

Be-LEAF it!

Mark Cullen reports from the tree line, **H6**



35
YEARS

Tarion Annual Public Meeting

April 19, 2012
www.tarion.com

NEW IN HOMES & CONDOS

How tall is too tall?



DREAMSTIME ILLUSTRATION

The study Tall Buildings: Inviting Change in Downtown Toronto, puts forth a vision for how high towers should be in the city centre.

Tall buildings study proposes design regulations that would 'sterilize' architects, developer says

RYAN STARR
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Tom Giancos doesn't mince words when asked his thoughts on a controversial study that recommends Toronto restrict the height and locations of tall buildings in the downtown core.

"I believe the report is seriously flawed," says Giancos, a vice president with Minto.

The report, "Tall Buildings: Inviting Change in Downtown Toronto," puts forth a vision for how tall buildings should be built in the city centre, an area ranging from Bathurst St. to the Don Valley Parkway, and from Dupont St. to the waterfront.

TALL continued on H10

LIVING IN THE SKY

Aspiring to rise to great heights

Tall towers offer prestige, affirm the developers of Toronto's landmark condos

RYAN STARR
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Canderel Residential generated big buzz last month when it announced the city had approved three additional storeys for Aura, the massive condo tower it's building at Yonge and Gerrard Sts.

The decision means Aura will now stand 78 storeys (or 273 metres) above College Park.

It also means "the contest for the bragging rights to Canada's tallest condominium among condominium developers and marketers is effectively over," Riz Dhanji, Canderel's vice president of sales and marketing, said in a news release. "Aura is clearly the tallest residential tower in Canada."

Aura's additional three floors don't just translate into bragging rights for Canderel; 50 additional condo suites were made available at a project that Dhanji says was 99 per cent sold out.

Seven penthouses remain — starting from the 75th floor — which range in price from \$2.3 million to \$18.3 million for the 11,370-square-foot penthouse, which takes up the entire top level.

Tall, iconic towers like Aura attract a particular kind of buyer, Dhanji notes in an interview.

"People are fascinated with height, especially with news worldwide about the towers going up in Dubai, Saudi Arabia, China, etc.," he says. "Tall buildings are becoming an important selling tool."

"Purchasers like the prestige of living in a tall building."

ICONIC continued on H18



TWO OLD MILL
BLOOR WEST

TRIDEL
BUILT FOR LIFE



Lobby

MODERN, SOPHISTICATED LIVING IN HISTORIC OLD MILL.

Awaken your senses with a vision of the truly extraordinary. The stunning residences at Two Old Mill provide the kind of freedom and space you're used to in your own home. Three unique suite collections feature open-concept floorplans with expansive windows and an exquisite array of finishes. Located in the delightful Old Mill pocket bordering the Humber River, Two Old Mill seamlessly blends old-world opulence in a new world environment — steps from the charm and convenience of the Kingsway and Bloor West Village.

Old Mill Collection from \$365,000*, Diamond Collection from \$615,000*, Penthouse Collection from \$795,000*

The Old Mill Community is now under construction.

Don't miss your opportunity to be a part of Tridel's successful Old Mill **Built Green. Built for Life.**® Community.

Presentation Centre: 2500 Bloor Street West (just west of the South Kingsway)

Visit at tridel.com or call 416.645.7022



Facebook.com/Tridel



Twitter.com/Tridel

*Prices and specifications are subject to change without notice. All dimensions are approximate. Illustrations are artist's concept only. Building and view not to scale. Tridel®, Tridel Built for Life®, Tridel Built Green. Built for Life.® are registered trademarks of Tridel and used under license. ©Tridel 2012. All rights reserved. E.&O.E. April 2012.



tridel.com

» HOMES & CONDOS

77 Yorkville defies the times



CHRISTOPHER HUME

Architecture critic Christopher Hume moves beyond the condo to look at other forms of residential design in Toronto.

The amazing thing about Yorkville is how it manages to retain such a strong sense of neighbourhood despite the damage inflicted by property owners.

