

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY REPORT Rockport (Unionville) Inc.
Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law
Amendments to permit a 32-storey student residence located
north of Enterprise Boulevard and on the west side of Bill
Crothers Drive, Markham Centre (Ward 3) File No. PLAN 20
129430

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Manager, Central District

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled “PRELIMINARY REPORT, Rockport (Unionville) Inc., Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to permit a 32-storey student residence located north of Enterprise Boulevard and on the west side of Bill Crothers Drive, Markham Centre (Ward 3), File No. PLAN 20 129430”, be received.

PURPOSE:

This report provides preliminary information on applications for Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment (the “Applications”) submitted by Rockport (Unionville) Inc. (the “Owner”). This report contains general information on the applicable Official Plan policies and the identified issues and should not be taken as Staff’s opinion or recommendation on the Applications.

BACKGROUND:

Location and Area Context

The 0.26 ha. (0.6 ac.) subject lands are located north of Enterprise Boulevard on the west side of Bill Crothers Drive (the “Subject Lands”), as shown on Figure 1. The Subject Lands represent Phase 3 of a three-phased development by the Owner, with Phases 1 and 2 located on the east side of Bill Crothers Drive, as shown on Figure 3. Phase 1 consists of a nine-storey retirement residence that was constructed in 2013. Phase 2, which fronts onto Main Street Unionville South, also consists of a nine-storey retirement residence that is currently under construction. Phase 3, the Subject Lands, are currently occupied by a surface parking lot that serves the Phase 1 lands to the east and construction activities associated with Phase 2. Mature trees line the north and west property lines. Figure 3 shows the surrounding uses.

The Applications respond to a Request for Proposal (“RFP”) by York University for a student residence and associated university-related uses. In the event that York University does not award the student housing project to the Owner, the Owner intends to proceed with a residential development on the Subject Lands, which would require revisions to the Applications and supporting materials.

Process to date

Staff deemed the Applications complete on November 13, 2020.

The next steps in the Planning process include the following:

- Holding the statutory Public Meeting at a future date, when appropriate
- Consideration of a Recommendation Report by the Development Services Committee (“DSC”)
- In the event of an approval, adoption of the site-specific Official Plan Amendment and approval of the site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment by Council
- Submission of a future site plan application

Proposed Development

The Applicant proposes a student residence (the “Proposed Development”) shown conceptually in Figures 4 and 5 that comprises the following:

- a) 32-storey building height comprised of a seven-storey podium and a 25-storey tower above
- b) 264 student suites consisting of one, two, three, and four bedroom unit mixes
- c) gross floor area (“GFA”) of approximately 24,460 m² (263,294 ft²), which includes 7,012 m² (75,479 ft²) of university programming space (including but not limited to business offices, medical offices and food services) and 17,450 m² of student residence uses
- d) 50 vehicular parking spaces in two levels of above-ground parking accommodated on Floors 2 and 3
- e) vehicular access to the above-grade parking levels provided via a series of internal ramps accessed from Bill Crothers Drive
- f) 520 bicycle parking spaces located below grade and on the ground floor

Figure 4 shows the loading and servicing for the Proposed Development accessed from Bill Crothers Drive with the ultimate access arrangement accommodated by a shared driveway with the lands to the south (28 Main Street), as shown on Figure 5.

The details of the Proposed Development will be refined further through a separate future Site Plan Approval application, should Council approve the current Applications. Figure 6 shows a conceptual rendering of the Proposed Development.

Provincial Policies

In considering the Applications, Staff will assess consistency with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (“PPS”), conformity with the 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the “Growth Plan”), and conformity with the York Region 2010 Official Plan (the “Regional OP”).

2014 Markham Official Plan (the “2014 Official Plan”)

The 2014 Official Plan designates the Subject Lands “Mixed Use High Rise.” This designation represents priority locations with the greatest level of development intensification. Unless specified in a secondary plan or site-specific policy, the “Mixed

Use High Rise” designation permits a maximum building height of 15-storeys and a maximum density of three times the area of the Subject Lands (Floor Space Index – “FSI”).

However, the policies of the 2014 Official Plan also provide that until an updated secondary plan is approved for the Regional Centre-Markham Centre lands, the provisions of the 1987 Town of Markham Official Plan (the “1987 Official Plan”), as amended, and the Markham Centre Secondary Plan (“OPA 21”), as amended, shall apply to the Subject Lands.

