

40-58 Widmer Street - Zoning Amendment Application - Preliminary Report

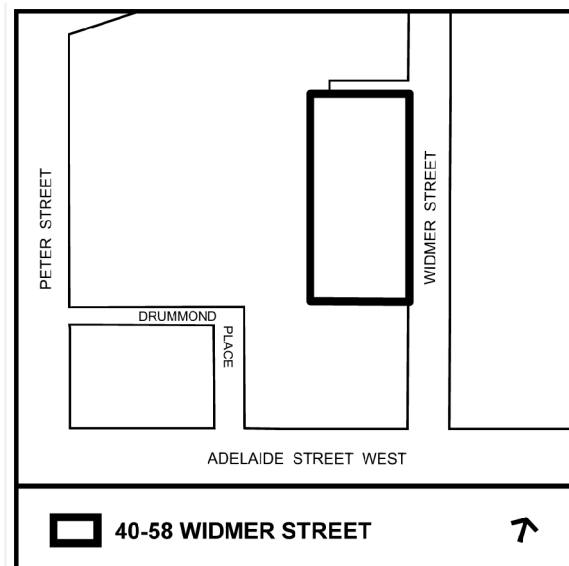
Date:	April 19, 2013
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	12 188716 STE 20 OZ

SUMMARY

This application proposes to demolish the existing five, 2 ½-storey rowhouses at 40-48 Widmer Street, a 2 ½-storey detached house at 50 Widmer Street, and four 2 ½ storey semi-detached houses at 52-58 Widmer Street, to develop a 40-storey mixed-use building with a 4-storey podium, ground and second floor commercial uses and 380 residential units above. The proposed overall height of the building would be 136 metres including a mechanical penthouse. The proposed building includes four levels of below grade parking with 73 resident parking spaces and 388 bicycle parking spaces.

This report provides preliminary information on the above-noted application and seeks Community Council's directions on further processing of the application.

A community consultation meeting was hosted by City Planning on December 10, 2012 which enabled the public to review the applicant's submission and ask questions of City staff and the applicant. A final report will be targeted for the fourth quarter of 2013, subject to any required information being provided by the applicant in a timely manner.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Notice for the public meeting under the Planning Act be given according to the regulations under the Planning Act.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

Pre-Application Consultation

A pre-application consultation meeting was held with the applicant to discuss complete application submission requirements on March 22, 2012. Staff raised concerns related to separation distances for the tower portion of the building in the context of surrounding buildings, and whether the existing buildings on the site could be retained in some way. These issues identified by City Staff have not been addressed in the current submission.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Proposal

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing five 2 ½-storey rowhouses at 40-48 Widmer Street, a 2 ½-storey detached house at 50 Widmer Street, and four 2 ½ storey semi-detached houses at 52-58 Widmer Street, to develop a 40-storey mixed-use building on the lands at 40-58 Widmer Street. The building will contain ground and second floor commercial uses, and 380 residential units above. The mix of units includes 24 bachelor (6%) units, 216 (57%) one-bedroom/one-bedroom plus den units, and 140 (37%) two-bedroom/two-bedroom plus den units.

The total gross floor area of the building is 30,389 square metres, which includes 29,807 square metres of residential gross floor area and 582 square metres of commercial gross floor area. The tower floorplate is approximately 743 square metres from the 6th to the 40th level. The overall density of the proposal is 20.1 times the area of the lot.

The proposed building height is 130 metres to the top of the 40th storey and an additional 6 metres to include the mechanical penthouse. At the base of the tower is a 4-storey podium (approximately 16 metres in height) that is set back approximately 6.0 metres from the west property line. The tower component is designed in a north-south orientation. The tower is setback approximately 6.4 metres to the north and south lot lines, 6 metres to the west lot line and 2.3 metres to the east lot line.

Also proposed is a total of 761 square metres of indoor amenity space located on the third and fifth levels and a total of 461 square metres of outdoor amenity space entirely located on the podium roof level. Twelve trees are proposed to be removed that are either on or within 6 metres of the subject site and they are to be replaced with 6 trees along Widmer

Street. The width of the Widmer Street sidewalk from the building face to the curb is approximately 4 metres. This sidewalk area will include trees, planters and upgraded paving treatment. The width of the sidewalk from the edge of the tree trenches to the curb is approximately 1.7 metres.

Vehicular access occurs from Widmer Street, at the southern edge of the site, with a driveway wrapping the western boundary of the site towards the below-grade parking entrance and loading area. Proposed is one Type 'G' loading space, internalized at ground level. Four levels of underground parking are proposed with a total of 73 residential vehicular parking spaces and zero spaces for visitors.

