

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY REPORT, Application by Unionville Montessori Private School, for a Zoning By-law Amendment to permit a six (6) storey Secondary School building on the existing private school campus at 9286 and 9302 Kennedy Road and 4484, 4486 and 4488 16th Avenue, File No. PLAN 21 107046 (Ward 4)

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

REVIEWED BY: Stephen Lue, MCIP, RPP
Acting Senior Development Manager (Ext. 2520)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report entitled “PRELIMINARY REPORT, Application by Unionville Montessori Private School, for a Zoning By-law Amendment to permit a six (6) storey Secondary School building on the existing private school campus at 9286 and 9302 Kennedy Road and 4484, 4486 and 4488 16th Avenue, File No. PLAN 21 107046 (Ward 4)”, be received.

PURPOSE:

This report provides preliminary information on a Zoning By-law Amendment application (the “Application”) submitted by Malone Given Parsons, on behalf of Unionville Montessori Private School (the “Owner”), to permit the expansion to the existing school campus with a new Secondary School building on the subject lands. This report contains general information in regards to applicable Official Plan and other policies as well as development issues and should not be taken as Staff’s opinion or recommendations on the application.

Process to date:

The Application was deemed complete by Staff on April 9, 2021. The *Planning Act* sets out the 120-day period after when an applicant can appeal an application to the Ontario Land Tribunal (the “OLT”) for a non-decision. This period expired on August 7, 2021, for the Application. However, the Owner has been working with staff to address the various matters related to the overall development.

Next Steps:

1. A Statutory Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 19, 2021;
2. Staff will prepare a Recommendation Report on the Zoning By-law amendment at a future date; and
3. If the Application is approved, then a future application for Site Plan approval is required.

BACKGROUND:

The 1.7 ha. (4.23 ac.) subject lands (the “Subject Lands”) are located on the northwest corner of Kennedy Road and 16th Avenue (see Figure 1 – Location Map, Figure 2 – Area Context and Zoning Map, and Figure 3 – Air Photo). There are four (4) rural residential

properties located to the north of the Subject Lands that are proposed to be redeveloped with a nine (9)-storey mixed-use building (Uptown Green Garden). There are low-rise residential dwellings and a commercial plaza located to the south and across 16th Avenue. A stormwater management pond and townhouses, including live/work units are located to the east, across Kennedy Road. Development located to the west includes an existing grocery store and bakery (the Village Grocer), and low-rise residential dwellings (Kylmore Yorkton Phase 1). The Subject Lands contain a surface parking lot, a soccer field, and five (5) structures including the following:

- The George Hunter House, circa 1860 (9286 Kennedy Road);
- Two (2) Elementary School buildings, with a height of two (2) storeys (9302 Kennedy Road and 4486 16th Avenue)
- A temporary portable for additional classrooms; and
- A two (2) storey Daycare building (4484 16th Avenue) that includes a play area.

The Proposed Development

The Owner proposes to rezone the southeast portion of the Subject Lands (9286 Kennedy Road and 4488 16th Avenue) from a Rural Residential Zone category under By-law 304-87, as amended, to Community Amenity Zone category under By-law 177-96, as amended, to incorporate site-specific development standards to facilitate the development of a mid-rise building (see Figure 4 – Site Plan, Figures 5, 6 and 7 – Renderings). The Owner's Proposed Development includes the expansion to the existing school campus (the "Proposed Development") and consists of the following:

- Two (2) six (6) storey Secondary School buildings connected by an archway and elevated walkway with a combined gross floor area of approximately 13,586 m² (146,238 ft²)
- Administrative offices and twenty-five(25) classrooms;
- A gymnasium and swimming pool, library, artificial turf, a running track;
- Fifty-six (56) dormitory rooms and four (4) apartment units;
- A site density of 1.09 times the area of the Subject Lands (Floor Space Index – "FSI") - FSI means the ratio of gross floor area of all buildings on a lot divided by the area of the lot on which the buildings are being developed;
- A total of 255 parking spaces: 129 spaces at grade and 126 spaces on two levels underground; and
- Retaining and integrating the front façade of the George Hunter heritage dwelling into the proposed building facing Kennedy Road.

Provincial and Regional Policy Framework

Provincial Policy Conformity

The Proposed Development must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 and conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019, and the *Planning Act*. It will be evaluated against the Provincial Policy Framework during the processing of this Application.

