
SUBJECT: **RECOMMENDATION REPORT**
York Region District School Board
Application for Site Plan Approval for a Proposed three-storey Secondary School at 100 Donald Sim Avenue

File SC 14 110102

PREPARED BY: Stephen Corr, ext 2624
Planner II, East District

REVIEWED BY: Sally Campbell, MCIP, RPP, ext 2645
Acting Manager, East District

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report dated March 3, 2015, entitled "RECOMMENDATION REPORT, York Region District School Board, Application for Site Plan Approval for a Proposed three-storey Secondary School at 100 Donald Sim Avenue, File No: SC 14 110102", be received;
- 2) That the presentation by Avinash Garde, of Snyder Architects Inc. regarding the proposed three-storey secondary school, be received;
- 3) That the Site Plan application (SC 14 110102) submitted by the York Region District School Board to facilitate a three-storey secondary school at 100 Donald Sim Avenue be endorsed in principle, subject to the conditions attached as Appendix 'A';
- 4) That Site Plan Approval (SC 14 110102) be delegated to the Director of Planning and Urban Design or his designate, to be issued following execution of a site plan undertaking;
- 5) That site plan endorsement shall lapse after a period of three (3) years from the date of endorsement in the event that a site plan undertaking is not executed within that period;
- 6) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

This report recommends endorsement of the site plan application submitted by the York Region District School Board for a three-storey secondary school at 100 Donald Sim Avenue.

In accordance with Section 2. (a)(v) of the Delegation By-law 2002-02, the approval authority for this site plan application is Development Services Committee.

BACKGROUND:

The 6.6 ha (16.3 ac) site is located on the east side of Bur Oak Avenue, on the north side of Donald Sim Avenue and on the south side of Almira Avenue, (south of 16th Avenue and east of 9th line) in the Cornell community (Figures 1, 2 and 3). The site is currently vacant and has been graded for future development.

The surrounding area includes a mix of low density residential dwellings, mixed-used commercial and residential buildings along Bur Oak Avenue and a 5-storey senior's care/retirement facility to the north (across Almira Avenue), known as the *Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care*.

Proposal

York Region District School Board (YRDSB) is proposing a new three-storey public secondary school on the subject lands. The site plan and building elevations illustrating the proposed school are shown in Figures 4 and 5. The school is proposed to be oriented towards the Bur Oak Avenue street frontage. It will have a Gross Floor Area of approximately 18,095 m² (195,000 ft²), and comprise 76 classrooms. The site and building plans submitted also show the potential for a future expansion consisting of 6 portable classrooms and an addition to the school with up to 3 classrooms. Paved parking areas will be located at the north and southeast sides of the site, providing surface parking for up to 257 vehicles, including 13 accessible spaces. One grass covered athletic field with a track is proposed to be located on the northeast side of the property and a second practice field is proposed at the southeast corner of the property. YRDSB anticipates that the school will be open for September, 2016.

Official Plan and Zoning

The site is designated 'Residential Neighbourhood' in the in force City of Markham Official Plan and Cornell Secondary Plan. The site is designated 'Residential Low Rise' in the 2014 Official Plan (not yet in force). Both designations allow for a public school on the subject lands and Schedule 'AA' – Detailed Land Use of the Cornell Secondary Plan anticipates a public secondary school at the proposed location.

The site is zoned 'Open Space Two (OS2)' under By-law 177-96, as amended. The zoning by-law permits a public school on the subject lands. The proposal conforms to the development standards required by the Zoning By-law. The Committee of Adjustment approved Variance A/131/14 on February 11, 2015 to reduce the total number of parking required by Parking Standards By-law 28-97, as amended. The approved variance permits parking to be provided at a rate of 2.9 spaces per classroom, whereas Secondary Schools are required to provide parking at a rate of 4.0 spaces per classroom. The approved variance permits a minimum of 247 parking spaces for the 76 class room secondary school, and potential expansion of up to 9 classrooms. Parking Standards By-law 28-97, as amended, requires secondary schools to provide parking at a minimum rate of four parking spaces per classroom. A parking justification study was submitted in support of the variance application. According to the study, the average parking demand rate observed at four existing secondary schools within York Region (two in Richmond Hill and two in Markham) is 2.64 spaces per classroom. Further, the report identified that a 1999 study

