



**Development Services Subcommittee
Official Plan - Employment Conversion**

Tuesday, July 16, 2013, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
York Room, Markham Civic Centre

Attendance

Regional Councillor Jim Jones,
Chair
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
Rino Mostacci, Director of Planning and Urban
Design
Marg Wouters, Senior Manager, Policy and
Research
Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator

The Development Services Subcommittee convened at 9:05 a.m. with Regional Councillor Jim Jones as Chair.

1. Disclosure of Interest – None Declared

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Logan Kanapathi
Seconded by Councillor Alan Ho

That the July 9, 2013 Development Services Subcommittee Minutes be approved as presented.

CARRIED

3. APPLICATIONS:

Staff indicated that this meeting is the second of a series of Subcommittee meetings to consider employment conversion applications. There are 4 applications under consideration at this meeting.

a) Times Group (OP 13-131100)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Times Group (OP 13-131100) to permit mixed use development on their remaining employment lands in the Leitchcroft

Community, located south of Highway 7 and east of Bayview Avenue. The proposal is for a mix of residential, retail and office uses.

Staff reported that the subject site is among the last available large properties with visibility from Hwy 407 and with direct access to Hwy 7. The lands are needed to achieve the employment target and to ensure a range of employment uses are available to 2031. The proposal would remove the remainder of the employment lands in the Leitchcroft Community.

Nick Pileggi of Malone Given Parsons, representing Times Group Corporation, presented the proposed concept plan for the site and the current land designation for the site. Some of the reasons the applicant provided for supporting this proposal included: the site has good visibility but it is hard to access; the site is not part of the larger employment area; the major office employment requirements can still be met; the proposal will contribute to the City's residential intensification targets; the Leitchcroft area needs population-related employment; the proposed plan is a better fit than the existing zoning permissions. The applicant believes the proposal would maintain the employment targets and that it would not destabilize employment in the area.

Moved by: Councillor Logan Kanapathi

Seconded by: Councillor Howard Shore

- 1) That the presentation by Nick Pileggi of Malone Given Parsons, representing Times Group, regarding Official Plan Amendment application OP 13-131100 (Times Group) for employment conversion be received; and,
- 2) That the application by Times Group for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-131100) to redesignate Business Park and Business Corridor lands for a mix of residential, retail and office uses, be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion/redesignation applications; and further,
- 3) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

b) King Square Ltd (OP 10-116596)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Kings Square Limited (OP 10-116596) to permit mixed use development at 9390 Woodbine Avenue, located within the employment area at the northwest corner of Woodbine Avenue and Markland Street. The proposal is to permit a hotel and 650 apartments units with grade related retail.

Staff's position is that all of the employment lands are needed in this area to achieve the employment targets and to ensure a range of employment uses to 2031. Additional residential lands are not needed in this area to reach intensification targets. The re-designation of this site would remove most of the remaining employment land north of Markland Street.

Peter Smith, a Partner with Bousfields Inc. presented the proposal for 9390 Woodbine Avenue and discussed the surrounding land uses and characteristics. The proposal to designate the land for mixed use development is being made not to remove employment from the area, but to add residential apartment units to the plans for the site. The applicant believes that permitting mixed land uses on the site would create synergies that would help make the project a success.

A member of the Subcommittee questioned what the proposed apartment building would be replacing from the original plans presented to the Development Services Committee.

Mr. Smith responded that the proposal to build residential apartment units is in replacement of the long term stay hotel originally proposed as part of phase 2 of this project. In addition, the size of the convention centre has been reduced from the original plans. The applicant will provide the Subcommittee with the revised convention centre details by email.

Moved by: Councillor Alan Ho

Seconded by: Councillor Colin Campbell

- 1) That the presentation by Peter Smith representing King Square Ltd, regarding Official Plan Amendment application OP 10-116596 (King Square Ltd) for employment conversion, be received; and,
- 2) That the application by King Square Ltd for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 10-116596) to redesignate Business Corridor lands for residential and hotel uses, be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion/redesignation applications; and further;

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

CARRIED

c) Wemat One Ltd. (OP 13-113480)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Wemat One Ltd. (OP 13-113480) to permit mixed use development on Hwy 7, between Commerce Valley Drive East and Hwy 404. The proposal is to add permissions for a hotel/conference centre, a theatre and 550 apartment units on the property, in addition to current office permissions.

