M E M O R A N D U M

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Brian Lee, Director, Engineering, Ext. 7507

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Date: December 8, 2020

Re: Parking and Transit Review, Part of Lot 11, Concession 9, north side of Highway 7, east of 9th Line (2341988 Ontario Ltd.), Ward 5
File SPC 19 136373

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Memorandum titled "Parking and Transit Review, Part of Lot 11, Concession 9, north side of Highway 7, east of 9th Line (2341988 Ontario Ltd.), Ward 5, File SPC 19 136375" be received.

BACKGROUND:

On November 23, 2020, Development Services Committee (DSC) received a staff report titled "RECOMMENDATION REPORT, 2431988 Ontario Ltd., Site Plan Control application to permit a 12-storey, 259 unit mixed use apartment building and 312 stacked townhouses on Part of Lot 11, Concession 9, north side of Highway 7, east of 9th Line, Ward 5, File No. SPC 19 136373".

The 1.72 ha (4.24 ac) subject property is located within Cornell Centre, on the south side of a proposed extension of Rustle Woods Avenue and the north side of a proposed extension of Arthur Bonner Avenue (north of Highway 7 and west of Bur Oak Avenue) (see Figure 1). The applicant has filed a site plan control application to permit a 12-storey, mixed-use 259-unit apartment building and 312 stacked townhouses on the subject lands. Both the apartment building and stacked townhouses will have shared accesses to two levels of underground parking and surface parking.

The development is proposed to have an overall parking supply of 727 parking spaces (including 1 car-share space) and 218 bicycle parking spaces. The lower parking supply of 706 parking spaces referenced in the November 23, 2020 DSC staff report is preliminary and based on the initial submission from the applicant which have since been updated with the submission of a variance application.

The applicant is requesting variances to Parking Standards By-law 28-97, as summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Proposed Parking Minor Variance Application by the Applicant

Land Use	By-law 28-97 Requirements	Minimum Parking Requirement	Proposed Parking Rate	Proposed Parking Supply*	Proposed Parking Supply Variance
Apartment Dwelling	1.25 spaces/unit and 0.25 spaces/unit for visitors	324 spaces for residents and 65 spaces for visitors	1.05 spaces per unit and 0.15 spaces/unit for visitors	272 spaces for residents and 39 spaces for visitors	52 spaces for residents and 26 spaces for visitors
Stacked Townhouse Dwelling	1.25 spaces/unit and 0.25 spaces/unit for visitors	390 spaces for residents and 78 spaces for visitors	1.05 spaces per unit and 0.15 spaces/unit for visitors	328 spaces for residents and 47 spaces for visitors	62 spaces for residents and 31 spaces for visitors
Commercial Use	1 space per 23 m^2 of GLA	36 spaces**	-	40 spaces***	-
Total	**-**	**893 spaces**	**-**	**726 spaces plus 1 car-share space**	**167 spaces**

* Based on the most recent site plan submitted by the applicant.
** Parking requirement calculated based on commercial GLA of 833 m2
*** Also available to residential visitors

At the request of DSC on November 23, 2020, staff prepared this follow-up Memorandum to DSC to elaborate on the resident parking and transit parameters associated with the proposed parking supply for the subject development.

DISCUSSION:

York Region Official Plan
The 2010 York Region Official Plan sets the framework for growth and development in the Region, including in the City of Markham. The Regional Plan emphasizes the need for appropriate densities in Regional Centres and Corridors. The Regional Plan includes policies that encourage Transportation Demand Management and parking management as a way to achieve the following goals:

- To reduce vehicle emissions by ensuring that communities are designed to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists, reduce single occupancy automobile use, and support public transit and Transportation Demand Management initiatives (Section 3.2.3); and
- That secondary plans and zoning by-laws shall, in consultation with the Region and related agencies, incorporate parking management policies and standards that include reduced minimum and maximum parking requirements that reflect the walking distance to transit and complementary uses (Section 5.2.10).

2014 Markham Official Plan
A major goal of the Markham Official Plan is to accelerate Markham's transition from a primarily car-dependent community to one where walking, cycling, transit and carpooling are seen as increasingly viable and attractive alternatives. Future development is to be directed to higher density mixed-use centres and corridors that are designed to support good levels of transit service and to provide more

attractive conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. This shift in policy direction requires that future growth and the supply of off-street parking be balanced to meet essential parking needs without providing an abundance of free parking that would only serve to promote car use.