A total of 388 of bicycle parking spaces are proposed consisting of; 306 resident spaces located on the fourth level underground, and 6 resident and 76 visitor bicycle spaces are to be located on the ground level. Additional site and development statistics are included in the Application Data Sheet as Attachment 6.

The application was originally submitted in June 2012. At that time, staff did not have detailed information on the number of rental units on site or an analysis of whether the buildings on site had any heritage significance. Without that information staff was not able to determine on what basis the application should move forward. Now that more detailed information has been provided, staff can continue to process the application and work with the applicant to resolve other issues identified in this report.

Site and Surrounding Area

The site is located within Toronto's "Entertainment District" on the west side of Widmer Street between Richmond Street West and Adelaide Street West. The total area of the site is approximately 1,513 square metres, with a 56.7 metre frontage along Widmer Street and a depth that ranges from 26.5 to 27.5 metres.

The site is currently comprised of ten low-rise, house-form buildings. Most have been occupied in recent years by the Canadiana Backpackers Inn for their hostel operations. At the time of application in 2012, there were only two residential owner-occupied units, one of which also operated as a live-work premise.

The buildings and uses surrounding the site include:

North: is a row of five 2 ½-storey converted row houses occupied by Canadiana Backpackers Inn. Beyond is a 2 ½-storey detached house and four 2 ½-storey semi-detached houses and an approximate 3.35 metre wide public lane. Fronting onto Richmond Street West is a row of five 2 ½-storey converted row houses. The row-houses are predominantly occupied by commercial-office uses.

South: is an approximate 3.7 metre private lane, an 8-storey warehouse building that fronts onto Adelaide Street West. To the west of the warehouse building is a 2-storey building with a restaurant, and further west is a 6-storey office building. At the northeast corner of Adelaide Street West and Peter Street (southwest of

the subject property) is a site that has recently been approved for a 40-storey tower that is currently under construction.

West: is a 9-storey tall office building that fronts onto Peter Street and on the southeast corner of Richmond Street West and Peter Street (northwest of the subject property) is a site that has recently been approved for a 36-storey tower that is currently under construction.

East: adjacent to the site is Widmer Street, and opposite on the east side is a large multi-storey entertainment retail complex known as RioCan Hall (formerly Festival Hall). This complex occupies the majority of the block bounded by Richmond Street West, Adelaide Street West, John Street and Widmer Street. The Widmer Street façade of the complex is primarily garage doors, loading areas and blank walls.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. The key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and, protecting public health and safety. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including: directions for where and how to grow; the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Staff will review the proposed development for consistency with the PPS and for conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Official Plan

The Official Plan locates the subject site within the *Downtown and Central Waterfront* area on Map 2 – Urban Structure. The Official Plan identifies the *Downtown and Central Waterfront* as one of the areas which can accommodate a vibrant mix of residential and employment growth. The Official Plan states that the *Downtown* will continue to evolve as a healthy and attractive place to live and work, as new development that supports the reurbanization strategy and the goals for *Downtown*, is attracted to the area.

Although the Plan identifies that the *Downtown* as one of the areas which can accommodate growth, Section 3.1.3 identifies that tall buildings are desirable in the right places, but also acknowledges that they are not appropriate in all locations. When tall buildings are poorly located or designed, they can physically and visually overwhelm adjacent streets, parks and neighbourhoods. The Plan acknowledges that tall buildings

are also only one form of intensification. Most of the proposed intensification is anticipated to be achieved with street oriented, grade related or mid-rise type buildings.

The site is designated *Regeneration Areas* in the City of Toronto Official Plan which permits the proposed residential and commercial uses. Chapter 6.16 of the Official Plan contains the King-Spadina Secondary Plan. The King-Spadina Secondary Plan emphasizes the reinforcement of the characteristics and qualities of the area through special attention to built form and the public realm. In particular, the policies of Chapter 3, Built Form specify that new buildings will achieve a compatible relationship with their built form context through consideration of such matters as building height, massing, scale, setbacks, step-backs, roof line and profile and architectural character and expression. Buildings in the King-Spadina area shall also be sited and massed to provide adequate light, view and privacy for neighbouring properties.

Zoning

The subject property is zoned Reinvestment Area (RA) by Zoning By-law 438-86, as amended. Refer to Attachment 5. The RA Zone permits a range of residential uses such as commercial, institutional and limited industrial uses. As part of the RA zoning controls, density standards were replaced by built form objectives expressed through height limits and setbacks.

The Zoning By-law permits a maximum building height of 30 metres for this property with an additional 5 metres for rooftop mechanical elements. The Zoning By-law also contains a number of requirements related to building setbacks from the front, side and rear lot lines, including a 3 metre step-back above 20 metres for buildings facing a public street.

