



Development Services Subcommittee Official Plan - Employment Conversion

Tuesday, July 9, 2013, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Canada Room, Markham Civic Centre

Attendance

Mayor Frank Scarpitti
Deputy Mayor Jack Heath
Regional Councillor Jim Jones
Councillor Howard Shore
Councillor Colin Campbell
Councillor Alan Ho
Councillor Logan Kanapathi

Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer
Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services
Stephen Chait, Director, Economic Development
Catherine Conrad, City Solicitor
Lilli Duoba, Senior Project Coordinator
Dave Miller, Manager, Development East
Rino Mostacci, Director of Planning and Urban Design
Richard Vandezande, Manager, Community Planning
Marg Wouters, Senior Manager, Policy and Research
Kitty Bavington, Council/Committee Coordinator

The Development Services Subcommittee convened at 9:00 a.m. with Regional Councillor Jim Jones as Chair.

1. Disclosure of Interest – None Declared

2. Draft Official Plan 2012 – Employment Conversion and Redesignation Applications (10.0)

As directed by Development Services Committee on May 21, 2013, the employment conversion requests associated with the new Official Plan have been referred to the Development Services Subcommittee for a report and recommendation back to the Development Services Committee.

Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services, advised that today's meeting is a continuation of discussions from May 21, providing an opportunity for applicants to present their rationale for conversions/redesignations. Staff are seeking direction on whether any of the requests should be considered for a designation other than employment in the final OP.

The Committee considered the process and agreed to wait until all eleven applications have been heard, and to make a comprehensive decision on all of them at that time.

Marg Wouters, Senior Manager, Policy and Research, gave a presentation regarding employment conversion/redesignation issues and impacts, the staff report and recommendations of May 21, Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan, Markham's Community Planning and Economic Development objectives, and the 2031 employment forecasts in the Official Plan. The six Growth Plan tests for conversion and the eleven applications that are being considered were reviewed.

If the applications are to go forward, the City must demonstrate to the Region that sufficient employment lands remain to achieve Markham's employment forecasts to 2031. If conversion is supported by Committee, an application would go through the regular OPA review process including submission of technical studies and Public Meetings to determine the appropriate use. The properties that go forward would be identified as "deferred" in the new OP until Council makes a decision on the new use.

The Committee briefly discussed the outcome of applications going forward and being appealed by the Region. It was noted that the Region requires Markham to achieve the employment forecast to 2031 by employment type: Major Office Employment (35%); Employment Land Employment (Industrial) (35%); Population-Related Employment (30%). Stephen Chait, Director of Economic Development, provided comments regarding economic issues relating to employment development.

Applications:

a) Catholic Cemeteries (OP 13-116842)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Catholic Cemeteries (OP 13-116842) to permit a cemetery on a 22 ha. parcel designated Future Employment Area at Woodbine Avenue and 19th Avenue. Staff clarified that the subject lands are not currently designated as employment lands but are identified as such in the draft OP, and are therefore not technically a conversion. However, the application does have an impact on the total employment land supply.

Mike Everard, representing Catholic Cemeteries, advised of the approaching crisis for provision of burial lands for the Catholic faith. Mr. Everard discussed the charity status of Catholic Cemeteries and the various reasons why this location is favourable for this use, and addressed the six Growth Plan conversion tests. The applicant is requesting approval or deferral of the application. The organization is working with AMO to have cemeteries reinstated as a permitted use in prime agricultural lands.

The Committee requested the applicant forward the noted statistics and studies regarding the burial land supply crisis, to staff for analysis. It was suggested that the applicant be asked to enter into an agreement to make the plots available only to residents of Markham; however, it was acknowledged that this limitation is not practical. Mr. Everard noted that as a charity, detailed technical studies could not be provided.

Moved by: Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by: Councillor Logan Kanapathi

- 1) That the presentation by Mike Everard, representing Catholic Cemeteries, regarding Official Plan Amendment application OP 13-116842 (Catholic Cemeteries) to designate the lands for a cemetery use rather than 'Future Employment Area', be received; and,
- 2) That the Development Services Commission report dated May 21, 2013 titled "Draft Official Plan 2012 – Employment Conversion and Redesignation Applications" and the updated staff presentation dated July 9, 2013 be received; and,

- 3) That the applicant be requested to provide the studies and statistics regarding the shortage of burial lands, to staff for analysis; and,
- 4) That the application by Catholic Cemeteries, Archdiocese of Toronto for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-116842) to redesignate future employment lands for cemetery use be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the applications; and further,
- 5) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

b) Box Grove Hill Developments (OP 13-108173)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Box Grove Hill Developments (OP 13-108173) for conversion of employment lands on Copper Creek Drive between the Walmart and Longos sites to grade-related housing. The proposal involves a banquet/conference hall and restaurant on Site A (3 ha.) and live-work/townhouse residential use on Site B (8 ha.). Only the proposal for Site B constitutes employment conversion. The proposal includes the provision of additional parkland by the applicant. The proposal to add a banquet/conference hall and restaurant use within a Business Park Area or Business Corridor Area designation on Site A is not a conversion, but still requires an Official Plan amendment.