York Region Official Plan

The Subject Lands are designated 'Urban Area' on Map 1 of the York Region Official Plan, 2010 (ROP), which provides for a wide range of Residential, Commercial, and Institutional uses.

Markham Official Plan 2014

The Subject Lands are designated 'Mixed Use – Mid Rise' in the 2014 Official Plan (as partially approved on November 24, 2017, and updated by the LPAT (now OLT) on April 9, 2018). This designation provides for integrated retail, office and residential uses and private schools within buildings up to a maximum height of eight (8) storeys and a maximum density of 2.0 FSI. The proposed building heights, site density and expansion of the private school campus uses will comply with the policies of the Markham Official Plan 2014.

ZONING

Zoning By-law 304-87

The southeast portion of the Subject Lands is zoned Rural Residential (RR1) under Zoning By-law 304-87, as amended, and the remaining portions are zoned Community Amenity One (CA1*260) under By-law 177-96, as amended. This RR1 zone permits single detached dwellings and limited home occupations on large rural properties. A Zoning By-law Amendment is required to permit the Proposed Development.

The Owner applied to amend the Zoning By-law for the RR1 zoned portion of the Subject Lands to delete this area from the designated area of By-law 304-87 and to add it to By-law 177-96, as amended, to a CA1 zone to permit the Proposed Development. A number of site-specific development standards and special provisions are proposed for the entire private school campus, including:

- No provision for loading spaces;
- A maximum building height of six (6) storeys and 26.0 m (85.3 ft.);
- No parking space requirement for dormitory lodging rooms and dwelling units that are accessory to the private school; and,
- To permit fifty-six (56) student dormitories and four (4) dwelling units accessory to the private school on the same lot.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The following is a list of preliminary comments raised to date. Other matters that are identified through the detailed review of this Application and public meetings will be discussed in a future recommendation report to DSC. Some of the matters identified to date for consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Review of the submitted Planning Opinion Report and draft ZBA, prepared by Malone Given Parsons. Staff will provide further comments on these documents, if required, in a future Recommendation Report.
- 2) Review of the appropriateness of the Proposed Development having regard for the following:

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- a) Integration of the proposed expansion with the existing private school campus and surrounding low rise buildings;
 - b) Built form and massing, building orientation, and transitions with particular focus on impacts to the existing residential area to the south across 16th Avenue;
 - c) Transportation Planning staff are reviewing a Transportation Study, prepared by the AECOM, submitted with the Application;
 - d) Staff note that the school campus will be impacted by York Region's planned future road network improvements, which will require future conveyances to facilitate the following:
 - A proposed widening of 16th Avenue;
 - A proposed widening of Kennedy Road; and,
 - Kennedy Road and 16th Avenue intersection improvements.
 - e) Heritage Planning has commented that the George Hunter House is the only historic building remaining from a small cross roads community that was once called Hunter's Corner. However, given the building's isolation and lack of any heritage context, Heritage Planning staff is open to alternative conservation strategies (including the current Proposed Development to surround the heritage dwelling with a glass enclosure), but recommends that any restoration measures of the heritage dwelling be as authentic as possible;
 - f) Heritage Markham commented that the Owner should make the heritage dwelling more prominent so that it is not overshadowed by the proposed secondary school building;
 - g) The private school campus consists of three separate properties that should be consolidated to avoid any issues relating to future site servicing and access; and,
 - h) Consideration of Public Art and other public benefits (Section 37 of the *Planning Act*).

Community Meeting

A non-statutory virtual Community information meeting was held on August 18, 2021, to discuss the proposed expansion to the existing school campus. This meeting was hosted by the Ward Councillor in conjunction with the representatives of the Unionville Montessori School, and was also attended by Staff. Comments made at this meeting included concerns about:

- Increased parking demands for events relating to the larger school campus resulting in parking overflow/ spillover onto adjacent streets;
- Increased vehicular traffic; and,
- Concerns relating to the conceptual building design and proposed building heights.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The Application is being evaluated in the context of the City's strategic priorities, including Growth Management and Municipal Services.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Application has been circulated to various City departments and external agencies and is currently under review.

RECOMMENDED BY:

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

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 – Conceptual Site Plan

Figure 5 – Rendering – view from 16th Avenue looking northeast

Figure 6 – Rendering – view from 16th Avenue looking northwest

Figure 7 – Rendering – view from Kennedy Road looking west

OWNER:

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