entitled *York Region Safety and Traffic Circulation at School Sites Guidelines* revealed an average parking demand rate of 2.67 spaces per classroom, which was based on six secondary school sites within the Region. The parking and justification study has been deemed acceptable by the Transportation Engineering Section.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The site plan and building elevations are appropriate

The orientation of the proposed school will create an effective urban edge along the Bur Oak Avenue frontage, which is a focal 'main street' within the Cornell community, as identified in the Cornell Secondary Plan. Staff are satisfied that the proposed school is sufficiently set back from adjacent residential properties located on the west side of Bur Oak Avenue and south side of Donald Sim Avenue. The scale and massing of the proposed school will be compatible to the adjacent 5-storey *Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care*, to the north (across Almira Avenue).

The proposed building elevations (see Figure 5) show that the exterior façade consists of varying window treatments, colours and materials that will enhance the street presence of the proposed school. The applicant has indicated that the proposed secondary school will implement the City's Bird Friendly Design Guidelines as part of the exterior elevation treatments. This will also be a condition of site plan approval, as noted in Appendix 'A'.

The Cornell Community Design Plan considers schools to be 'landmark buildings' that should be sited in way that maximizes their prominence within the community. Further, multi-storey school buildings are encouraged, as they maximize use of the site and services, and contribute to an urban street condition. Staff are satisfied that the proposed secondary school conforms to the Cornell Community Design Plan with regards to the proposed built form and building placement.

With respect to the proposed site configuration (See Figure 4), sufficient landscaping is provided across the property and the perimeter of the parking areas includes low dense planting to screen parked vehicles. A Bicycle storage rack adjacent to the main entrance is shown on the site plan. However, additional details regarding the proposed type of bicycle storage rack has been requested by the Transportation Engineering Section, which will be required as a condition of site plan approval (Appendix 'A'). Sufficient areas for snow storage are also provided. The two sports fields, located on the east side of the site, will provide a substantial amount of soft landscaping providing opportunities for rainwater infiltration. The practice field also provides additional recreational opportunities for local residents when not in use by the school.

Staff has advised the applicant that there are concerns that the 1.8 m (5.9 ft) chain link fence around the two sports fields, as reflected on the current site plan submission, is considered excessive. Staff are of the opinion that while a certain amount of fencing is required for the safe use of the fields, a reduced fence height and alternative fence materials would provide for an appropriate and more attractive means of enclosure. Additional openings along the fence would benefit students, by allowing for easier access to the site and thereby encouraging walking and cycling to school. To address staff

concerns, the School Board has agreed to remove fencing around the practice field will allow for easier access to the school. The School Board has also agreed to reduce the fence height around the main sports field to 1.5 m (5.0 ft). Given that the main sports field and running track will not be available for public use at evenings and weekends due to the specialized surface, which is costly to install and maintain, staff are satisfied with the revisions proposed by the applicant. A Revision to remove the fencing around the practice field and to reduce the fence height around the main sports field will be incorporated into the site plan prior to site plan endorsement.