John Genest of Malone Given Parsons, representing Box Grove Hill Developments Inc., discussed the context and surrounding uses of the proposal, and reviewed the actions of other municipalities and the Region in similar circumstances. Mr. Genest considers the sites in question to be stand-alone, and not part of an employment cluster. He discussed alternate prospects, the benefits for the community, and the economic development strategy targets that are more suitable for Buttonville than Box Grove.

The Committee compared permitted uses that may or may not be compatible with the community, and the potential employment generated, specifically, a hotel. Silvio De Gasperis, the applicant, responded with respect to the potential hotel.

Tom Farrar of the Box Grove Community Association spoke on behalf of himself and Claudia Ferryman, in support of the request by Box Grove Hill Developments Inc. with respect to the provision of parkland. Mr. Farrar referred to two previous petitions in support of parkland development. Mr. Farrar noted the negative impacts of industrial uses.

Moved by: Councillor Colin Campbell

Seconded by: Mayor Frank Scarpitti

- 1) That the presentation by John Genest of Malone Given Parsons, representing Box Grove Hill Developments Inc., and the deputation by Tom Farrar of the Box Grove Community Association, regarding Official Plan Amendment application OP 13-108173 (Box Grove Hill Developments) for employment conversion, be received; and,

- 2) That the Development Services Commission report dated May 21, 2013 titled "Draft Official Plan 2012 – Employment Conversion and Redesignation Applications" and the updated staff presentation dated July 9, 2013 be received; and,
- 3) That the application by Box Grove Hill Developments Inc. for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-108173) to redesignate 3 hectares of Business Park Area lands (Site A) to Business Corridor Area to permit banquet hall/conference hall and restaurant uses; and to redesignate 8 hectares of Business Park Area lands (Site B) for residential and live/work uses, be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion applications; and further,
- 4) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

c) Cathedral Town Ltd. (OP 13-114066)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Cathedral Town Ltd. (OP 13-114066) to add grade-related residential uses within the Business Park designation, along Highway 404 within the Cathedral community, to achieve a mix of uses. The applicant contends that the employment forecasts can be achieved on half of the 19 ha. parcel of land, leaving the remaining half to be used for other purposes, including residential. Staff consider this Highway 404 area to be a key employment corridor.

Staff confirmed that the subject lands were identified as employment lands prior to adjacent homes being purchased.

Bob Forhan of RJ Forhan & Associates, representing Cathedral Town Ltd., suggested that half of the 19 hectare parcel will accommodate the employment targets of 1100 jobs, and the proposed designation of the remainder of the lands to Community Amenity will permit mixed uses. The proposal will comply with the approved Community Design Plan for Cathedraltown and provide for 866 residents and 173 PRE jobs. Mr. Forhan stated that Cathedraltown is a unique mixed-use urban community, and employment uses should focus on the residents of the community, not on the 404 transportation corridor. Mr. Forhan presented concept plans reflecting the Community Design Plan.

The Committee discussed the type of employment uses that could be accommodated (MOE, ELE, PRE), compatible uses, and protection for sustainable, prestige development along the 404 corridor. The pros and cons of a business park environment were debated and the criteria of the Community Design Plan was analysed - could a Honda development or similar use fit in?

Moved by: Councillor Alan Ho

Seconded by: Councillor Colin Campbell

- 1) That the presentation by Bob Forhan of RJ Forhan & Associates, representing Cathedral Town Ltd., regarding Official Plan Amendment OP 13-114066 (Cathedral Town Ltd.) for employment conversion, be received; and,

- 2) That the Development Services Commission report dated May 21, 2013 titled "Draft Official Plan 2012 – Employment Conversion and Redesignation Applications" and the updated staff presentation dated July 9, 2013 be received; and,
- 3) That the application by Cathedral Town Ltd. for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-114066) to redesignate Business Park Area lands for a mix of employment and none-employment uses including residential, be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion applications; and further,
- 4) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

d) Romandale Farms Ltd. (OP 13-114027)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Romandale Farms Ltd. (OP 13-114027) to add grade-related residential uses within the Future Employment Area north of Elgin Mills Road to achieve a better mix of uses. The 39 ha. parcel is designated as Agriculture in the current OP. The applicant contends that the employment ratio can be achieved on half of the land with the remaining half used for other purposes, and that the resulting higher density would add to transit viability.

Bob Forhan of RJ Forhan & Associates identified the lands known as the Snider Farm, and stated his opinion that half the lands will accommodate the employment targets of 1800 jobs and that the remaining lands could be used for additional PRE and residential uses, to achieve an integrated community. Mr. Forhan suggested a higher employment ratio could be achieved than the Region requires.

The Committee suggested the road network should be determined prior to the secondary plan.

Moved by: Councillor Alan Ho

Seconded by: Councillor Colin Campbell

- 1) That the presentation by Bob Forhan of RJ Forhan & Associates, representing Romandale Farms Ltd., regarding Official Plan Amendment OP 13-114027 (Romandale Farms Ltd.) for employment conversion, be received; and,
- 2) That the Development Services Commission report dated May 21, 2013 titled "Draft Official Plan 2012 – Employment Conversion and Redesignation Applications" and the updated staff presentation dated July 9, 2013 be received; and,
- 3) That the application by Romandale Farms Ltd. for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-114027) to redesignate future employment lands for a mix of employment and non-employment uses including residential be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion applications; and further,

- 4) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

The Development Services Subcommittee adjourned at 1:00 p.m.