Section 7.1.5.1 of the Markham Official Plan addresses vehicle parking and speaks to the need to revise the parking standards contained in Markham's zoning by-law to:

- establish minimum parking standards that may vary by location in Markham;
- include a maximum parking standard for given land use classes in new mixed-use neighbourhoods and intensification areas and other areas well served by transit;
- permit lower levels of required parking in mixed-use development projects where different patterns of parking among compatible uses will be shared;
- permit reductions in the number of required parking spaces in multi-unit residential developments that provide dedicated car-share spaces.

The Markham Official Plan policies provide direction to Markham staff with regards to reviewing proposed parking standards and variances. The policies support the need for more balanced mobility and the need to facilitate the transition from a primarily auto dependent community to one where travel includes a greater share of other modes such as walking, cycling, transit and carpooling.

Resident Proxy Site Survey Findings

In support of the proposed resident parking supply for the subject development, the applicant was required to undertake a parking demand survey at a site with similar existing and future transportation context as the subject site in order to better understand the residential parking demand that could be anticipated for the proposed site. WSP, the transportation consultant for the applicant, commissioned parking surveys at the Grand Cornell Brownstones site located at the southeast quadrant of Highway 7 and 9th Line, which is located within 600 m of the subject site. Grand Cornell Brownstones development consists of a total of 250 stacked townhouse units with centralized underground parking. The surveys were undertaken between 12:00 AM and 2:00 AM on two weeknights in July 2020. The survey is taken at that time because most of the residents should be at home and the parking should be at its maximum. The site statistics for the Grand Cornell Brownstones and survey findings as provided by WSP are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 – Site Statistics and Results of Parking Survey of Grand Cornell Brownstones Development

	Statistic
No. of Dwelling Units	250
No. of Residential Parking Spaces	316
Surveyed Parking Demand	237
Parking Demand/Dwelling Unit Ratio	0.95

A peak resident parking demand of 237 spaces was observed at the Grand Cornell Brownstone site, which is a 75% utilization of the available resident parking supply. This is equivalent to a peak resident parking demand rate of 0.95 spaces per unit on the basis of 250 occupied units, whereas 1.26 spaces per unit were provided.

The proposed development will have a higher proportion of bachelor and 1-bedroom units than the Brownstones proxy site, meaning that it should require a lower parking rate than the Brownstones development. Therefore, the residential parking rate of 1.05 spaces per unit proposed for the subject

development is appropriate and sufficient to meet the resident parking demands of the proposed development.

Transportation Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures are more effective when implemented in conjunction with reduced resident parking supply. The applicant is required to implement a number of TDM measures to help reduce car dependency and resident parking demand. The site-specific TDM measures include the following:

- Unbundled parking: Parking will be unbundled for all residential units such that residents/buyers have the option and flexibility to purchase a dwelling unit without a parking space.
- Car-share program: An on-site car-sharing service will be available to all residents.
- Transit information package and Transit incentive program: A pre-loaded PRESTO card and transportation information package with transit and cycling maps will be provided to each residential unit.
- Bicycle parking: A total of 218 bike parking will be available to residents and visitors.
- Bike repair station: A bike repair station will be provided to support the occasional repair/maintenance needs of resident bicycles.

Transit Assessment

The subject property is located within Cornell Centre, identified as a Key Development Area along the Highway 7 rapid transit corridor in the Markham Official Plan. Currently, there are several ongoing or planned improvements to the transit system that will benefit the Cornell Centre area. Key improvements include the Cornell Bus Terminal and the future Highway 7 Viva Rapidway extension to Cornell Centre.

The Cornell Bus Terminal construction is nearing completion and is located immediately to the west of the subject property. The bus terminal will provide a total of 11 bus bays, including seven for standard buses, two for articulated buses, with the remaining two to accommodate other transit service providers, such as GO Transit and/or Durham Region Transit. The Cornell Bus Terminal will become the eastern terminus for the future Highway 7 Viva Rapidway extension.

