



January 12, 2023

MEMO TO: Sarah Mowder, Planner II
FROM: Steven Bell, Senior Urban Designer
SUBJECT: OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT / ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT
Applicant Name: Gil Shcolyar and Maria Shcolyar
Municipal Address: 16 and 20 Centre Street W
City File No.: OPA 22 0007 ZBLA 22 0022

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above noted application circulated to the Heritage and Urban Design Section for review. Staff have reviewed the proposal and are providing the following comments:

Proposal Summary:

The application proposes a 6-storey condominium apartment building (not including penthouse floor) located in the Village District (Downtown Local Centre) that contains 27 multi-level dwelling units, an FSI of 3.21 and 29 parking spaces.

General Comments:

The comments provided in this memorandum address both Official Plan policy and partial UD Guidelines considerations. These are provided early in the planning process and in an effort to evolve the conceptual design of the proposal. Notwithstanding, urban design staff will continue to provide comments on future submissions in response to any changes made to the application.

Detailed Comments:

A) URBAN DESIGN BRIEF		
Issue	Comments / Recommendations	Policy / UDG Ref.
1. UD Brief Application to Proposal	The Urban Design Brief as submitted addresses a number of aspects that attempt to speak to 'fit' of the proposed development and its relationship to the Village District, including compatibility of materiality and colour. Notwithstanding, we note that the design of the proposal itself could go a bit further to include a number of the design ideas expressed in the visuals and precedents cited throughout the UD Brief as described below.	OP 5.27

B) CONTEXT / ADJACENCIES

Issue		Policy / UDG Ref.
2. Context Streetscape Drawing	Please submit a streetscape elevation drawing to illustrate how the proposed building is situated on the length of the block (Centre Street W) and in relation to adjacent existing built-form, including buffer spaces, parking areas, etc. as described in the UD Brief on Page 15.	OP 3.4 Design Excellence

C) SITE DESIGN

Issue	Comments / Recommendations	Policy / UDG Ref.
3. Spot Elevations	Provide spot elevation information along exterior walkways in addition to what is shown for the interior areas;	Requested information

D) BUILT-FORM / MASSING AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

Issue	Comments / Recommendations	Policy / UDG Ref.
4. Floor Space Index	The proposal, set at 3.21 FSI, is located within the Village District and exceeds the allowable FSI set at 2.0 FSI by the Official Plan. The applicant is encouraged to reduce the FSI where possible in complying with OP policies.	OP 4.3.1.1.11
5. Building Height	The application proposes a height of 6 storeys plus the addition of a penthouse, noting that Official Plan policies for the Village District shall contain building heights up to a maximum of 5 storeys (with a base building of 3 storeys). The proposed height and form of the building may be considered, providing that a number of improvements made to the exterior elevation are incorporated into the design (see below).	OP 4.3.1.1.16 and 17. UDG 6.5 Midrise Buildings
6. Ground Floor Design	<p>Front Elevation: Additional energy should go into the ground floor exterior elevation to better reflect the programming of interior ground floor uses (i.e. lobby, amenity room, etc.) and create an improved presentation of the development towards the street. This includes creating a more interesting transition between the ground floor storey, balcony railing above (re: 2nd floor) and relationship to upper storeys. Also, given the mixed-use objectives of the Village District, the applicant should consider incorporating a retail component on the ground floor to support street animation and synergies with other non-residential uses in the locale.</p> <p>Front Entrance: Design the front entrance of the building to have a more welcoming presence through emphasis, amplification and/or greater articulation of material treatments including the massing of the entrance. Also, provide an entrance canopy as illustrated in the examples shown in the Urban Design Brief.</p> <p>East and South Elevations: To create additional visual interest, consider incorporating either spandrel glazing at select locations, an inset panel relief, or precast bandings to break down the horizontal expanse of blank brick walls (ground floor portions).</p>	OP 3.4 Place Making / Design Excellence OP 3.4.1 39

7. Penthouse

Size/bulk: Reduce the size/height of the penthouse to the greatest extent possible and use a different cladding material that is darker (i.e. similar to the tone of windows or darker brick) that contrasts with the red brick portion of the building. Given the simple rectilinear architectural expression of the building, the inscribed half-rounded arch feature should be reconsidered or omitted for the purpose of simplicity, relating to the overall design and broader District character.

3.4 Place Making / Design Excellence

8. Balconies

Amenity: Provide balconies for the 4th floor as a value added amenity for individual residential units (also, see Comment No. 9 related to balcony design).

3.4 Place Making / Design Excellence

9. Floors 2 – 5

The Village District character consists of modest residential and commercial buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries that inherently have a fine grain nature to their exterior architectural expression. This holds true for the majority of residential heritage buildings that line Centre Street West which have a collective sense of scale, rhythm and proportion in their fenestration design and distribution of openings across facades.

3.4 Place Making / Design Excellence

With reference to the mark-up below and to encourage a better fit with the architectural context of the street, the front elevation of the proposed building should be reconsidered to incorporate a stronger vertical articulated emphasis in the expression of façade elements (versus the elongated horizontal character attributed to the balcony design). We note that a number of examples cited in the applicant's Urban Design Brief would be better suited to the Village District character compared to what is proposed (see pg. 1, and 2/left side; and page 22/bottom). Applicable examples of other low to mid-rise/walk-up style apartment buildings are also included as an attachment for the applicant's reference.



NORTH ELEVATION

Greater vertical emphasis (at the column grid-lines) should be expressed and amplified through the façade (balcony) elements of the building in order to better relate to the heritage context of Centre Street

10. Parking Garage

Intake/Exhaust Vents: Identify the location of the all parking garage exhaust and intake vents on the site plan, ensure these are integrated into the exterior wall design of the building and architecturally treated where they are located in public facing zones or areas;

3.4 Design Excellence

Enclosure: Recommend that parking areas exposed at grade (beneath the building) be fully enclosed to the greatest extent possible in order address CPTED principles; provide a greater sense of comfort and improved surveillance of these areas.

11. Exterior Materials and Colours to be Secured

Upon submission of the Site Plan, the applicant will be required to complete the Exterior Material and Colour Schedule for the purpose of securing what is proposed for the exterior construction of the building. Please refer to the link below:

3.4 Design Excellence

<https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/shared-content/resources/documents/Exterior-Material-and-Colour-Schedule.pdf>

For future submissions, please have the applicant indicate how each of these comments has been addressed using a chart or spreadsheet format with any accompanying drawing packages.

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LOW-MIDRISE APARTMENT BUILDING PRECEDENTS AND EXAMPLES (Illustrating vertical façade emphasis)

