facilitate the construction of a two storey data centre and warehouse on the subject lands.

### Recommendations:

- a) That Staff Report SRPRS.20.106 with respect to a Site Plan application submitted by Urbacon Properties Limited for lands known as Block 8 and Part of Block 6, Plan 65M-4114 (Municipal Address: 10 Sofia Court), City File D06-19010, be received and that all comments be referred back to staff.

### Contact Person:

Sarah Mowder, Planner I – Subdivisions, phone number 905-771-5475 and/or  
Deborah Giannetta, Manager of Development, Site Plans, phone number 905-771-5542

### Report Approval:

Submitted by: Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services

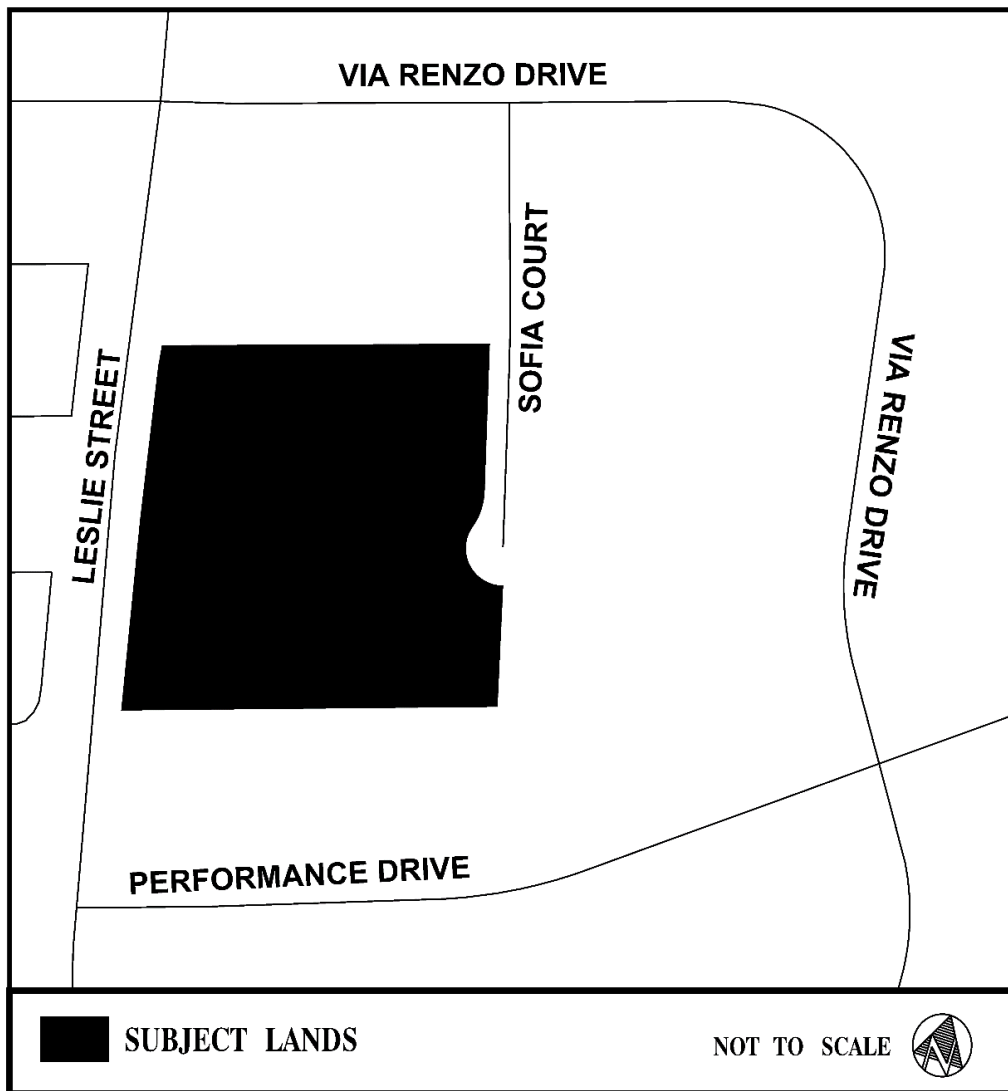
Approved by: Mary-Anne Dempster, City Manager

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All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

### Location Map:

Below is a map displaying the property location. Should you require an alternative format call person listed under “Contact Person” above.



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### Background:

The subject Site Plan application was received and deemed complete by the City on February 28, 2019. The application was subsequently circulated to relevant City departments and external agencies for review and comment.

The purpose of this report is to seek comments from Council with respect to the applicant's development proposal.