TRCA COMMENTS

Comments on the first submission of the site plan application were provided by the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) in a letter dated September 22, 2014. As part of their review, the TRCA requested that the applicants provide additional information in the submitted Engineering plans and studies regarding on site water retention calculations and Erosion and Sediment Control measures to be implemented during construction. Additional comments from the TRCA following the second submission have not been provided at the time this report was prepared. Accordingly, as a condition of site plan approval (Appendix 'A'), the applicant will have to provide written clearance that the TRCA comments and conditions have been satisfied.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, staff are of the opinion that proposed development is appropriate with respect to land use and built form. The proposed 3-storey secondary school will create a strong building edge along Bur Oak Avenue in support of the Cornell Community Design Plan goals and its scale and massing is compatible with the adjacent 5-storey senior care facility, to the north. The proposed site configuration is acceptable with respect to building location, landscaping, snow storage and availability of parking. As noted, the applicant has agreed to remove fencing around the practice field and reduce the fence height around the main sports field to 1.5 m (5.0 ft), which is to be reflected in the next submission of site plans. Once this revision has been made, staff recommend that the site plan be endorsed in principle, subject to the conditions in Appendix 'A'.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:

Not Applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not Applicable

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

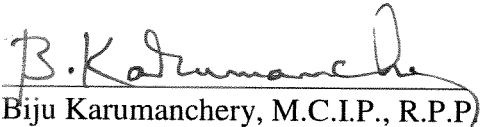
The proposed application has been reviewed in the context of the City's strategic priorities of Growth Management, Transportation and Municipal Services.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The application has been circulated to various City departments and external agencies, including Engineering, Urban Design, Waste Management, Zoning, Operations,

Transportation Planning and the TRCA and their requirements have been reflected in this report as well as the conditions of site plan approval.

RECOMMENDED BY:



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



Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

- Figure 1 – Site Location
- Figure 2 – Area Context/Zoning
- Figure 3 – Arial Photo
- Figure 4 – Proposed Site Plan
- Figure 5 – Proposed Building Elevations

Owner: Bryan Blackert
Manager of Construction
York Region District School Board
1260 Gorham Road
Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 8W4
(905) 727-0022 ext. 3243 - bryan.blackert@yrdsb.edu.on.ca

Applicant: Avinash Garde
Snyder Architects Inc.
260 King Street E Unit A101
Toronto, Ontario, M5A4L5
(416) 966-5444 – agarde@snyderarchitects.ca

File path: Amanda\File 14 110102\Documents\Recommendation Report

APPENDIX 'A'
SITE PLAN CONDITIONS
YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
100 DONALD SIM AVENUE
SC 14 110102

That prior to site plan endorsement:

1. The site plan and landscaping plans be revised to remove fencing around the practice field and reduce the fence height to 1.5 m (5.0 ft), to the satisfaction of the City Architect, or his designate.
2. That the Applicant obtain final approval of the parking reduction variance (Ref: A/131/14) or revise the onsite parking to conform to the requirements of Parking Standards By-law 28-97, as amended.

That the Owner shall enter into a Site Plan Undertaking with the City, containing all standard and special provisions and requirements of the City and external agencies, including but not limited to:

