

SUBJECT: Preliminary Report, Applications by Timbercreek Four Quadrant GP2 Inc., for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to permit five (5) mixed use buildings at 288, 298, and 300 John Street, File No. PLAN 20 130784 (Ward 1)

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

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

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report entitled “Preliminary Report, Applications by Timbercreek Four Quadrant GP2 Inc., for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to permit five (5) mixed use buildings at 288, 298, and 300 John Street, File No. PLAN 20 130784 (Ward 1)”, be received.

PURPOSE:

This report provides preliminary information on Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by Timbercreek Four Quadrant GP2 Inc., to permit a mixed use development 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 applications.

Process to date:

The applications to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law were deemed complete on November 20, 2020.

Next Steps:

1. A Statutory Public Meeting, to be scheduled at a future date when appropriate;
2. Staff will prepare a Recommendation Report on the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments at a future date;
3. If the applications are approved then future applications for Site Plan approval, and Draft Plan of Condominium approval are required;

BACKGROUND:

The 3.13 ha. (7.7 ac.) subject lands are located approximately 170 m (558 ft.) east of Bayview Avenue and immediately east of the Thornhill Community Centre, on the north side of John Street and the south side of Green Lane, with frontage on both these streets (see Figure 1 – Location Map, Figure 2 – Area Context and Zoning Map, and Figure 3 – Air Photo). Located to the north of the property are three (3) residential high rise apartment buildings (Landmark of Thornhill) that range between twelve (12) and fifteen (15) storeys in height, a fire station (Fire Hall #91) and neighbourhood plaza, fronting on the north side of Green Lane. There are condominium townhouses located to the south, in the Johnsville Village neighbourhood across John Street. To the east is a publicly accessible, private, north south driveway that links John Street with Green Lane and

provides access to adjacent uses. These uses include a mixed use mid rise development consisting of at-grade commercial uses and stacked townhouses above, a place of worship (St. Luke's Catholic Church), a seniors housing residence (St. Luke's Lodge), and the CN Rail/GO corridor. Located to the west is the Thornhill Community Centre and further west, across Bayview Avenue is a private hospital (Shouldice Hospital), a seniors housing facility (HCN-Revera Glynnwood) and low rise residential to the south. There is a proposal to develop five (5) high rise residential towers on the Shouldice Hospital site which is currently under review. In addition, the expansion proposal for an eight (8) storey building on the HCN-Revera Glynnwood seniors housing facility is currently on hold.

The subject lands contain a surface parking lot, two (2) commercial buildings with a grocery store (Food Basics) and a mid-rise office building, a drug store (Shoppers Drug Mart) and a variety of other low rise retail, service commercial and medical office uses. It also contains a heritage building circa 1858 (The John Welsh House "Thornlea", 288 John Street). The heritage building is listed on the Markham Register of Property of Cultural Value or Interest and has been designated as a heritage building under By-law 66-94. The heritage building is currently occupied by a restaurant. The municipal boulevards along John Street and Green Lane are lined with mature trees.

Vehicular access to the subject lands is provided via the private, publicly accessible driveway on the east side noted above, which will be retained.

Proposal

The applicant is proposing to develop five (5) mixed use buildings on the subject lands (see Figure 4 – Site Plan, and Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8 – Massing Views for Buildings A, B, C, D and E). The redevelopment of the subject lands will occur in three phases and proposes:

- A total of 579 residential units to be built in 3 phases:
 - Phase 1: Buildings A and B – fifteen (15) and thirteen (13) storey towers connected by a four (4) storey podium (Buildings A and B – 251 units);
 - Phase 2: Buildings C and D – ten (10) and eight (8) storey towers each with separate four (4) storey podia (Building C – 112 units, Building D – 108 units);
 - Phase 3: Building E – eight (8) storey tower with a four (4) storey podium (108 units);
- A total Residential Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 44,404 m² (477,960 ft²);
- A total combined Retail and Commercial GFA of 12,195 m² (131,266 ft²) for all 3 phases:
 - Phase 1: Building A and B – Retail and Commercial GFA of 9,000 m² (96,975 ft²);
 - Phase 2: Buildings C and D – Retail GFA of 2,361 m² (25,414 ft²);
 - Phase 3: Building E – Retail GFA of 834 m² (8,977 ft²);
- A total area of 1,166 m² (12,560 ft²) for indoor amenity space;
- A total area of 1,166 m² (12,560 ft²) for outdoor amenity space;
- A site density of 2.0 FSI;

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- A total of 1,050 parking spaces: 637 residential spaces and 413 spaces for retail and visitors (968 spaces are proposed to be located within two (2) levels of underground parking and 82 spaces are proposed at-grade);
 - A total of 179 bicycle parking spaces;
 - A 0.33 ha. (0.81 ac.) public park on the southwest portion of the subject lands, adjacent to the Thornhill Community Centre and with frontage on John Street, is proposed to be conveyed to the City;
 - The retention of the existing The John Welsh House "Thornlea" heritage building;

Rental Units Proposed

The applicant has indicated that market based rental units will form a significant part of the development proposal.