### Summary Analysis:

#### Site Location and Adjacent Uses

The subject lands are located southeast of the Leslie Street and Via Renzo Drive intersection within the Barker Business Park. The lands have a total lot area of 4.05 hectares (10.0 acres), with a lot frontage of approximately 142.3 metres (466.86 feet) along Sofia Court and approximately 207.83 metres (681.85 feet) along Leslie Street. The lands abut existing office buildings to the north, Leslie Street to the west, and a designated heritage property to the south (George Baker House, barn and outbuildings) (refer to Maps 1 and 2).

#### Development Proposal

The applicant is seeking approval of a Site Plan application to construct a two storey data centre and warehouse building with at-grade parking on the subject lands (refer to Maps 5 to 8). The following is a summary outlining the pertinent statistics of the applicant's development proposal based on the current plans and drawings submitted to the City:

- **Total Site Area:** **4.05 hectares (10.0 acres)**
  - **Developable Area:** **3.99 hectares (9.84 acres)**
  - **Road Widening (Leslie Street):** **0.06 hectares (0.16 acres)**
- **Building Height:** **14.0 metres (45.93 feet) or 2 storeys**
- **Gross Floor Area:** **13,251.5 square metres (142,638.0 square feet)**
- **Lot Coverage:** **33.2%**
- **Number of Parking Spaces:** **87 (including 5 barrier-free spaces)**
- **Proposed Bicycle Parking Spaces:** **9**

The main entrance to the building is proposed to be oriented towards Leslie Street. The parking area is proposed to be located along the north property line from Sofia Court to Leslie Street, with the majority of parking to be supplied along Sofia Court. Vehicular access is proposed to be from Sofia Court. Landscape treatments have been integrated into the site design with two berms proposed along the Leslie Street frontage and a selection of trees and vegetation proposed throughout the site (refer to Maps 5 and 6).

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A major component of the development proposal is the presence of outdoor mechanical equipment required to support the facility. The applicants are proposing to screen the facility with a 5.49-metre (18.0 feet) grey precast architectural screen wall, which will be constructed around the perimeter of the proposed building. It is noted that this architectural screen wall will be consistent with the architectural screen wall, which was approved and constructed at 80 Via Renzo Drive.

The proposed building spans a total length of approximately 173.85 metres (570.21 feet) along Leslie Street, resulting in a significant building prominence along a Regional arterial street. In this regard, City staff requested that the applicant provide more colour along the Leslie Street frontage. In addition to the proposed introduction of colour in the design of the front entrance at the northwest corner of the building, the applicant is also proposing an artwork element to be located along a segment of the architectural screen wall fronting Leslie Street. The artwork piece, as proposed by the applicant, is designed to be a minimum of 5 metres (16.4 feet) in height by 33 metres (108.27 feet) in length, and a total of 165.0 square metres (1,776.05 square feet) in size (refer to Map 8).

Further, the proposed artwork will be commissioned by the applicant. In support of the proposed piece, the applicant has submitted a document, as requested by the City's Urban Design Section, which highlights the theme and style of the proposed work and provides examples of the artist's previous works (refer to Appendix A). Further, other examples of the artist's work are included as Appendix B to this report. As described by the commissioned artist, the large-scale images will be aimed to appeal to the passerby and provide time for the commuters to enjoy.

The following is a summary of the proposed artwork:

- **Proposed Theme:**       **Community and Connectivity**
- **Proposed Style:**       **Bright Colours; Large-Scale; Hyper-Realism**

It should be noted that the applicant has not submitted conceptual designs of the proposed artwork at this time as details of the piece are under deliberation. City staff would like to provide the applicant with some creative freedom in designing the proposed artwork element and will continue to work with the applicant with respect to the form and content of the proposed artwork. It should be noted that the details related to the proposed artwork will be secured through the Site Plan Agreement for the proposed development.

### Supporting Documentation/Reports

The applicant has submitted the following documents/information to the City in support of the proposed development:

- Site Plan;
- Elevation Plans;
- Floor Plans;

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- Landscape Plan;
- Grading Plan;
- Servicing Plan;
- Exterior Lighting Plan;
- Streetscape Elevation Plan;
- Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment;
- Phase One Environmental Site Assessment;
- Water Balance Assessment; and,
- Sustainability Metrics.

### Planning Analysis:

#### City of Richmond Hill Official Plan

The subject lands are designated **Employment Area** in accordance with Schedule A2-Land Use of the City's Official Plan (refer to Map 3). Uses permitted within the **Employment Area** designation include predominantly high performance industrial, warehousing and office and major office uses as contemplated by the subject proposal. A maximum height of 5 storeys is permitted for all other *development* within the **Employment Area** apart from *major office*, *office* and hotels which are permitted to be a maximum of 10 storeys. The proposed development is to be two storeys in height, which is permitted in accordance with the applicable policies of the Plan.

