

Memorandum

Issued By: Anne McIlroy / Nathan Flach
Brook McIlroy Inc.
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Date: July 10, 2023

Paul Kulyk, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner – Planning Division, Growth Management Services
King Township
2585 King Road
King City, ON L7B 1A1

Re: **326 Main Street, Schomberg ZBA and SPA Urban Design Peer Review**

Dear Paul,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the urban design aspects of the application materials submitted to the Town in June, 2023 in support of a Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control application. Brook McIlroy provided informal commentary on the previous submission of the proposed development in November of 2022. Comments primarily focused on built form elements of the proposed development, which is a 6-storey residential building attached to a 2-storey commercial use within the existing heritage building on the Subject Site.

Our comments are provided below and are organized into the categories of Site Design & Interfaces, Site Access & Circulation, Building Massing & Transitions, Building Façade Design & Materials, and Amenity Space & Landscaped Open Space. These comments should be read in conjunction with those of all other commenting agencies. Should any conflicting information arise between these and other comments/recommendations, Township staff will work with the applicant to arrive at a solution that achieves the objectives of all commenting agencies.

1. Site Design & Interfaces

a) North

The north portion of the Subject Site is bound by the rear yard of 344 Main Street, a residential property.

The proposed development locates the loading area and a series of surface parking stalls in the north portion of the site. A 3.0 metre green buffer and ornamental metal fence is provided abutting the north property line and low-level plantings will be provided. **This will appropriately buffer the surface parking from the adjacent property.**

The ground floor of the building is set back approximately 17.18 metres from the north property line. At the 3rd storey, the north portion of the building cantilevers above the driveway and is set back approximately 5.5 metres from the north property line. At the 5th and 6th storeys the north elevation is set back approximately 12.3 metres from the north property line. **The provided setbacks from the north property line and various step-backs as the building rises are appropriate and do not project into a 45-degree angular plane beginning 5.5m from the property line at a height of 10.5m above grade.**

b) East

The east portion of the Subject Site is bound by Dufferin Marsh, which contains walking trails adjacent to the Subject Site.

The proposed development includes a two-way drive aisle and a series of surface parking stalls at the east portion of the Subject Site. The site plan shows a proposed connection to the walking trails beyond the property line accessed through a new opening in the existing fence. The softscaped area includes a green buffer of varied width and three proposed trees. Several existing trees flank the east property line, and the existing landscaped area at the northwest corner of the site is maintained to provide infiltration area for the health of existing trees.

At grade, the proposed development provides a setback ranging between 14.81 metres and 23.59 metres from the east property line due to the irregular angle of the lot line as well as a recession of the façade at the southeast corner. At the 3rd storey a portion of the east elevation cantilevers over the driveway and is setback from the property line between 5.4 metres and 7.11 metres. At the 6th storey the east elevation is setback minorly. **The east portion of the Subject Site is appropriately sculpted to allow for site circulation at grade and allows suitable building massing along the east side of this underutilized site while limiting shadow and visual impacts on the adjacent Dufferin Marsh land.**

c) **South**

The south portion of the Subject Site is bound by 314 Main Street, a commercial property to the southwest, and slopes down to existing low-lying marsh land to the southeast.

The proposed development includes a two-way drive aisle along the south portion of the property. At the southwest, two small surface parking areas will serve the commercial use in the existing two-storey heritage building as well as any short term parking for pick up and drop off. **A 1.65 metre sidewalk has been provided at the south edge of the drive aisle to allow for pedestrian access to the subject site. It is recommended that the sidewalk width be expanded to a minimum of 2.1 metres to promote accessibility, by reducing the vehicle travel area to 6.6 metres in width from 7.2m.** The entrance to the underground parking is located at the south elevation of the proposed building. A turnaround area is provided to allow efficient vehicle movement to the pick up and drop off area. A commercial patio is located at the south side of the existing 2-storey heritage building.