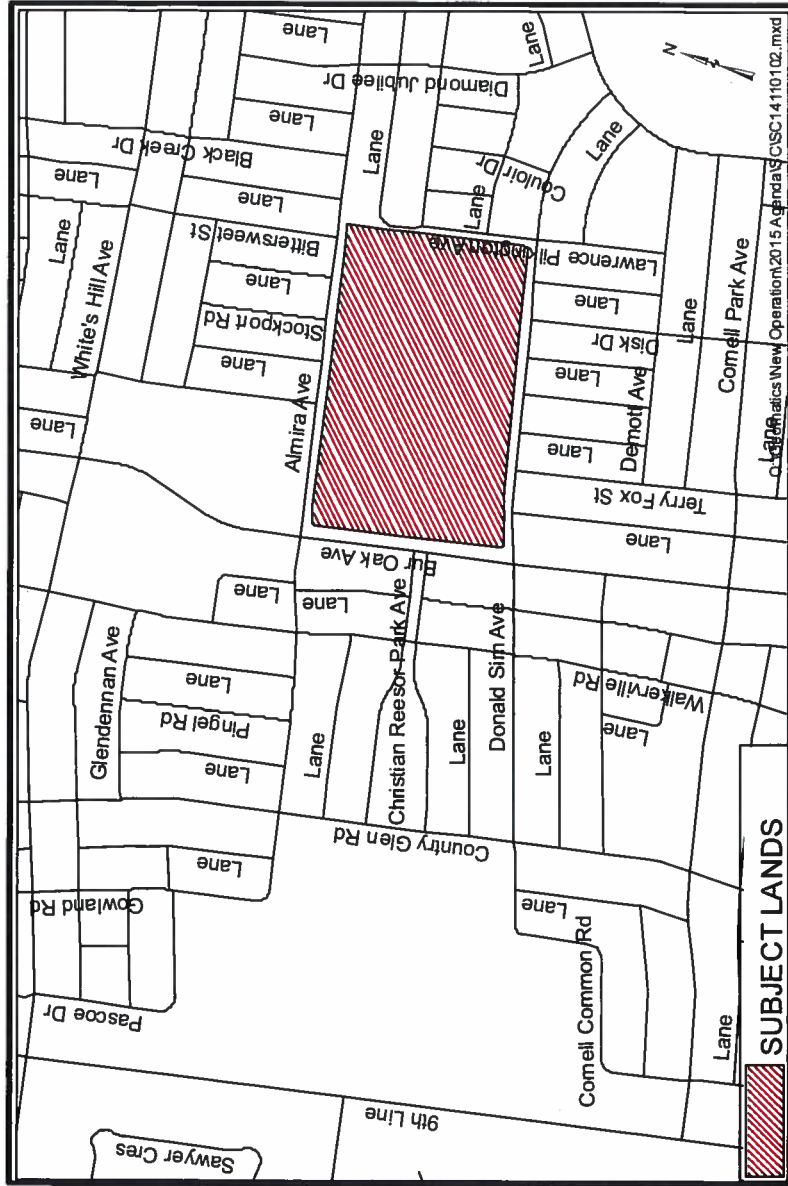
1. Provisions for the payment by the Owner of all applicable fees, recoveries, and any other financial obligations.
2. Implementation of bird friendly elements into the proposed building, to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Urban Design.
3. Provisions to satisfy all of the Toronto Region Conservation Authority requirements.