**Section 4.8.1.2** of the Plan stipulates that development shall be designed to promote a prestige image and business environment through distinctive gateways and focal points within the City's business parks. The proposed development meets the criteria as identified in **Section 4.8.1.2.4** by proposing outdoor amenity space for employees, which includes benches, bicycle racks and bicycle shelters located at the main entrance of the building, which is oriented towards Leslie Street.

Further, the proposed development is in keeping with **Section 4.8.1.2.5** by providing appropriate fencing, tree plantings and landscaping along the frontage of Leslie Street, thereby enhancing the quality of the public realm by providing appropriate landscaping and streetscaping along public streets. In addition and pursuant to **Policy 4.8.1.2(3)**, development shall be assessed on the basis of conformity with the applicable Council approved Urban Design Guidelines for the area, as described below.

#### Barker Business Park Urban Design Guidelines

The Barker Business Park Urban Design Guidelines ("Guidelines") apply to the lands bound by Leslie Street, Highway 404, Major Mackenzie Drive and Elgin Mills Road, and provide a vision for the development of a "prestige", corporate-oriented business park with a focus on high quality design and landscape features. The primary design principles for the Business Park include visual and physical accessibility, including

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strong pedestrian connections, reinforcement of the site's prominence in the broader City and Regional context, enhancement of view/vistas and site views, and a comprehensive, cohesive image achieved through diverse and high-quality design. In addition, the Guidelines encourage the development of gateway points and edges that are designed to enhance the prominence and identity of the Business Park.

The proposed development is designed to introduce colour and vibrancy along Leslie Street through the proposed paint and window treatments at the main entrance of the building, as well as the proposed artwork. As previously mentioned, the proposed development consists of an architectural screen wall, which will run the perimeter of the building and shall provide a visual boundary barrier of the Business Park.

With respect to landscape features, the proposed Site Plan includes the installation of two berms along Leslie Street and a number of trees and vegetation planting around the site. The landscape buffer between Leslie Street and the proposed building is a minimum of approximately 23.97 metres (78.64 feet) wide. Pedestrian connectivity is to be achieved in and around the site by continuing the existing sidewalks along Leslie Street and Sofia Court, by constructing sidewalks across the site, and by connecting pedestrians from Sofia Court and the proposed parking areas to the main entrance of the proposed building.

Given all of the above, staff are satisfied that the proposed development achieves the objectives of the Barker Business Park Urban Design Guidelines.

### Zoning By-law

The subject lands are zoned **High Performance Commercial Industrial (MC-1) Zone** in accordance with By-law 150-80, as amended (refer to Map 4). Uses generally permitted within the **MC-1 Zone** include a range of commercial/industrial uses, including a data centre and warehouse as proposed by the subject application. Therefore, the proposed development is permitted under the **MC-1 Zone**. Additional comments respecting compliance with the development standards in the Zoning By-law have been provided by the City's Zoning Section in a subsequent section of this report.

### Sign By-law

As noted previously, the applicant is proposing the establishment of an artwork piece on the building elevation that is to front onto Leslie Street (refer to Map 8). In accordance with the City's Sign By-law 52-09, as amended, a "mural sign" is defined as "**any type of display or artistic endeavor that is applied as paint or film, or a sculpture to any external wall or other part of a Premises or structure, but shall not include any stained glass window of a Premises**". As such, in accordance with Section 7.8 of the Sign By-law, a "mural sign" requires Council approval. Given that the mural will not be executed until the site works and construction of the proposed building and proposed architectural wall are completed, the mural component will be brought forward for consideration at a future Council meeting.

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### **Department and External Agency Comments:**

The subject Site Plan application and associated drawings and reports submitted in support of same have been circulated to various City departments and external agencies for their review and comment. The following is a summary of the comments received with respect to the applicant's development proposal.

#### **Building Services Division – Zoning Section**

The City's Zoning Section has reviewed the application and has advised that additional information pertaining to the proposed building setbacks, screen wall setbacks, building height and parking spaces must be reflected on the submitted Site Plan. In addition, deficiencies have been noted with respect to the total number of parking spaces and proposed number of barrier free parking spaces. In this regard, a Minor Variance application will be required to support the proposed development.

#### **Development Engineering Division**

The City's Development Engineering Division has reviewed the development proposal and provided technical comments with respect to on-site circulation, parking, stormwater management, water balance, servicing and grading, and erosion and sediment control. Furthermore, Transportation staff recommend that the applicants seek relief through the Committee of Adjustment to address the proposed reduced parking supply.