The south elevation includes the entrance to the underground parking level as well as a covered walkway for the primary entrance of the residential building. Due to the irregular angle of the property line, the proposed building is set back at grade by 30.58 metres at the nearest point, and more than 40m toward the west. At the 2nd storey, the building cantilevers slightly to the south, providing a minimum 27.7-metre setback at the nearest point, expanding to nearly 37 metres toward the west.

Although most residential unit access is located within corridors, two units are directly accessed from the main building lobby. As a result, noise and privacy may be a concern for these residents. **An additional wall or screen within the lobby could provide some privacy, prevent direct views into units from the building entrance door, and encourage residents to stay to the east side of the lobby to access the elevator core. Placement of unit access doors toward the west end of the units will also help to avoid excessive pedestrian traffic passing enroute to the elevators.**

d) **West**

The west portion of the Subject Site is bound by Main Street. The right-of-way includes two sidewalks abutting the roadbed. Beyond Main Street is the Schomberg Community Hall.

The west portion of the proposed development includes the vehicular and pedestrian entrance to the Subject Site, as well as a surface parking area containing 9 spaces.

The west portion of the Subject Site contains the existing 2-storey heritage building which is 37.83 metres from the west property line, measured from the enclosed porch. A glazed extension at the rear of the heritage building connects it with the proposed mid-rise building. **Note there is a dimensioning error in the proposed building setback from the west property line to the new building, which currently reads '25.2'.** An accessible entrance via ramp to the commercial component's main entrance is provided.

The glazed extension at the rear of the heritage building is a sensitive and contextually-appropriate approach to extending the restaurant uses into the new building. To ensure privacy for the adjacent private patio space, the division between the proposed north restaurant-related outdoor patio and the private patio should include solid screening that provides privacy and mitigates noise.

2. Site Access & Circulation

a. Pedestrian Access & Accessibility

The proposed site plan includes a pedestrian sidewalk along the south edge of the driveway connecting Main Street to the secondary surface parking area.

Overall, the proposed development has provided a series of pedestrian crosswalks that will aid in safe site circulation and access for pedestrians. Three pedestrian crosswalks are located along the south portion of the Subject Site. The crosswalk connected to the at-grade accessible parking spaces and the crosswalk connecting across the entrance to the underground parking level are well positioned and enhance site circulation. An angled pedestrian crosswalk extends the pedestrian pathway across the driveway to an area between the heritage building and the proposed mid-rise building, providing access to both residential and commercial uses.

The south elevation of the proposed mid-rise building contains the primary entrance to the building. The entry is covered by a cantilevered portion of the building which will support pedestrian access by providing protection from inclement weather. There is discontinuity between the Landscape and Architectural drawings with respect to the design and seating locations of the south covered colonnade flanking the main building entrance and underground garage access. **West of the parking garage ramp along the amenity space frontage, it is recommended that benches be placed close to the building wall to maximize pedestrian clearway width below the overhang. East of the parking garage ramp adjacent to the private 2-bedroom dwelling, it is recommended that benches be placed in line with structural columns, and space under the overhang being reassigned as additional private outdoor amenity (patio) space for the 2-bedroom unit. This will make better use of the space and maintain privacy for residents of this particular unit.**

b. Vehicle Access & Parking

The proposed site plan provides vehicular access from the west of the property from Main Street. The proposed development provides one consolidated curb cut. Vehicle circulation in the proposed development generally balances ease of access to the commercial and residential uses with site landscaping.

c. Bicycle Access & Parking

The proposed development includes a total of 26 bicycle parking spaces, including 23 for residential use and 3 for restaurant use. A total of 8 bicycle parking spaces are located outdoors and 18 are located in the underground parking level. **Consideration should be given to expand the number of bicycle parking spaces by locating additional hangers within underused (hatched) areas of the parking level, where appropriate.**

In case of increased demand for long-term bicycle parking beyond the provided spaces, the applicant should consider provisions for additional future wall-mounted bicycle parking rings installed between vehicle parking spaces in the underground parking area. These can be provided for residents on an on-demand basis.