King-Spadina Secondary Plan Review and King-Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study (2009)

The subject site falls within the Warehouse District as identified within the King-Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study, which was considered by Council in 2009.

The Study included the principle that heights generally decrease from east to west (University Avenue to Spadina Avenue), and from south to north (Front Street to Queen Street West). Within this general height trend are areas of localized conditions where additional height may be permitted so long as various built-form criteria are met. It is noted in the Study that the built form character of the Warehouse District is a main feature of the King-Spadina area and is the character that the Secondary Plan policies seek to protect.

The King-Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study also provides for a two-tier height approach. Development proposals aiming to achieve the “Second Tier” height permissions are to be considered in light of the policy objectives in the King-Spadina planning framework as well as the built form standards that apply to any tall building development in the city, including but not limited to: respect for heritage in the immediate context; preservation of sunlight on important pedestrian streets; conformity

with the King-Spadina Built Form Guidelines; and, achieving a 25 metre tower separation and a maximum 750 square metre floor plate to address light, view and privacy.

Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals

Toronto City Council approved the use of the document, “Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals” (Tall Buildings Guidelines) in June, 2006 on a pilot basis, and it was endorsed by Council in May 2010. The Tall Buildings Guidelines provide policy recommendations for tall buildings on issues of transition, building placement and orientation, entrances, heritage conservation, massing of base buildings, tower floorplates, separation distances, pedestrian realm considerations and sustainable design.

The City’s “Design Criteria for Review of Tall Buildings Proposals” can be found on the City’s website at <http://www.toronto.ca/planning/urbdesign/index.htm>.

The Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals provide direction on matters related to the scale of buildings, building floor plates and spatial separation. Key criteria in the Guidelines are minimum facing distances of 25 metres between towers in order to achieve appropriate light and privacy, minimum side and rear yard tower setbacks of 12.5 metres, and tower floor plates that are no larger than 743 square metres to break down the massing of the building.

Rental Housing

Planning staff reviewed the recent history of the uses of all of the properties, in addition to undertaking a site visit with the building owner and applicant, to determine if there had been rental housing uses since July 2007 when the City's By-law on rental demolition and conversion (under Section 111 of the City of Toronto Act) came into effect. The By-law applies if there are 6 or more residential dwelling units, of which at least one is a rental unit. The Official Plan policy 3.2.1.6 applies if six or more rental units would be affected by proposed demolition.

Staff determined that in 2007, at most there were five residential units, three of which were owner-occupied. At that time, the residential uses were owned by three separate owners. Although there may have been one or two rental units in 2007, the threshold of 6 residential units was not met. By the time of the planning application in 2012 when the properties were all subject of the same application, only two residential units remained, both owner-occupied. Therefore, neither the Official Plan policy on rental demolition, nor the Section 111 By-law, applies.

Site Plan Control

The proposed development is subject to site plan approval. A Site Plan Control application has not yet been submitted but shall be required.

Heritage Preservation

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared by E.R.A. Architects Inc., dated March 26, 2013 has been submitted for City staff review. The purpose of the HIA is to provide information on the heritage resources that may be affected by the proposed redevelopment of the subject property. The HIA proposes an overall approach to the conservation of the cultural heritage value of the property and its heritage attributes.

Tree Preservation

A Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan Report was submitted for this application. It indicates that there are 12 existing trees on and within 6 metres of the site. This report is under review by City Forestry staff.

Community Consultation

A Community Consultation meeting was held on December 10, 2012, with the local Councillor, Planning Staff, the applicant and approximately 75 members of the public. The meeting started with presentations from Planning Staff and the applicant followed by questions and concerns from those in attendance. Some of the concerns raised included:

- the potential retention and designation of the house form buildings on-site;
- concerns with the proposed height, and density of the building;
- concerns with the tower separation distances;
- the length (north-south) of the building along Widmer Street as it is a very narrow street;
- provision of public parking below grade to alleviate current area parking issues; and
- the potential for more commercial space within the building.

These issues are also noted in the "Issues to be Resolved" section of this report, and will be considered during the on-going review of the application.

Reasons for the Application

The proposed building exceeds the maximum height of 30 metres by approximately 100 metres. In addition, there are deficiencies with the proposed outdoor amenity space, setbacks, the number of resident and visitor vehicular parking spaces, the dimension of the parking spaces, among other technical issues.

Additional areas of non-compliance with the zoning may be identified through the review of this application.

