
SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY REPORT Emix Ltd., Applications to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to add commercial uses including a commercial self-storage facility at 8400 Woodbine Avenue, west side of Woodbine Avenue, north of Perth Avenue (Ward 8) File Nos. PLAN 19 132742 and PLAN 20 110587

PREPARED BY: Rick Cefaratti, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner, West District, (Ext. 3675)

REVIEWED BY: Ron Blake, MCIP, RPP
Senior Development Manager, (Ext. 2600)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report dated April 21, 2020, entitled “PRELIMINARY REPORT Emix Ltd., Applications to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to add commercial uses including a commercial self-storage facility at 8400 Woodbine Avenue, west side of Woodbine Avenue, north of Perth Avenue (Ward 8) File Nos. PLAN 19 132742 and PLAN 20 110587”, be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not applicable.

PURPOSE:

This report provides preliminary information on Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by Corbett Land Strategies Inc., on behalf of Emix Ltd., to permit additional uses on the subject lands. The application contains general information in regards to applicable Official Plan or other policies as well as other issues. The report should not be taken as Staff’s opinion or recommendation on the applications.

The applications have been deemed complete:

The Zoning By-law Amendment application was deemed complete on September 20, 2019. The Official Plan Amendment application was deemed complete on March 23, 2020.

Next Steps:

1. A Statutory Public Meeting will be scheduled when appropriate;
2. Staff will prepare a Recommendation Report on the zoning by-law amendment at a future date, if required;

Application Processing

This application is moving forward during a period when the Province of Ontario has suspended Planning Act timelines for the processing of applications. The application will be circulated to commenting departments and agencies and normal resolution of issues and case management will be undertaken. At the time of writing of this report, matters respecting the holding of public meetings, finalization of approvals and appeals had not

been resolved. These matters will continue to be investigated by the Development Services Commission and Legal Services.

BACKGROUND:

Property and Area Context

The 1.24 ha. (3.07 ac.) subject property is located on the northwest corner of Woodbine Avenue and Perth Avenue. The property also has road frontage on the east side of Cochrane Drive. The site contains a large retail warehouse style, three storey commercial building with a gross floor area of 10,509 m² (113,119 ft²) and asphalt parking lot areas. Existing uses operating within the building include a furniture outlet and an immigration office. Located to the north are various commercial operations including Princess Auto and Fit 4 Less. To the south, across Perth Avenue, is a hotel (Comfort Inn) and other commercial uses. To the east, across Woodbine Avenue, are various commercial uses including an appliance store (Goemans Appliances). To the west across Cochrane Drive are industrial uses and an office building (see Figures 1, 2 and 3). An application for Site Plan approval, to redevelop the above noted adjacent hotel property at 8330 Woodbine Avenue, was endorsed in principle by Development Services Committee in April of 2019. This proposal was endorsed by staff in November of 2019 (File SPC 18 253507).

PROPOSAL

The owner is proposing to renovate the second and third floors of the existing three (3) storey building for a commercial self-storage facility. There are no external changes proposed to be made to the existing building. The existing zoning is very specific as to the types of retail uses permitted. Consequently, the owner is also proposing to broaden the permission for retail store types as well as to permit restaurants and a banquet hall.

OFFICIAL PLAN

2014 Official Plan

The subject lands are designated 'Commercial' in the 2014 Markham Official Plan (as partially approved on November 24, 2017 and updated by the LPAT on April 9, 2018). The designation provides for a broad range of commercial uses including complementary retail, service, and office uses, as well as restaurants, banquet halls, financial institutions, light manufacturing, processing and warehousing. This designation does not provide for a commercial self-storage facility use, which would require an official plan amendment.

Staff note that lands designated 'Commercial' form part of the City's 'Employment Area' as shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure. The Official Plan recognizes that this designation provides for large format retail development, adjacent to other Employment Area designated lands.

ZONING

These lands are currently zoned SC1 – Special Commercial One Zone under By-law 165-80, as amended, which permits very specific commercial uses including lumber and building supplies outlets, sales of home improvement products, personal service shops, book stores, banks, hotels and motels, pet stores and supplies, furniture sales and repair, commercial schools as well as recreational and entertainment facilities.

The owner is proposing to add a commercial storage facility as a permitted use, broaden the types for retail uses permitted, and permit restaurants and banquet hall uses on the subject property.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The following is a list or preliminary summary of comments raised to date. Other matters that are identified through the detailed review of these applications will be discussed in a future recommendation report, if required. Some of the issues identified include, but are not limited to:

Building Standards Department

The Zoning section has advised that the proposed change of use requires additional parking, as per the City's Parking Standards By-law. The total parking requirement for the proposed self-storage use and existing first floor business office is 387 spaces, whereas 188 spaces are currently provided. In addition 5 % of the total parking spaces (19) are required to be accessible spaces.

Engineering

A Parking Study was received in late January of 2020 to support the proposed parking reduction. The Study was reviewed by Transportation Engineering staff. The Study indicates that, although the Parking Standards By-law requires a minimum of 387 spaces for the proposed commercial self-storage use and existing first floor businesses, the current on-site parking supply of 188 spaces is sufficient to for both uses, and Transportation Engineering staff have accepted these findings.

A Functional Servicing Report (FSR) was received in support of the applications to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. Development Engineering and Waterworks staff concur with the FSR findings that no additional services are required to accommodate the proposed commercial self-storage facility and additional commercial uses through these applications.

Existing Built Form

The existing building is a warehouse style building that was designed to contain large retail outlets such as furniture stores or building material suppliers. The building only requires interior alterations to accommodate a proposed commercial self-storage facility. The remaining portions of the building will contain the existing Immigration consulting office and other commercial tenants.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The application is being evaluated in the context of the City's strategic priorities.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The applications have been circulated to various City departments and external agencies and are currently under review.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Ron Blake, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Senior Development Manager

Arvin Prasad, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1 – Location Map
Figure 2 – Area Context/Zoning
Figure 3 – Air Photo
Figure 4 – Site Plan

OWNER:

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APPLICANT/AGENT:

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