

Development likely in for a fight

## BATHURST BATTLE

By Edward LaRusic

A proposal for a 12-storey building in the Eglinton-Lawrence area is likely to see stiff opposition. Not only do the councillor and neighbourhood not like it, planning staff is not pleased with the project.

If **Greatwise Developments** has its way, the southeast corner of Glencairn and Bathurst will sport a new mixed-use development.

“What has been proposed is simply outrageous,” said **Glencairn & Bathurst Community Coalition** president **Nadia Vakharia**. She told *NRU* that the coalition—created in response to this development—thinks this proposal is too tall, too dense, will cause too much traffic and is out of step with the built form in the neighbourhood.

Greatwise has applied for official plan and zoning by-law amendments to allow a 12-storey, mixed-use development at 491 Glencairn Avenue. The top two floors would comprise a mechanical penthouse, wrapped with a two-level residential unit. The official plan amendment is required to change the southern portion of the site—currently occupied by three vacant detached dwelling units—from a neighbourhood to a mixed-use designation.

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Ward 44 candidates

## TALKING TRANSIT

By Leah Wong

Transit has been a hot-button issue in Scarborough over the last four years as council has gone back and forth between a subway extension and a new light rail transit line. In Ward 44 Scarborough East transit continues to drive the election chatter.

While candidates may not agree on the type of technology that is best for Scarborough, they generally agree on one thing. It's time to get something built.

“I think the residents have spoken and we need to move forward,” candidate **Jennifer McKelvie** told *NRU*. “Is it the best plan? I don't know, but I think what's important is that we get something built and we move forward.”

While McKelvie would like to see the current plan move forward, she also said it's important to work on a long-term vision that isn't just focussed on the Scarborough RT replacement. The ward is currently bus dependent, said candidate **Amarjeet Chhabra**. Frequency of bus service is something she said needs to be improved in the ward until there is another form of transit available. Neither the LRT nor the subway extension would reach Ward 44.

Candidate **Paul Maguire** would like to see faster transit, especially in the northern part of the

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# BATHURST BATTLE

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“It’s the first of three new redevelopment sites at the intersection of Glencairn and Bathurst Street,” said Vakharia. “We know that the northeast side has already been bought out, this southwest side will most likely be upcoming as well. So one thing that we’re really concerned about is that this is not the case of an isolated building to begin with. It really should be looked at as part of the entire quadrant.

Toronto planning staff has issued a preliminary report concerning the Greatwise Developments proposal and, unlike most preliminary reports, it is looking to send a message to the developer that staff is not pleased. North York district west section manager **Al Rezoski** told *NRU* that the proposal in its current form “raises a number of significant concerns.”

“It isn’t a typical preliminary report, just identifying some issues that we have. I think that we wanted to come out in as strong a way [as possible] that this is a lot of development being proposed on the property and that we’re not satisfied with the application.”

Rezoski said that the big factor is the massing and density on the property, particularly the angular planes that the applicant is proposing. These are greater than the typical 45-degree angular plane on both the east and west sides of the building, which he said is normally used to help achieve a transition to neighbouring residential properties.

“It’s not just about shadow, it’s about light, view, privacy and the overlook potential. Sometimes there’s some mitigating factors that you can use like raised planters and trellises and that type of thing. But certainly, you can see by looking at the design that the current proposal, with its transitioning down to the neighbourhood, is quite aggressive. It’s not normally what we would see for a mid-rise [building].”

Rezoski said that staff, when applying the city’s mid-rise guidelines, would look for a building no taller than the adjacent street’s right-of-way. In the case of Bathurst Street this is 27 metres, plus a five-metre mechanical that does not break the angular planes. The current Greatwise Developments proposal—including the two-storey wrapped mechanical—is 38.5 metres tall. The mid-rise guidelines also suggest a minimum 7.5-metre setback from the property line, but the current proposal is built right up to the property line.

Ward 16 councillor **Karen Stintz** told *NRU* that the mid-rise guidelines are an appropriate tool to use for this area. She echoed both Vakharia and planning staff’s concerns that this

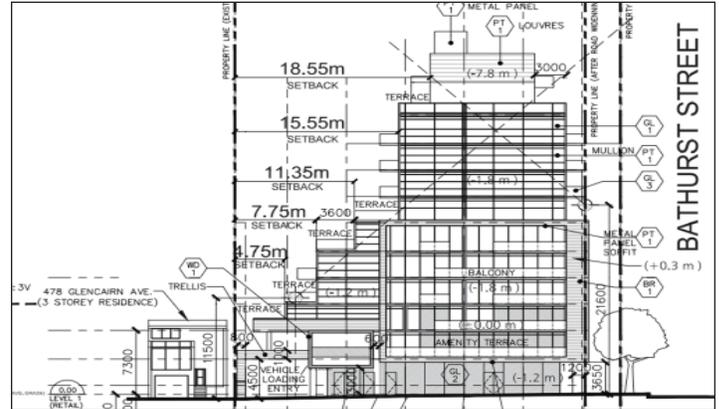


Diagram of 491 Glencairn proposal, including typical mid-rise angular planes, looking south on Glencairn Avenuesouth-east  
SOURCE: BOUSFIELDS INC.

application is too “aggressive.”

“The community is looking forward to having this area developed, but it needs to be in keeping with good planning, and also needs to be respectful of the neighbourhood behind it.”

Stintz said that the height is a problem, and she’d like to see the bulk of the building, currently proposed to face Glencairn Avenue, reoriented to face Bathurst Street.

“With the size of the site, I don’t think it can accommodate a 12-storey building.” She added that something closer to nine storeys would be more appropriate.

Vakharia said she’s not sure what would constitute an appropriate height for the site, but it would likely be less than 8-storeys, given the constraints of the site and the character of the neighbourhood.

“What has been proposed is simply outrageous. It’s totally insensitive to the neighbourhood... We don’t want to have shadowing, we don’t want to have increased traffic. We want something that enhances, but does not change the character of that neighbourhood.”

A final staff report on 491 Glencairn Avenue is anticipated in early 2015.

*The statutory public meeting for Greatwise Developments’ proposal for 491 Glencairn Avenue was held yesterday, after publication deadline. NRU contacted Greatwise Developments, but was told it could not comment before deadline and would not allow NRU to contact its agent Bousfields Inc., which wrote the planning justification report, for comment. nru*