As what could well be the single greatest concentration of bad '70s renos in Toronto, the old Village teaches us many lessons; first among them is that heritage buildings are not improved when they are given new facades and buried in brass plate. Other lessons are that basement shops don't work well and setting storefronts back from the property line creates

empty space.

Unlike many Toronto neighbourhoods, Yorkville has the traffic to sustain retail at the second and third levels above the street. This is because of pedestrians, not parking lots. Except for Cumberland Park, which remains one of the finest examples of landscape architecture in the city, there's not much room for the kind of sidewalk life the area pioneered back in the 1960s. Those days are long gone, of course, and Yorkville has been gentrified beyond recognition.

What's interesting, though, is that the problem's not height as much as what happens at grade. That's where the interest is. That's where we experience things.

The closing of the Four Seasons Hotel this week will also change the feel of the neighbourhood. Once this towering condo conversion is complete, Yorkville will be a little less cosmopolitan, and a lot more residential.

Then there is 77 Yorkville Ave. Dating back to the 1860s, this humble yet elegant structure is one of the oldest in the area. A simple neo-classical building set a metre



TARA WALTON/TORONTO STAR FILE PHOTO

Dating back to the 1860s, this humble yet elegant structure is one of the oldest in Yorkville.

or so below street level, it possesses the dignity of symmetry and exudes a wonderful sense of Georgian restraint.

The only decorative details are the shutters, which also serve a

purpose. With its gently sloped roof and prominent row of arched windows, it stands in contrast to what's left of the mostly Gothic neighbours. Today, this heritage gem houses a clothing store, Pink

Tartan, and before that it was an antique shop. In its 21st-century context, 77 Yorkville has acquired an air of defiance; its rightness has never been more apparent. chume@thestar.ca

RED CARPET EVENT THIS WEEKEND ONLY!

WEST KINGSWAY

2% Cash Back

Plus Last Chance at PreConstruction Pricing

Westwood Condominium Residences at Bloor and Islington.

Steps to the Islington Station.

From the high **\$200's**

WESTWOOD CONDOMINIUMS

SALES OFFICE LOCATED AT 3391 BLOOR ST. W
S/W CORNER OF BLOOR AND ISLINGTON

416.239.9888

Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.,
Sat. Sun. & Hol. 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Rendering is artist's concept. Prices and specifications are subject to change without notice. E. & O. E.

*10% deposit for a limited time only.

See sales representative for more details.

Living in the clouds

ICONIC from HI

"They tell their friends that their condo is 60, 70 or, as Aura will be, 78, storeys up in the air."

Jim Ritchie agrees. Tridel's vice-president of sales and marketing is overseeing the launch of Ten York, another super-tall tower that is proposed at 75 storeys (with 774 units).

While the project is still in pre-sales, Ritchie says Ten York's height and landmark location — it will be wedged onto a triangle-shaped site at York and Harbour Sts., hard against the Gardiner Expressway — have attracted quite a bit of attention.

"We've had thousands of prospects that have registered online, and over 1,000 real estate agents on top of that," he says.

"The building is iconic and it's tall, and that attracts buyers. I guess it's making a bit of a statement about where you live. It's certainly very aspirational, I think — distinctive, maybe a little conspicuous, but some people like that."

Tall towers attract a particular kind of buyer

Developers of Toronto's iconic tall towers have a competitive edge in a crowded market, notes Alan Vihant, senior vice president of high-rise for Great Gulf Homes, which is building the 70-storey One Bloor condo tower at Yonge and Bloor Sts.

For one thing, One Bloor's developer can genuinely say that residents will enjoy unobstructed views. "You do market views, and with a very tall building you get those views," he says. "So you can position your building against other projects that don't have that kind of view."

Great Gulf wants One Bloor to be even taller than its current 70 storeys, and is seeking permission from the city for additional floors. A bid to take on Aura, perhaps?

"We could get into a whole discussion about who is taller," says Vihant, noting that One Bloor is at a "higher elevation above sea level" than Aura. "So we're technically a taller building."

"But we're not playing that game." The project is currently 94 per cent sold, with 45 units remaining (the penthouse units have not yet been released).



One Bloor by Great Gulf Group will rise 70 storeys.