Seven existing YRT and Viva routes that serve the Markham-Stouffville Hospital in the study area will access the Bus Terminal while another existing route (Route No. 2 – Milliken) will be re-routed to the new terminal, for a total of eight YRT and Viva routes servicing this site. In addition to these eight transit routes, YRT Express Route 303 also services the area. Detailed information on these transit routes are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 – Transit Routes Serving the New Cornell Bus Terminal

Route	Route Description	Planned Rush Hour Frequency (mins)	Weekday Ridership At Bus Stops Near Markham Stouffville Hospital†	Weekday Route Ridership (Oct. 2019)
Viva Purple	Cornell Terminal - Richmond Hill Centre	9*	1,143	6,339
Route No. 1 – Highway 7	Smart Centres – Markham Boxgrove – Cornell Terminal – Richmond Hill Centre	30	58	1,459
Route No. 2 – Milliken	Smart Centres – Markham Boxgrove – Cornell Terminal – Finch Bus Terminal	Weekends/ holidays only	NA	NA
Route No. 9 – 9th Line	Riverwalk Drive/9th Line – Cornell Terminal – Whitchurch-Stouffville	43**	86	347
Route No. 16 – 16th Avenue	Ilan Ramon Road/Rutherford Road – Cornell Terminal	30**	211	1645
Route No. 18 – Bur Oak	Angus Glen Community Centre – Cornell Terminal	27-30**	127	711
Route No. 25 – Major Mackenzie	Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital – Cornell Terminal	33-43	133	626
Route No. 522 – Markham Local	Hagerman's Corners – Cornell Terminal	Non-rush hour only	22	95
Route No. 303 – Bur Oak Express***	Mount Joy GO station - Cornell Terminal – Finch Bus Terminal and subway station	8	40	755

* Pre-COVID-19 service frequency

** Part of Frequent Transit Network (FTN). The ultimate vision is for these routes to operate at frequency of 15 minutes or less every day between 6 AM to 10 PM.

*** Route No. 303 will not stop at the Cornell Terminal

† Weekday sample in October 2019 (Boarding and Alighting number)

As shown in Table 3, the subject site will be well served by transit through the Viva Purple, the Frequent Transit Network routes and local bus routes. Although Route No. 303 is not planned to be re-routed to the Cornell Bus Terminal, the subject site is within its ridership catchment area (500 m walking distance of the Ninth Line/Rose Way bus stop).

Three of the nine transit routes in Table 3 provide frequent and convenient connections to major transit hubs at Finch TTC subway station, Unionville GO station and Richmond Hill Centre (see Table 4). Viva Purple provides fast, convenient and reliable service between the Cornell community and Richmond Hill Centre hub, with part of the route travelling on dedicated bus lanes along Highway 7. It also connects with the Stouffville GO line at Unionville station, where all-day, two-way, 15-minute train service during peak periods is planned to start in 2025. YRT Route No. 303, which runs partially on Highway 407, provides fast and frequent bus service between the Cornell community and the Finch TTC subway station. It also connects Cornell residents to the Mount Joy GO station.

Table 4 – Key Transit Routes Connecting Cornell Centre to Major Transit Hubs

Route	Route Description	Buses Per Hour (AM Peak Hour)	Travel Time (Westbound from Markham Stouffville Hospital to Richmond Hill Centre)
Viva Purple	Markham Stouffville Hospital - Richmond Hill Centre	7 buses per hour*	35 minutes
Route No. 1 – Highway 7	Smart Centres – Markham Boxgrove – Markham Stouffville Hospital – Richmond Hill Centre	3 buses per hour	47 minutes
Route No. 303 – Bur Oak Express	Mount Joy GO station - Markham Stouffville Hospital – Finch Bus Terminal and subway station	7 buses per hour	30 minutes

* Pre-COVID-19 service frequency

As shown in Table 4, Viva Purple provides a more frequent service than the local YRT Route 1. The route travel time for Viva Purple Line is 25 percent less than that for the local YRT route from Markham-Stouffville Hospital to Richmond Hill Centre. Although dedicated bus lanes are not available for the section of Viva Purple between the Markham-Stouffville Hospital and Warden Avenue, the travel time is 27 percent less than that for the local YRT Route 1 (16 minutes compared to 22 minutes) which runs parallel. This is partly due to fewer stops along that section of Highway 7 for the Viva Purple service.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed parking supply of 1.05 spaces per unit for the subject development is considered appropriate to accommodate the needs of the residents based on the following:

- Parking policies in the York Region and Markham Official Plans supports reduced parking;
- Observed parking demand at the proxy site is a good indication of parking demand at the subject site;
- TDM measures proposed will help encourage non-auto modes of travel and provide opportunities to reduce car ownership and use;
- Proximity of the site to the Cornell Bus Terminal and transit level of service available in the area will encourage transit use.