The 1987 Official Plan

The Subject Lands are designated “Commercial – Community Amenity Area” in the 1987 Official Plan. The planned function of the “Community Amenity Area” designation is to provide for a multi-use, multi-purpose centre with a diverse range of retail, service, community, intuitional, and recreational uses.

OPA 21

The Subject Lands are designated “Community Amenity – General” in OPA 21. This designation accommodates a mix of residential, commercial, employment, and community uses. Lands designated “Community Amenity Area – General” may be used predominantly for medium and high-density residential uses.

The draft Official Plan Amendment (“draft OPA”) submitted by the Owner in support of the Applications proposes to permit a maximum building height of 32-storeys, a density of 9.6 FSI, and 264 student suites. The draft OPA also incorporates flexibility to permit 264 residential units in the event York University does not award the student housing project to the Owner.

Zoning

The Subject Lands are zoned “Markham Centre Downtown Two *9(Hold)” [MC-D2*9(H9)] by site-specific Zoning By-law 2010-48 (“By-law 2010-48”), which amended Parent By-law 2004-196 (see Figure 2). By-law 2010-48 restricts the permitted uses on the Subject Lands to a retirement home and accessory uses.

The draft Zoning By-law Amendment (“draft ZBLA”) submitted by the Owner in support of the Applications proposes to amend the site-specific use permissions and development standards contained in By-law 2010-48 including, but not limited to, building height, density, and special parking provisions. Similar to the draft OPA, the draft ZBLA also provides flexibility to permit a 264 unit high-density residential development in the event York University does not award the project to the Owner.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The following summarizes the issues raised to date. These matters, including other matters identified through the circulation and detailed review of the Applications for the Proposed Development will be addressed in a final recommendation report to DSC:

- 1) Staff are reviewing the submitted Planning Justification Report, draft OPA, and draft ZBLA, prepared by Bousfields Inc. Staff will provide further comments on these documents, if necessary, in a future Recommendation Report.

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- 2) Staff are reviewing the Proposed Development in the context of the existing policy framework and with regard to the Markham Centre Secondary Plan (MCSP) Update Study process. A Recommendation Report will not be brought forward until the draft development concept for the MSCP Update process is endorsed by Council in Q2 or Q3 2021.
 - 3) Review of the appropriateness of the Proposed Development having regard for the following:
 - a) compatibility with existing and planned surrounding land uses
 - b) the appropriateness of the proposed building height and density
 - c) built form and massing, building location/orientation, and transitions
 - d) preliminary sun and shadow analysis and wind analysis
 - e) traffic impacts, driveway access, parking and transportation demand management
 - f) municipal servicing
 - g) amenity space areas
 - h) Water table and ground water impacts
 - 4) The Owner proposes 50 parking spaces to support the Proposed Development, with 25 parking spaces allocated for the student residents based on a proposed parking rate of 0.09 spaces per unit. The remaining 25 parking spaces are allocated for non-residential uses (the proposed university programming space) based on a proposed parking rate of 0.35 spaces per 100 m². Further confirmation on the bedroom mixes and the types of uses comprising the proposed university programming space is required. The Owner submitted a Transportation Impact Study that includes a parking justification, which is currently under review by the City's Transportation Planning Staff.
 - 5) Review of all technical studies submitted in support of the Proposed Development including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a) Stormwater Management and Servicing Compliance Brief
 - b) Traffic Impact Study, including Parking Study
 - c) Urban Design Brief
 - d) Shadow Impact Study
 - e) Wind Study
 - f) Arborist Report and Tree Preservation Plan
 - 6) The Proposed Development will have regard for any requirements of external agencies including, but not limited to, Metrolinx, Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and York Region.
 - 7) Confirmation of any outstanding financial obligations including, but not limited to, cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication; tree replacement/compensation; public art as well as consideration of community benefit contributions under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The Proposed Development will be reviewed in the context of the City's strategic priorities, including safe, sustainable and complete communities.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Applications have been circulated to various departments and external agencies and their requirements will be addressed as part of a future staff recommendation report.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Director of Planning & Urban Design

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Location Map
Figure 2: Area Context/Zoning
Figure 3: Air Photo
Figure 4: Site Plan/Ground Floor Plan (Interim)
Figure 5: Site Plan/Ground Floor Plan (Ultimate)
Figure 6: Conceptual Rendering (South-East View)

AGENT:

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