#### **Urban Design and Heritage Section**

The City's Urban Design and Heritage Section has advised that they are satisfied with the design and configuration of the proposed building. Furthermore, staff supports the applicant's desire to include an artwork element along the Leslie Street frontage and are satisfied with the preliminary materials provided by the applicant in support of the proposed artwork. Urban Design staff will continue to work with the applicant to address final comments concerning the addition of colour elements at the main entrance of the proposed building and the works relating to the proposed mural.

#### **Fire and Emergency Services Division**

The City's Fire and Emergency Services Division has reviewed the applicant's most recent submission and indicated that additional information pertaining to the location of fire route signage and siamese connections shall be included in the plans.

#### **Regional Municipality of York**

The Regional Municipality of York has advised that they will be party to the Site Plan Agreement. The Region has reviewed the Site Plan application and requires that a portion of the lands be conveyed in support of the regional right-of-way (Leslie Street).

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### Other Departments and External Agencies

Comments have also been received from the City's Park and Natural Heritage Planning Section, Building Services Division – Building Section, Community Services Department – Waste Management Section, and Financial Services Division – Development Section, in addition to Alectra Utilities, Bell Canada, the Ministry of Transportation, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and Rogers Communication. These departments and external agencies have no objections to the application and/or have provided comments to be considered by the applicant during a more detailed implementation stage. All comments received by the City at the time of writing this report have been forwarded to the applicant for consideration but have not been appended to this report.

### Sustainability Metrics:

The applicant has submitted the required Sustainability Performance Metrics Tool in support of its development proposal. Individual scores are measured for both community-based and application-based metrics.

The Metrics Tool submitted in support of the Site Plan application demonstrates an Overall (application-based) score of 37 points and an Overall (community-based) score of 47 points, achieving a “Very Good” ranking for Site Plan applications for each category, respectively. The Overall score of 37 points is supported by the proposed sheltered bicycle racks, pedestrian access, tree plantings, rainwater runoff retention, and energy efficient toilets. The Metrics Tool has been circulated to relevant departments and is currently under review by City staff.

### Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

The recommendations of this report do not have any financial, staffing or other implications.

### Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

The applicant's development proposal would align with **Goal Two** of the Strategic Plan, **Better Choice in Richmond Hill** as it introduces more employment to the City. The proposed development is also generally aligned with **Goal Three, A More Vibrant Richmond Hill** as it will enhance the streetscape of the Barker Business Park on Leslie Street, and **Goal Four, Wise Management of Resources** as it is supported by the City's Sustainability Metrics.

### Conclusion:

The applicant has submitted a Site Plan application to the City to permit a two storey data centre and warehouse to be constructed on the subject lands. The application has been circulated to relevant City departments and external agencies for review and comment and at the time of writing this report, the proposal remains under review. In consideration of the preceding, it is recommended that this staff report be received by



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Council and that all comments regarding the proposed development be referred back to staff.

### **Attachments:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Map 1 – Aerial Photograph
- Map 2 – Neighbourhood Context
- Map 3 – Official Plan Designation
- Map 4 – Existing Zoning
- Map 5 – Proposed Site Plan
- Map 6 – Proposed Streetscape Rendering
- Map 7 – Proposed Elevations (North and South)
- Map 8 – Proposed Elevations (East and West)
- Map 9 – Proposed Landscape Plan
- Appendix A – Mural Design Package, Prepared by Urbacon Properties Limited
- Appendix B – Examples of Artist's Work

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### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPRS.20.106 - Request for Comments - D06-19010 - 10 Sofia Court.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- MAP 1 - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH.pdf</li><li>- MAP 2 - NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTEXT.pdf</li><li>- MAP 3 - OFFICIAL PLAN DESIGNATION.pdf</li><li>- MAP 4 - EXISTING ZONING.pdf</li><li>- MAP 5 - PROPOSED SITE PLAN.pdf</li><li>- MAP 6 - PROPOSED STREETScape.pdf</li><li>- MAP 7 - PROPOSED ELEVATION (NORTH EAST).pdf</li><li>- MAP 8 - PROPOSED ELEVATION (EAST WEST).pdf</li><li>- MAP 9 - PROPOSED LANDSCAPE PLAN.pdf</li><li>- Appendix A - Mural Design Package.pdf</li><li>- Appendix B - Examples of Artist's Work.pdf</li></ul>
Final Approval Date:	Aug 19, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Gus Galanis - Aug 18, 2020 - 3:01 PM**

**Kelvin Kwan - Aug 18, 2020 - 3:28 PM**

**MaryAnne Dempster - Aug 19, 2020 - 1:17 PM**