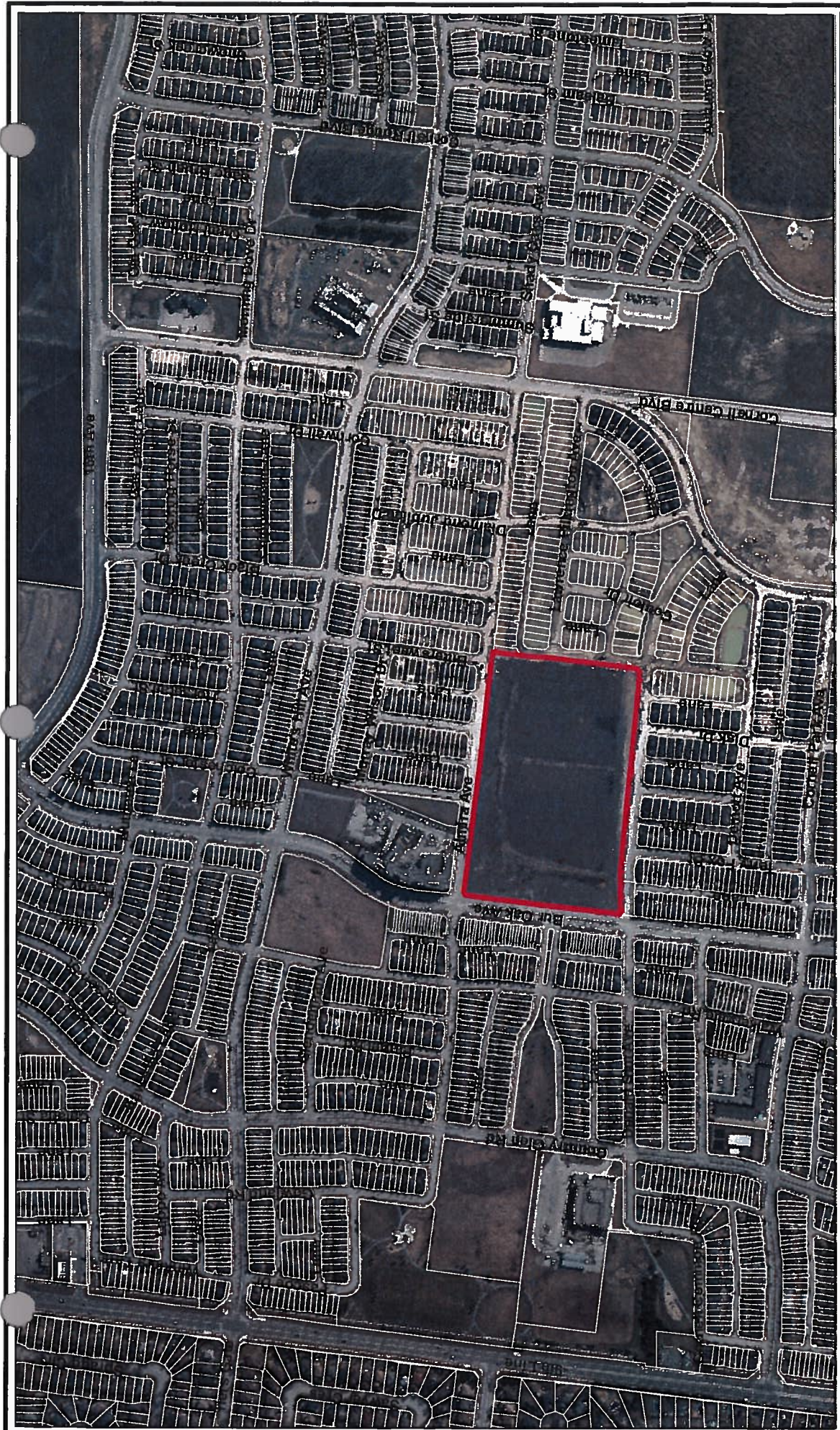
That prior to execution of a Site Plan Undertaking:

1. The Owner shall submit final site plans, building elevations, engineering drawings, lighting plans, and photometric data (if applicable), landscape plans, information related to the bicycle storage facility, along with any other studies and reports which are required to comply with the requirements of the City and external agencies, to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Development Services.

That prior to issuance of Site Plan Approval:

1. Written clearance from the Toronto Region Conservation Authority that all of their requirements have been met, to be submitted to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Development Services.