3. Building Massing & Transitions

In combination with the building materiality and façade design discussed below, the building massing has a tripartite expression and transitions well across the site by concentrating increased density where it is appropriate. Brook McIlroy is supportive of the proposed building massing and transitions to various neighbouring uses, considering both existing conditions and potential future development.

The provided site sections indicate that the majority of the building massing is contained within 45 degree angular planes drawn at appropriate setback distances from the property lines. In

combination with landscaping buffer measures, this provides for appropriate transitions to the surrounding uses, and incursions into the angular plane are considered minor and acceptable.

The height of the proposed development is greater than what was generally contemplated in the 2006 Schomberg Village Centre Urban Design Guidelines, which, 17 years ago, did not anticipate mid-rise forms. **Recent development trends in King Township, the size and depth of the lot, and adjacent open spaces and uses cause us to determine that the massing approach proposed is appropriate for the Subject Site.**

4. Building Façade Design & Materials

The proposed development expresses a tripartite design with a light polished stone block masonry base, red brick masonry middle, and polished grey stone upper portion. The proposed materials are typically durable and should weather well over time if correctly installed. The light lower and upper portions frame the red brick middle of two to three storeys, maintaining a sense of solidity while also diminishing the visual impact of the massing. The east elevation includes a balance of red masonry and light grey stone masonry to break up the façade and diminish the apparent width of the elevation.

The red brick facade is complemented by white quoining at the corners of the proposed building. This enhances the new construction's relationship with the existing heritage building which features similar detailing. However, the architectural approach of the proposed building is thoroughly contemporary and does not seek to inappropriately replicate the heritage building. A two storey connection between the existing and proposed buildings is appropriately scaled and the south façade is glazed to underscore the distinct nature of each building.

The residential units include access to private balconies expressed as inset or protruding balconies, or as joined terraces where setbacks occur. Balconies facing the west are frosted to minimize privacy concerns. **On all elevations, it is recommended that bird friendly glazing techniques be applied to both balcony and window glazing within 16 metres above grade.** This will limit bird collisions and is particularly important given the Subject Site's proximity to Dufferin Marsh.

5. Amenity Space & Landscaped Open Space

The proposed development provides approximately 3,301 square metres of landscaped area, excluding paved walkways and curbs. Proposed amenity spaces include private amenity patios and balconies (1,042 square metres), an indoor amenity at the 2nd storey (91 square metres), a rooftop amenity space (310 square metres), and at grade amenity space (150 square metres) accommodated between two spaces proximate to the residential lobby.

At the southeast of the proposed building is an area labeled "Garden Patio" and also serves as snow removal storage in winter. **It is recommended that this space include landscaped beds adjacent to the building wall at the west to buffer and provide privacy for the residential unit from pedestrians. The addition of seasonal seating within the patio area is encouraged.**

Notwithstanding rationale for locating it where indicated on the second floor, **Brook McIlroy recommends considering an alternative location at grade for the 2nd storey amenity space. Good candidate locations include at the southeast corner adjacent to the parking ramp, or adjacent to the proposed extension to the heritage building.** A relocation could help to limit potential noise concerns associated with amenity spaces adjacent to residential units.

The rooftop amenity space will be a positive addition to the proposed development. **It is recommended that the rooftop amenity space be designed for maximum usability with communal seating and programming such as a barbeque area to activate the space. Pergolas, sun shades, and wind breaks should be considered in order to allow residents to enjoy the space in a variety of weather conditions.**

It is noted that significant existing naturalized open space on-site is proposed to be preserved as part of the development, including a variety of new plantings on the south side of the building. Protecting

and enhancing the wetland buffer can be considered a positive result of the proposed development, as well as providing new connections to existing open spaces and pathways in Dufferin Marsh.

This concludes our comments on the provided documents. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to offer a constructive review for this important site in Schomberg. We look forward to reviewing any future revisions to the submission materials and will be happy to provide further comments at that time.

Should you have any questions regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact us anytime.

Sincerely,



Anne McIlroy, BArch, FRAIC, RPP, FCIP
Principal



Nathan Flach, Architect OAA, AIBC, MRAIC
Principal