Staff reported that additional residential lands are not needed in this area to reach Markham's intensification targets, but all of the current employment lands in this area are needed to achieve the employment target and to ensure a range of employment uses are available to 2031. The proposal would adversely impact the remainder of the employment area in the Commerce Valley Business Park area by introducing residential uses. This is one of the last available large properties with visibility from Hwy 407 and Hwy 404 and with direct access to Hwy 7.

Dagmar Teubner, representing Wemat One Ltd. discussed the proposal to permit mixed use development on the subject site located in the Commerce Valley Business Park Area. The proposal preserves the commercial land uses permitted under the current Official Plan and adds the ability to build residential units on the site. This was believed to enhance the attractiveness and economic viability of the business park area. The mixed development being proposed for this site appeals to the 20 to 40 year old demographic.

Staff indicated support for a mix of land uses in appropriate areas such as Markham Centre and in identified intensification areas, but do not support residential uses in employment lands.

A Member of the Subcommittee suggested that the location of the proposed residential units should be changed to a more favourable location if this plan was to proceed.

Moved by: Councillor Colin Campbell
Seconded by: Councillor Howard Shore

- 1) That the presentation by Dagmar Teubner representing Wemat One Limited regarding Official Plan Amendment application OP 13-113480 (Wemat One Limited) for employment conversion, be received; and,
- 2) That the application by Wemat One Ltd for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-113480) to redesignate the Business Park Area lands to permit office, hotel/conference, theatre and residential uses, be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion/redesignation applications; and further,
- 3) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

c) Holborn Properties (OP 13-116651)

Staff provided a brief description of the proposal by Holborn Properties (OP 13-116651) to convert the Holborn property located at Elgin Mills Road and Woodbine Avenue from employment uses to an urban residential and commercial land use. The proposal includes 131 detached and townhouse units, and a two storey retail commercial office building.

Staff's position is that the Hwy 404 corridor is a key employment corridor in Markham which should not be compromised by the introduction of residential uses. The lands are needed to achieve the employment target and to ensure a range of employment uses are available to 2031, and that it has not been demonstrated how the displaced jobs would be accommodated elsewhere.

Michael Gagnon and Andrew Walker of Gagnon Law Urban Partners Ltd. stated that the conversion of future employment lands to residential and commercial uses on the subject site is needed due to the isolated location of the property, which is bordering a woodlot and a stormwater pond. The property owner has marketed the property for industrial condominiums and for a corporate headquarters without success over the last 3 to 4 years. A consultant was also retained to conduct a hotel marketing study, which concluded that the site was not appropriate for a hotel. Approximately 70 jobs will be created under this proposal. It was believed that the adjacent property owners to the west of the property could make up the loss of employment.

A member of the Subcommittee suggested that the reconstruction of the ramp off Hwy 404 onto Elgin Mills should be reconsidered if this change in land use is approved.

It was also suggested that the houses in the revised concept plan should not back onto the pond if this proposal was to proceed.

Staff expressed concern that if the future employment lands were successfully converted to urban residential and commercial land uses that it would set precedent for other employment land owners who would like to convert their land to residential land uses.

Moved by: Councillor Alan Ho

Seconded by: Councillor Logan Kanapathi

- 1) That the presentation by Michael Gagnon and Andrew Walker representing Holborn Properties regarding Official Plan Amendment application OP 13-116651 (Holborn Properties) for employment conversion, be received; and,
- 2) That the application by Holborn Properties for a proposed Official Plan Amendment (OP 13-116651) to redesignate Business Park Area and Business Corridor Area lands for residential and commercial uses, be included for consideration in the deliberations of the Subcommittee following the presentations on all the conversion/redesignation applications; and further,
- 3) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

CARRIED

The Development Services Subcommittee adjourned at 11:29 p.m.