COMMENTS

Application Submission

The following reports/studies were submitted with the application:

- Architectural Plans, Elevations and Sections
- Perspective Drawings

- 3-D Massing Model
- Planning Rationale
- Community Services and Facilities Study
- Toronto Green Standards Checklist
- Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment
- Pedestrian Level Wind Study
- Sun/Shadow Study
- Traffic Impact and Parking Study
- Phase 1 Environmental Assessment Study
- Functional Servicing
- Stormwater Management Report
- Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan Report

A Notification of Complete Application was issued on June 15, 2012. A Heritage Impact Assessment was submitted on April 5, 2013.

Issues to be Resolved

Issues to be addressed through the review of this application include, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. conformity with the existing Urban Structure and Built Form policies of the King-Spadina Secondary Plan, including the requirement that development result in a built form and massing which is complementary to the historic physical fabric of the area;
2. conformity with the Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals including transition in scale, tower separation distances, adjacency issues, and pedestrian realm. In particular, the separation distances currently proposed are not supportable and will need to be increased;
3. provision for reduced on-site resident and visitor parking including impacts on the supply of on-street parking in the area;
4. traffic and access circulation;
5. shadow impacts on Queen Street West and the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District;
6. the mix of unit sizes; and
7. how the proposed development responds to the heritage character of the area.

Additional issues may be identified through further review, circulation to City Divisions and the community consultation process.

Toronto Green Standard

The Toronto Green Standard (TGS) is a tool to implement the broader environmental policies of the Official Plan. Several of the natural environment policies of the Official Plan encourage green development. These policies are geared to reduce the negative impacts of development on the natural environment through practices such as improved stormwater management, water and energy efficiency, and waste reduction and recycling.

These policies also promote development that enhances the natural environment and support green industry.

The TGS Checklist has been submitted by the applicant and is currently under review by City staff for compliance with the Tier 1 performance measures.

Section 37

Should the application proceed to approval, a Section 37 contribution will be recommended.

CONTACT

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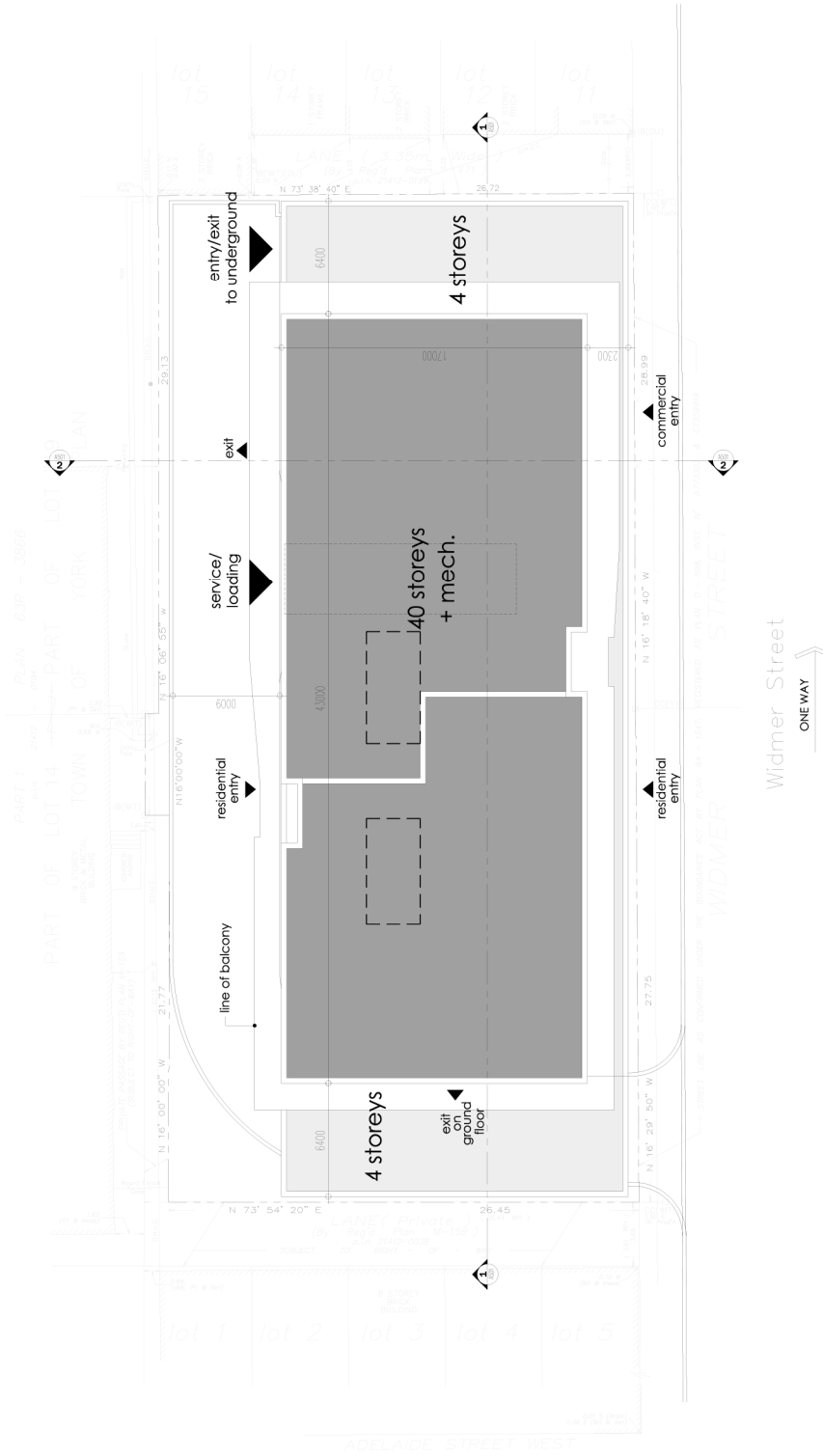
Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning
Toronto and East York District