Provincial and Regional Policy Framework

Provincial and Regional Policy Conformity

This proposal must be consistent with the Regional Official Plan, Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, and conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019, and the Planning Act. It will be evaluated against this Policy Framework during the processing of this application.

Markham Official Plan

Markham Official Plan 2014

The subject lands are designated 'Mixed Use Mid Rise' under the Markham Official Plan 2014 (as partially approved on November 24, 2017 and further updated by the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal on April 9, 2018). The 'Mixed Use Mid Rise' designation provides for a broad range of uses including residential dwellings, retail, restaurants, service, hotels, commercial parking garages, commercial schools, as well as sports and fitness centres. The 'Mixed Use Mid Rise' designation permits a maximum building height of eight (8) storeys and a maximum overall site density of up to 2.0 FSI. The subject lands are further identified under the Site Specific Policy 9.18.11 as being located within the Local Centre of Thornhill Centre which is intended to serve as a focal point for the surrounding community and provide a range of housing, employment, shopping and recreational opportunities.

An amendment to the Markham Official Plan 2014 is required to permit the proposed development. Consequently, the applicant is seeking to amend the Markham Official Plan 2014 by re-designating the subject lands from 'Mixed Use Mid Rise' to 'Mixed Use High Rise'.

Zoning

The subject property is zoned Community Amenity One (CA1), under By-law 1767, as amended (see Figure 2). Permitted uses within the CA1 zone category include, but are not limited to, townhouses, multiple unit buildings, retail stores, offices, a shopping centre, restaurants, and personal service shops.

The applicant is proposing a number of exceptions to the current zoning including:

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- A maximum of 579 dwelling units, whereas a maximum of 356 dwelling units are permitted;
 - A minimum of 413 parking spaces are proposed for visitor and commercial purposes, whereas under the City's Parking By-law, a minimum of 592 parking spaces are required for the proposed non-residential uses. Therefore the applicant is requesting a parking reduction of 179 parking spaces for the proposed non-residential uses;
 - A maximum building height of 15 storeys, whereas a maximum of 6 storeys is permitted;

A Zoning By-law amendment is required to permit the increase in the number of units, reduction in required parking and maximum number of storeys as noted above. The requirement for additional site specific exceptions to the zoning by-law will be determined following the submission and review of a formal application for site plan approval.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Issues or concerns identified through the detailed review of these applications and public meetings will be discussed in a future recommendation report to DSC. Some of the preliminary matters identified for consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Review of the submitted Planning Opinion Report, draft OPA and ZBA, prepared by the Goldberg Group Land Use Planning and Development consulting firm. 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:
 - a) Compatibility with the existing and planned surrounding land uses;
 - b) The appropriateness of the proposed uses, density and building heights;
 - c) Staff are reviewing the proposed development standards in the context of the existing and planned uses;
 - d) Opportunities to provide an appropriate balance of affordable housing, purpose-built rental, senior focused housing, and family oriented unit sizes. Based on the conceptual site statistics provided, the applicant is proposing to provide a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartment units. Region of York staff have also commented that they encourage the inclusion of affordable rental housing as part of the proposal;
 - e) Built form and massing, building orientation, and transitions with a focus on impacts to the existing multiple dwellings east of the subject lands and to the townhouses to the south across John Street;
 - f) Urban Design Staff are reviewing the supporting studies submitted with the applications including a Wind Study and a Shadow Study to ensure the wind and shadow conditions will comply with the City's requirements;

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- g) Development Engineering staff is reviewing the Functional Servicing Report prepared by Counterpoint Engineering Inc., to determine whether upgrades to sanitary sewer infrastructure is required to accommodate the proposed development;
 - h) Transportation Planning staff are reviewing a Transportation Impact and Parking Study, prepared by the LEA Consulting Ltd., submitted with the applications;
 - i) Impacts on existing community and recreation facilities serving the area;
 - j) The conceptual site plan (see Figure 4) proposes a 0.33 ha. (0.81 ac.) public park at the south end of the site fronting on to John Street, whereas the parkland dedication requirement for the proposal is 1.4 ha. (3.46 ac.). Staff will work with the applicant to determine the appropriate amount of parkland that should be provided on site as part of this development as well as the appropriate amount of cash-in-lieu of parkland contribution, or off-site park conveyance;
 - k) Consideration of Public Art and other public benefits (Section 37 of the *Planning Act*);

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, including Growth Management and Municipal Services.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

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

RECOMMENDED BY:

Biju Karumanchery
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 – Site Plan
Figure 5 – Massing View – Buildings A and B
Figure 6 – Massing View – Building C
Figure 7 – Massing View – Building D
Figure 8 – Massing View – Building E

OWNER:

Timbercreek Four Quadrant GP2 Inc.
C/O Ryan Ng
1133 Yonge Street 4th Floor
Toronto, ON M4T 2Y7
Email: mg@timbercreek.com
Tel: 647-261-5985

APPLICANT/AGENT:

Goldberg Group
C/O Todd Trudelle
2098 Avenue Road
Toronto, ON M5M 4A8
Email: ttrudelle@goldberggroup.ca
Tel: 416-322-6364