AIR PHOTO

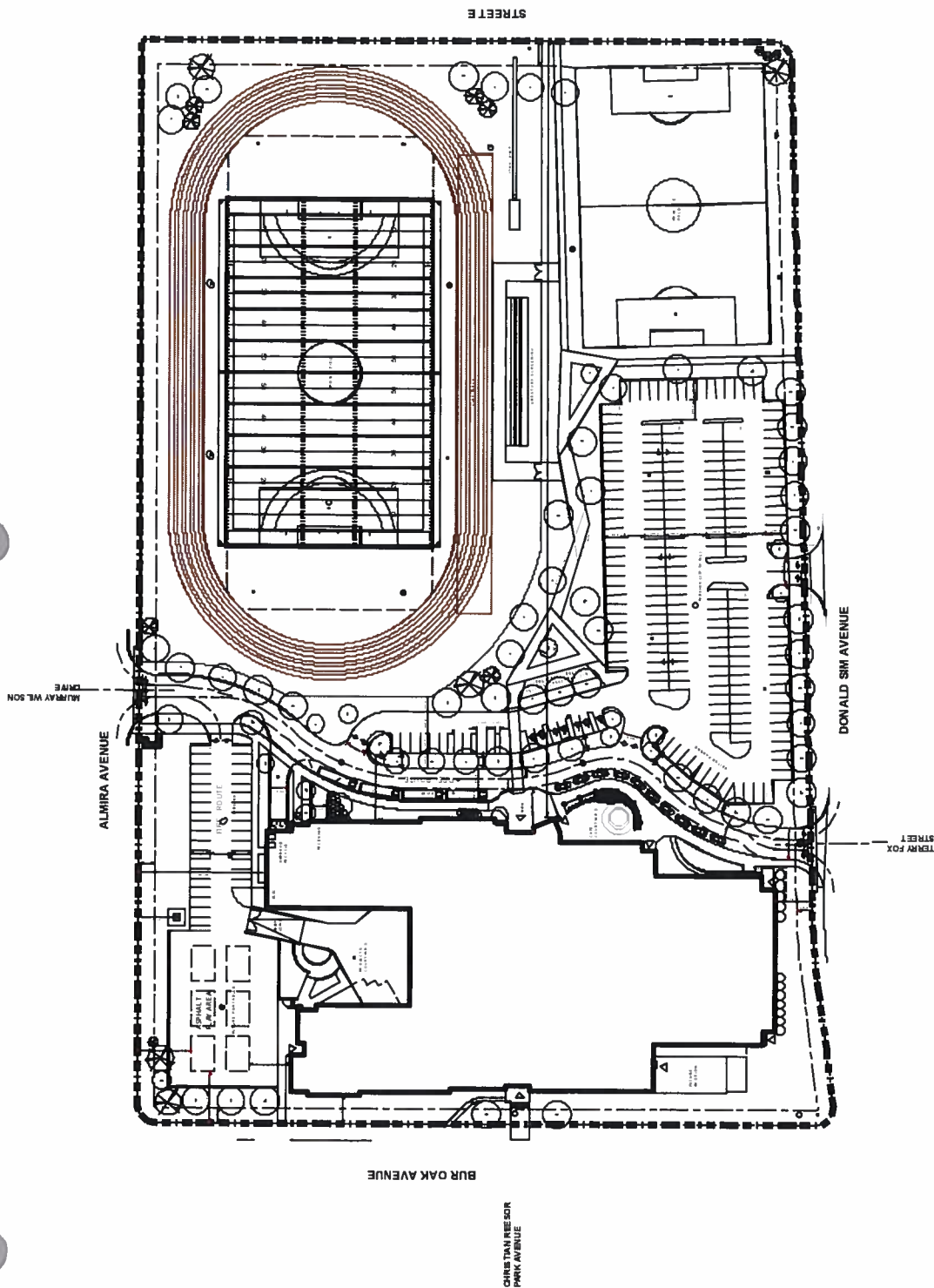
APPLICANT: YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
100 DONALD SIM AVENUE

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 SUBJECT LANDS





SITE PLAN

APPLICANT: YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
 100 DONALD SIM AVENUE

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DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION

Drawn By: CPW

Checked By: SC

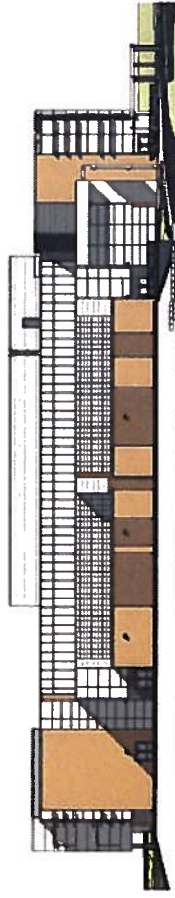
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FIGURE No. 4

SUBJECT LANDS



NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

DONALD SIM AVENUE



MAIN ENTRANCE VIEW



WEST ELEVATION

BUR OAK AVENUE



EAST ELEVATION

MAIN ENTRANCE

ELEVATIONS

APPLICANT: YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
100 DONALD SIM AVENUE

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