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Site Plan
Attachment 2: East Elevation
Attachment 3: West Elevation
Attachment 4: North and South Elevations
Attachment 5: Zoning Map
Attachment 6: Application Data Sheet

Attachment 1: Site Plan



Site Plan

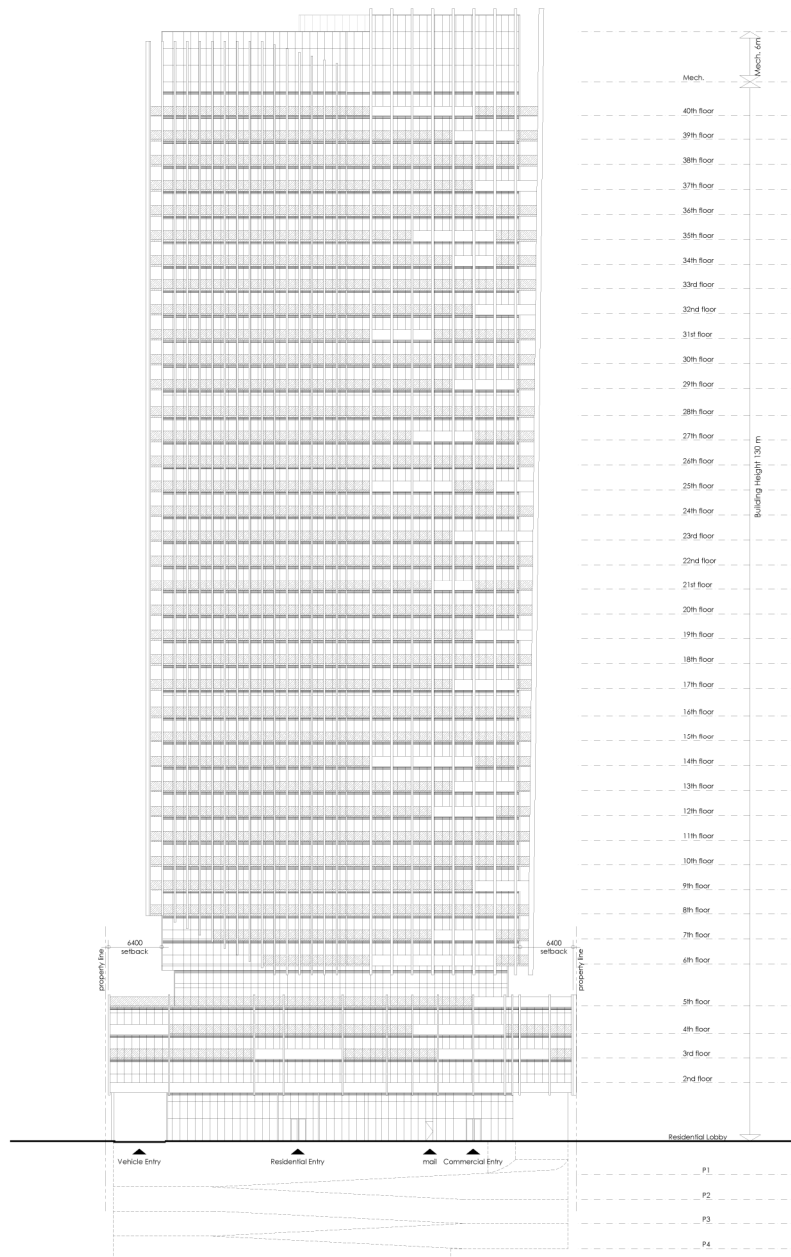
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
08/01/2012

