



Planning and Building Services Department  
Heritage and Urban Design (HUD)

September 9, 2024

**Memo To:** Giuliano La Moglie, Senior Planner – Development  
**From:** Kunal Chaudhry, Manager of Heritage and Urban Design

**Subject:** Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-Law Amendment

**Applicant Name:** M. Behar Planning and Design Ltd.  
**Municipal Address:** 539-563 Major Mackenzie Drive East and 148-158 Maple Avenue  
**Legal Description:** Part Lots 243, 249 and 250, Plan 2383  
**City File No.:** OPA-23-0010, ZBLA-23-0014  
**Related City File No.:** PRE-23-0094 (CAP)

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above noted Planning Act application and its accompanying supporting materials circulated to the Heritage and Urban Design (HUD) section. Urban Design staff have reviewed the materials in the first submission in accordance with the City’s *Official Plan* (OP) and Council approved *City-wide Urban Design Guidelines* (UDGs) and have provided the following comments:

**Proposal Summary:**

The lands are located west of Maple Avenue and south of Major Mackenzie Drive East. The subject lands fall within the Local Mixed Use Corridor land use designation as per Schedule A2 of the Official Plan, which permits a maximum FSI of 1.5 and maximum building heights of 4 storeys. The applications for Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBLA) request approval to permit two towers, 12 and 20 storeys in height connected by a 6-storey base building and density of 5.0 FSI. Urban Design staff note that a related Phase 2 – Collaborative Application Process first submission (PRE-23-0094) was reviewed, and comments provided on May 30, 2024.

**General Comments:**

It appears that the height, massing, and density of the proposed development is nearly identical to the submission that was reviewed through the Collaborative Application Process. A Comment Response Matrix was not provided, and it is not clear how Urban Design comments dated May 30, 2024 have been addressed.

The following comments have been provided to the applicant to maintain the City’s Urban Structure, and to ensure appropriate built form, transition, and compatibility with the existing neighbourhood and along Major Mackenzie Drive. To that effect, Urban Design staff are generally not supportive of the proposed heights. Until such time that matters related to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment applications are addressed, HUD shall defer any detailed design comments to a future resubmission. As such, comments related to these matters have been reiterated below, and should be addressed through a future resubmission.

## Detailed Comments:

### A) Built-Form / Massing and Conceptual Design

Issue	HUD Staff Comments	Reference
1. <b>Building Heights</b>	<p>Staff note that the applicant has proposed 2 towers of 12 and 20 storeys height with a 6-storey base building on the lands designated as Local Mixed-Use Corridor where building heights of 4 storeys are permitted. Under such circumstances, the proposed development is considered excessive and not in line with Richmond Hill's City Structure and associated Official Plan policies. While the City Structure does identify local corridors to facilitate moderate intensification, contextual limitations are important to understand.</p> <p>Given the existing context, where the subject lands are adjacent to low-rise, low-density residential units, the proposed building heights do not complement or create a synergized relationship. While Local Development Area lands are identified to accommodate intensification as a series of smaller scaled, mixed-use service hubs for adjacent neighborhoods, Local Mixed Use Corridor lands are meant to accommodate a much lesser scale of intensification and are meant to serve as connectors to adjacent Local Development Area and/or Local Centre lands. Therefore, staff does not consider the proposed development to be in alignment with the vision of the Official Plan.</p>	<b>OP 3.1.3.4</b> <b>OP 3.1.3.13</b> <b>OP 4.7.1(2)</b>
2. <b>Transition to Neighborhood</b>	<p>Further to the above, staff emphasize the need for appropriate transition to the Neighbourhood designated lands abutting and adjacent to the subject lands. The proposed building heights of 12 and 20 storeys do not adhere to the transition policies of the Official Plan, specifically, the 45-degree angular plane policies. Moreover, the proposed heights create a contrasting, and noticeably out of scale, massing adjacent to low-rise, low-density residential dwellings. It should be noted that the intent of the city-wide Urban Design Guidelines, is to foster comfortable and context-sensitive development that provides appropriate transition to existing low-rise, low-density residential neighbourhoods to the south and to the north of the subject lands. To that effect, the applicant shall conduct an angular plane analysis from properties to the north and across the street from Major Mackenzie Drive for the subject lands, i.e., a 45 degree angular plane shall be measured, and adhered to, from the property lines of the Neighbourhood designated properties to the north of Major Mackenzie Drive.</p>	<b>OP 3.4.1.55</b> <b>UDG 3.5</b> <b>UDG 6.2.8</b> <b>UDG 6.6.50</b>
3. <b>Compatibility to Context</b>	<p>The immediate area is characterized by low-rise, low-density residential dwellings, approximately 1 to 2 storeys in height. While some assessment</p>	<b>OP 3.1.4</b> <b>OP 4.7.1</b> <b>UDG 5.1.5</b>

has been provided in the Urban Design Brief regarding compatibility with the existing context, the applicant should further elaborate and explain how the proposed heights of 12 and 20 storeys atop a 6-storey base building achieve a context-sensitive fit and scale with the existing and adjacent low-rise, low-density residential neighbourhood.

For future submissions, please have the applicant indicate how the comments in this memorandum have been addressed using a chart or spreadsheet format. Relevant drawing packages and any additional supporting materials required to address the comments above, or where changes are proposed, shall be provided in subsequent submissions.

Regards,



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