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450 ROCHESTER DESIGN BRIEF

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Since the establishment of little Italy in the early 1900's, our site at 450 Rochester and its neighborhood has evolved many times. In the early 1900's, our site was at the center of this working class community and was predominantly vacant. It was likely used in some capacity for some of the nearby rail yard activities.

In the 1950's, the neighborhood densified and saw growth in residential homes and various commercial and industrial establishments. Concurrently, our site also developed and assumed an industrial identity. The western edge along Preston street was mainly residential in nature but the remaining majority of the site was occupied by industrial buildings. The largest building on the site was a shipping and manufacturing facility for the Pure Spring soft drink bottling company along with other smaller industrial buildings. Another important development during this period was the creation of the eastern part of Beech Street which created a stronger connection to the neighborhood to the east.

The implementation of the Queens Way in the early 60's brought additional growth and development in the surrounding area. Notably, the establishment of major Government buildings to the east of our site added additional vibrancy to the area. Our site generally remained the same during this period and continued its industrial activities.

From the 70's to the 90's, our site's industrial heritage began to erode and the buildings that once existed here slowly began to disappear. With the exception of the two residential houses and the restaurant along Preston street, our site eventually became vacant once again and served as a parking lot to support the parking needs of retail users along Preston and to the people occupying the commercial buildings in the area.

Since becoming vacant, our site has been used as a parking lot for nearly 30 years. It's now time to make the site a home for people. Our objective is to transform this large integral piece of land and redevelop it into a vibrant mixed use development that Little Italy so deserves.

The proposed development seeks to re-envision the land into two mixed-use buildings. The development would be broken down in two phases. The West phase would be the first to be constructed.

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KEY DESIGN NARRATIVES

There are several key design narratives that were carefully considered for this development which helped guide our massing and design considerations.

1- PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

Creating and maintaining a strong pedestrian experience was a critical aspect for the vision of this site. Weekend or weekday, all of the streets bordering our site are regularly used by pedestrians. Due to the inherent commercial nature of Preston and Beech Street, it was important that our development recognize and contribute to this rich pedestrian experience by designing appropriately scaled edge conditions and with appropriate programming along those streets. Aberdeen Street being more residential in nature was a good location to have both of our residential entrances for the first phase. Towards the east side of our site, Rochester Street will also see significant transformation through both the redevelopment of our site and the proposed Canada Lands redevelopment. These developments would see Rochester become a complete street promoting various uses along the street with a much improved pedestrian experience.

2- STREET ANIMATION

Carefully selecting appropriate uses at the ground level is imperative in creating and maintaining a vibrant and animated urban experience for both the existing community and our proposed development. We anticipate that some of the retail tenants will be animating the sidewalk spaces with their own programs. In addition, our proposed landscape plan proposes spaces where people can rest and interact along this animated street which will contribute in adding liveliness to these streets.

3- RETAIL VISIBILITY

Retail visibility is critical for any commercial or retail viability. Ensuring that retailers are highly visible and are functionally supported by their required logistical requirements are critical in attracting key tenants. Creating a balance of commercial and retail uses are also important when considering the synergy of the development and existing context. Amongst others, the anticipated food store and liquor store or pharmacy will likely be welcomed features by the community.

4- URBAN FABRIC

Considering the existing and future context of our site was instrumental in developing appropriate massing for our proposed development. Our massing fits in appropriately with the tall building corridor along Rochester street and transitions in height from Preston to Rochester. Understanding the existing and future built environment around our site allowed us to properly establish building heights and plan key functional elements for our development. The



residential component of various heights benefit from great sun exposure and views. In addition, private roof terraces will be available in the first phase. The existing context also served as inspiration when considering materiality and form. The commercial ground level is 6m in height, it creates a comfortable pedestrian edge and is appropriate for retail spaces. Our proposed development proposes a 6 storey masonry base which speaks to the surrounding built form which exist on the Canada Lands site. The upper floors will be composed of lighter materials which will complement the height and massing.

5- PUBLIC SPACE

Creating strong public spaces has always been one of our primary objectives for this proposal. However, planning for these spaces requires a broader understanding of our site and its current and future context. Beech Street is the most appropriate street to host such spaces given its existing animated nature and its orientation. Also, Beech Street is an important East and West axis which will connect the larger network of parks, public spaces and multi-use pathways.

Our design proposes a large plaza at the corner of Beech and Preston. The intent of this plaza is to provide a certain level of flexibility while providing some programmed spaces via hard and soft landscaping. We have the ambitious intent to extend the ground treatment across the streets to suggest a much larger space during special events. We see this plaza as a new focal point of Little Italy where one can host cultural events and provide daily enjoyment for the community.

Another Plaza is planned for the corner of Beech Street and Rochester which will complement the ground level commercial and retail spaces. Our edge condition along Beech Street is also intended to be developed as a linear park. Through hard and soft landscaping, we intend on creating a green buffer along this edge linking both plazas together and creating a stronger pedestrian axis through our site.

Additionally, we've allowed for some site porosity between both phases via a short term surface parking area for the commercial and retail tenants. Although designed as parking, the design intent for this woonerf is to remain flexible for special events and should feel more like a pedestrian thoroughfare rather than a parking lot with the use of appropriate landscaping materials.

6- PARKING & SERVICING

We are proposing a two story underground parking garage which would provide parking for both the public and the residents. Access to a public elevator and stairs to the parking garage will be provided on Beech Street and is shared between both major tenants on the ground floor. Access to the parking garage has been located off of the central woonerf between both phases. A temporary loading bay for tenants is also located next to the parking garage entrance. The commercial loading area for the large commercial/retail



spaces will be located at the north west corner of our lot off of Aberdeen. This will minimize congestion on Preston and Beech street.

WEST PHASE DEVELOPMENT

The west phase proposes a 9 and 15 storey mixed use development featuring a corner plaza at the corner of Preston and Beech Street. A two storey underground parking garage will provide parking spaces for both the public and residential tenants. This phase would see various ground floor commercial/retail spaces. We anticipate having a food store and either a liquor store or pharmacy as the second major retail tenant on this site. A three storey commercial/retail piece will be fronting onto Preston and is intended to frame the plaza and maintain a reasonable scale along Preston. Two residential entrances will be located on Aberdeen street. This phase proposes approximately 295 residential units.

EAST PHASE DEVELOPMENT

The east phase proposes a 26 storey mixed use development and also features a corner plaza at the corner of Rochester and Beech Street. A three storey underground parking garage will provide parking spaces for its residents. We currently plan to have some ground floor commercial/retail spaces to the south along Beech Street. This phase proposes to have approximately 245 residential units.