40-58 Widmer Street

File # 12 188716 0Z

Attachment 2: East Elevation



East Elevation

Elevation

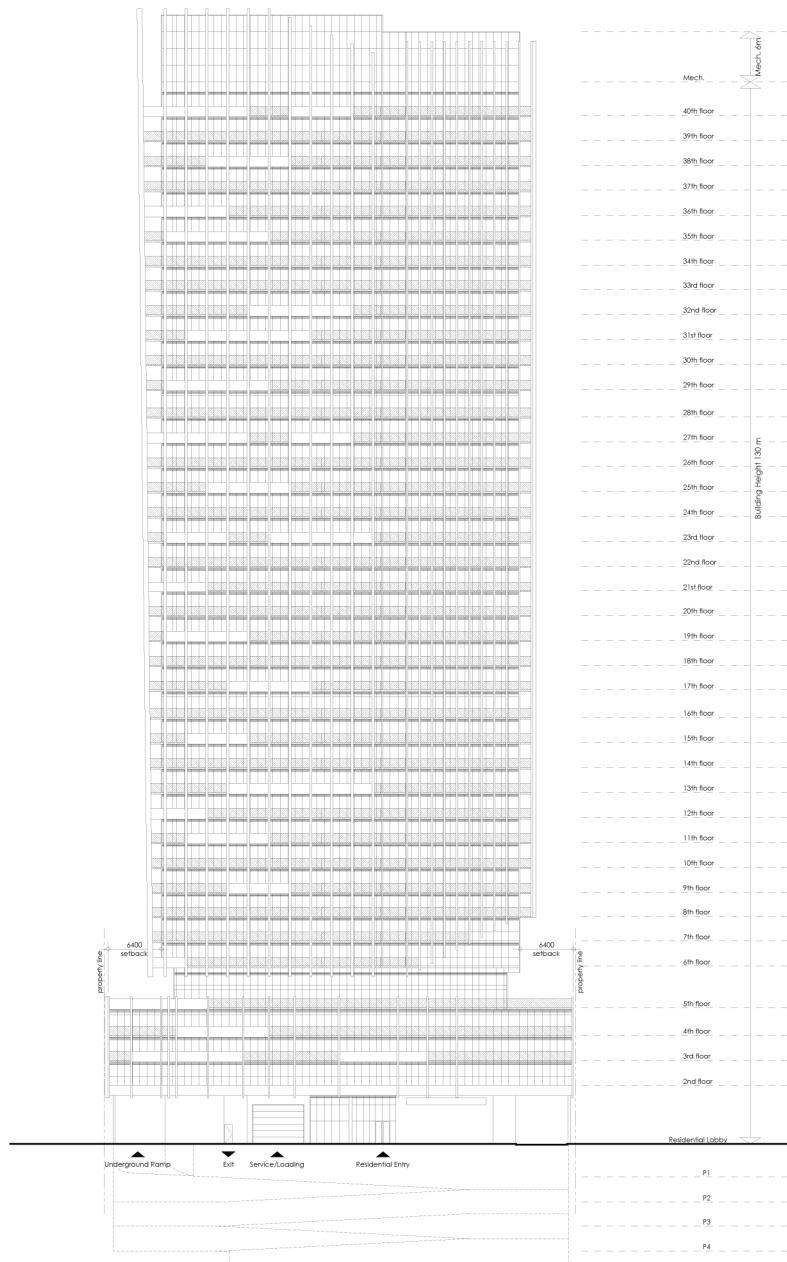
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
08/01/2012

40-58 Widmer Street

File # 12 188716 0Z

Attachment 3: West Elevation



West Elevation

Elevation

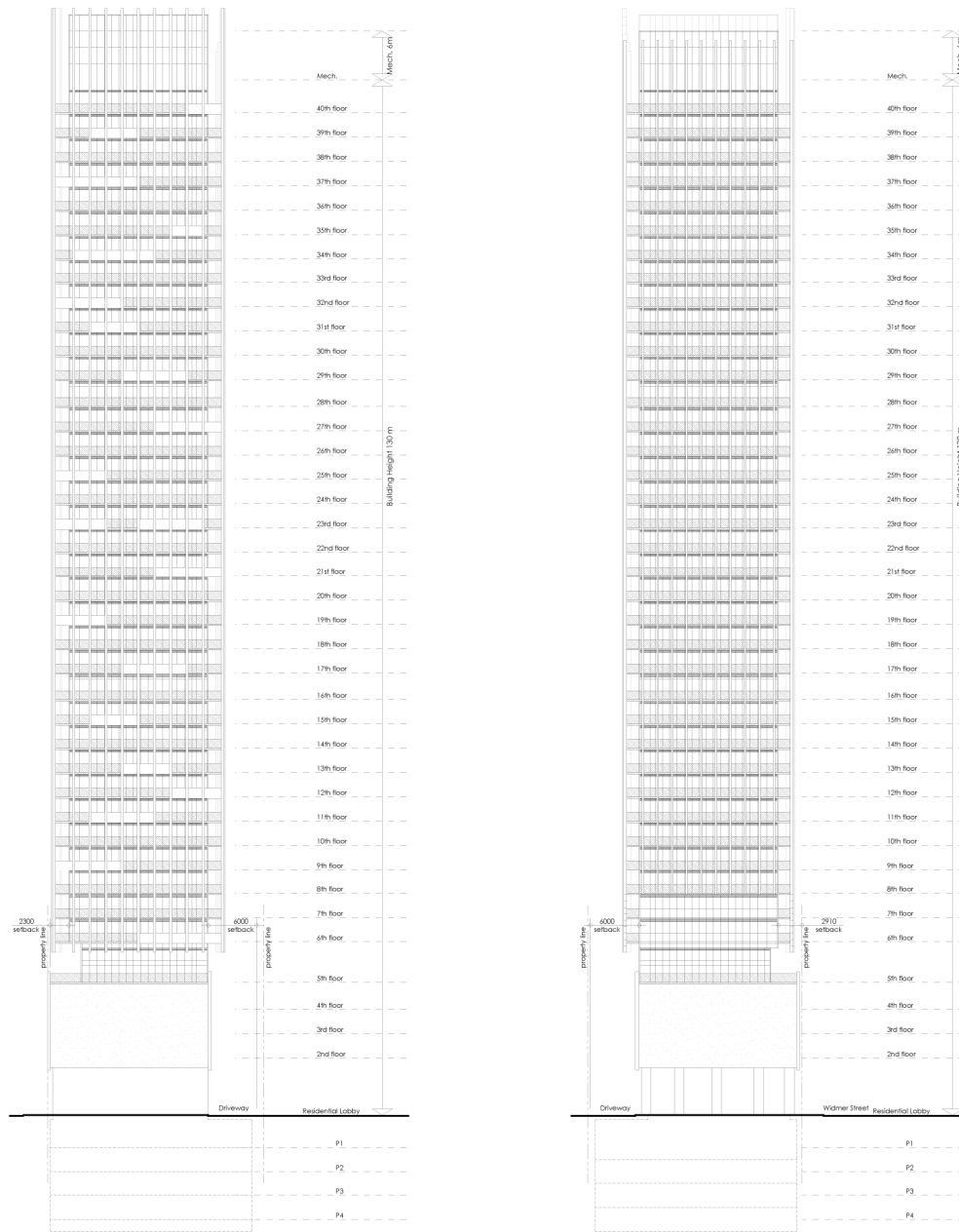
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
08/01/2012

40-58 Widmer Street

File # 12 188716 0Z

Attachment 4: North and South Elevations



North Elevation

South Elevation

Elevations

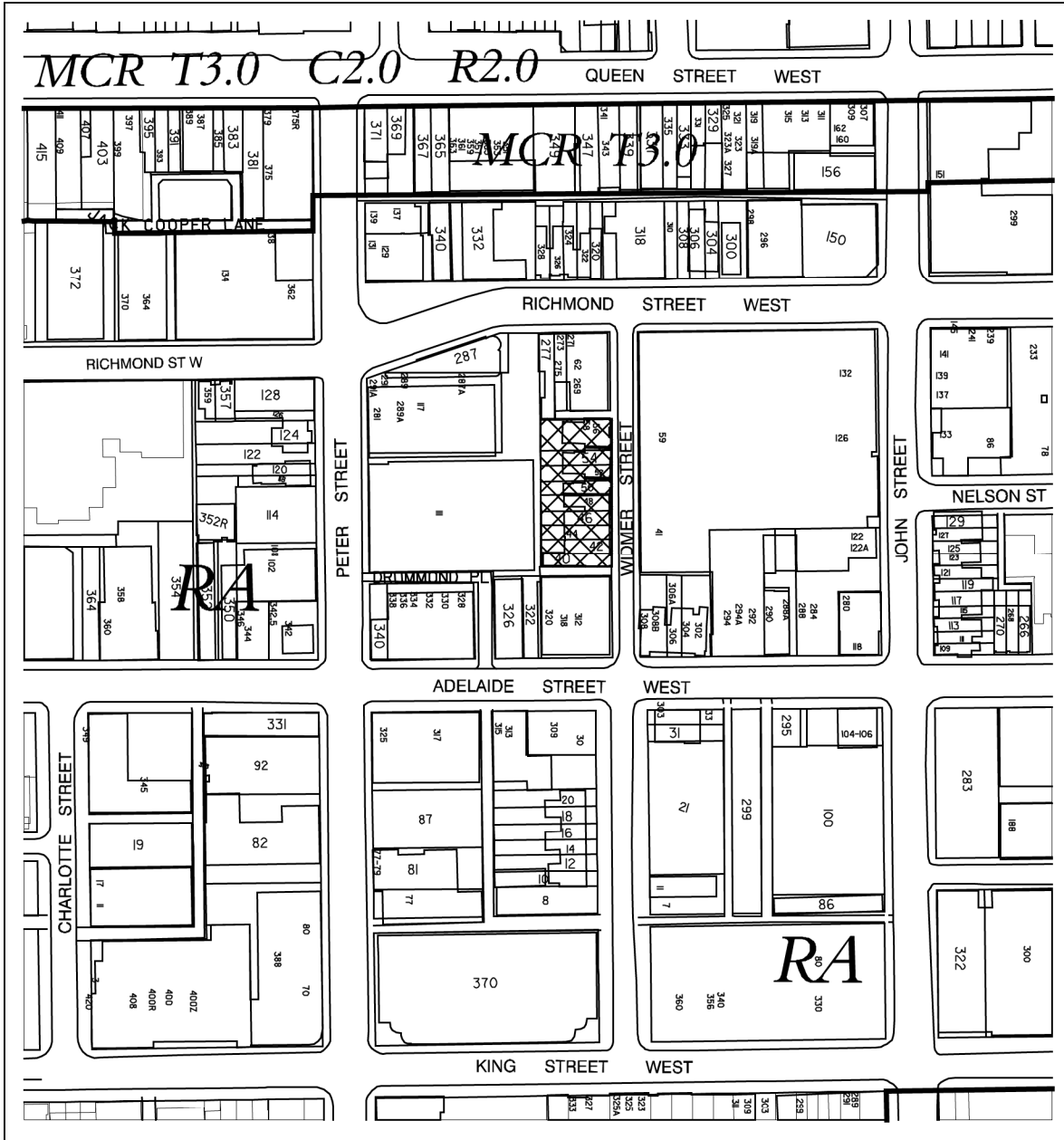
Applicant's Submitted Drawing

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08/01/2012

40-58 Widmer Street

File # 12 188716 02

Attachment 5: Zoning



40-58 Widmer Street

File # 12_188716_OZ

- RA Mixed-Use District
- MCR Mixed-Use District



Not to Scale
 Zoning By-law 438-86 as amended
 Extracted 08/08/12

Attachment 6: Application Data Sheet

Application Type	Rezoning	Application Number:	12 188716 STE 20 OZ
Details	Rezoning, Standard	Application Date:	June 7, 2012

Municipal Address: 40 WIDMER ST
 Location Description: PLAN M159 LOT 16 **GRID S2013
 Project Description: Rezoning application for construction of new 40-storey mixed-use building with ground and second floor commercial uses and 380 residential units above, 73 parking spaces on 4 levels underground, and 388 bicycle parking spaces.

Applicant:	Agent:	Architect:	Owner:
Alimar Grove Estates Inc.		Graziani + Corazza Architects Inc.	Enamaria Holdings Inc.

PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	Regeneration Areas	Site Specific Provision:
Zoning:	RA	Historical Status:
Height Limit (m):	30	Site Plan Control Area:

PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq. m):	1513	Height:	Storeys:	40
Frontage (m):	56.7		Metres:	136 (inc. mechanicals)
Depth (m):	27.5			
Total Ground Floor Area (sq. m):	632			Total
Total Residential GFA (sq. m):	29807		Parking Spaces:	73
Total Non-Residential GFA (sq. m):	582		Loading Docks	1
Total GFA (sq. m):	30389			
Lot Coverage Ratio (%):	42			
Floor Space Index:	20.1			

DWELLING UNITS

Tenure Type:	Condo
Rooms:	0
Bachelor:	24
1 Bedroom:	216
2 Bedroom:	140
3 + Bedroom:	0
Total Units:	380

FLOOR AREA BREAKDOWN (upon project completion)

	Above Grade	Below Grade
Residential GFA (sq. m):	29807	0
Retail GFA (sq. m):	582	0
Office GFA (sq. m):	0	0
Industrial GFA (sq. m):	0	0
Institutional/Other GFA (sq. m):	0	0

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