



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: May 22, 2012

SUBJECT: **PRELIMINARY REPORT**
Markham Centre Development Corporation
North side of Enterprise Boulevard, west of Kennedy
Road
Applications for Official Plan and zoning by-law
amendment to permit a high density residential
development
Files: OP 08 106659 and ZA 08 106664

PREPARED BY: Scott Heaslip, Senior Project Coordinator
Central District, ext. 3140

REVIEWED BY: Richard Kendall, Manager
Central District, ext. 6588

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report dated May 22, 2012 titled "Preliminary Report, Markham Centre Development Corporation, North side of Enterprise Boulevard, west of Kennedy Road, Applications for Official Plan and zoning by-law amendment to permit a high density residential development," be received.
2. That staff be authorized to schedule a Public Meeting to consider the applications.
3. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not applicable.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide preliminary information regarding applications for Official Plan and zoning by-law amendment to permit a high density residential development on the north side of Enterprise Boulevard, west of Kennedy Road, and to obtain authorization for staff to schedule a public meeting to consider the applications. This report contains general information regarding applicable Official Plan and other policies as well as other issues and the report should not be taken as Staff's opinion or recommendation on the applications.

BACKGROUND:**Subject Lands and Area Context (Figures 2 and 3)**

The subject lands have an area of 2.1 ha (5.2 acres) and are located on the north side of Enterprise Boulevard between Rivis Road and the GO Rail line. A woodlot occupies the north portion of the lands; the remainder is vacant.

Official Plan and Zoning

The subject lands are designated “Commercial” and “Environmental Protection Area” in the Official Plan.

The lands are further designated “Community Amenity Area – General,” “Community Amenity Area – Major Urban Place,” “Open Space” and “Open Space – Environmentally Significant” in the Markham Centre Secondary Plan (OPA 21) (see Figure 7).

The “Environmental Protection Area” and “Open Space – Environmentally Significant” designations correspond to the woodlot in the north portion of the property. The other designations reflect the proposed street and land use regime at the time the secondary plan was prepared.

The subject lands are zoned “Single Family Rural Residential” (RR4) by By-law No. 122-72.

Proposal

The concept plans submitted by the applicant (Figures 4-6) show the following:

- Existing woodlot to be preserved.
- Three residential buildings:
 - A 28 storey building at the north-west corner of Enterprise Boulevard and Rivis Road
 - A 10 storey building along the Enterprise Boulevard frontage
 - A building backing onto the GO Rail line containing a 3-level above grade parking structure and two residential towers (28 and 29 storeys).
- 981 residential units.
- Total gross floor area of 82,276 m² (885,612 ft²).
- Parking provided within two below grade and three above grade parking levels; no surface parking.
- Access driveway aligned to Rivis Road.
- Ground floor level of buildings transitions down along Enterprise Boulevard to maintain grade relationship with the street at approach to railway underpass.
- Plan provides for a potential pedestrian crossing of the GO Rail line.

Requested Approvals

The Owner has applied to amend the Town’s Official Plan and zoning by-laws.

The following site-specific amendments are being requested to permit the proposed development:

Official Plan (Markham Centre Secondary Plan):

- Consolidate the designation of the subject lands, excluding the woodlot, to “Community Amenity Area – Major Urban Place.”
- Permit a maximum building height of 29 storeys.
- Exempt the lands from the precinct plan requirements.
- Permit a maximum residential density and a maximum floor space index reflecting the proposed development.

Zoning by-law:

- Incorporate the subject lands into the Markham Centre Zoning By-law and zone them “Markham Centre – Downtown Two” (MC-D2), incorporating site specific use permissions and development standards reflecting the proposed development.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Applications initially applied to the applicant’s lands on the north and south sides of Enterprise Boulevard

The applicant owns an additional 2.65 hectares (6.5 acres) on the south side of Enterprise Boulevard, directly opposite the subject lands (see Figure 2). In 2008 the applicant applied to amend the Town’s Official Plan and zoning by-laws to permit the block on the north side of Enterprise Boulevard to be developed with residential uses and the block on the south side of the street with a mixture of residential, office and commercial uses. The overall development included 1227 residential units, 11,200 square metres (120,559 square feet) of commercial uses and 17,200 square metres (185,145 square feet) of office uses with an overall floor area of 141,044 square metres (1,518,235 square feet).

Processing of applications could not proceed because of uncertainty regarding the area south of Enterprise Boulevard

The street and block pattern and the location and configuration of the mobility hub (Unionville GO) station and related transit infrastructure need to be finalized through the Mobility Hub/East Precinct Plan study before any developments can proceed on the applicant’s lands on the south side of Enterprise Boulevard.

Applicant has revised proposed development to apply only to their lands on the north side of Enterprise Boulevard

The applicant’s lands on the north side of Enterprise Boulevard are not directly impacted by the Mobility Hub/East Precinct Plan Study and proposed road alignments, and are further separated from the adjacent lands by the woodlot and the GO Rail line. In the circumstances, development could proceed on this isolated parcel in advance of the completion of the Mobility Hub/Precinct Plan Study.

Subject lands are an appropriate location for a higher concentration of uses

The Unionville GO Station and vicinity is identified as an “anchor mobility hub” by Metrolinx. It is intended that lands within mobility hubs, and in particular in the immediate vicinity of mobility hub transit stations, should be developed at higher densities and with a greater variety of uses in support of the planned function of the mobility hub and to take advantage of the increased transit opportunities provided by the station facility. The subject lands, which are a block away from the future mobility hub transit station, are therefore an appropriate location for a higher concentration of uses.

It should be noted that the current “Open Space” designation on a portion of the subject lands reflects the location of a neighbourhood park shown in the original concept plans for Markham Centre as identified on Schedule ‘DD’ – Community Structure of the Markham Centre Secondary Plan. (see Figure 8) A neighbourhood park is no longer being considered in this location, but is being considered for the lands at the east end of the woodlot in front of Bill Crothers Secondary School.

A Public Meeting should be scheduled to consider the requested amendments.

As it is not necessary to await completion of the precinct plan, the proposed development can be considered in the context of the existing secondary plan and the Council endorsed Growth Management Strategy. In this regard it is noted that the Town’s modeling for Markham Centre’s East Precinct in conjunction with the Growth Strategy includes the 1227 units originally proposed by the applicant for their lands on the north and south sides of Enterprise Boulevard. The appropriate level of development for the applicant’s lands on the south side of Enterprise Boulevard, and the mix of uses including a significant component of commercial and office floor space, will ultimately be determined through the ongoing Mobility Hub/East Precinct Plan study.

Woodlot boundaries would need to be confirmed before by-law amendment could be finalized

The applicant has submitted an environmental impact study to confirm the boundaries of the woodlot and to assess the impact of the proposed development on the woodlot and recommend appropriate mitigation and enhancement/maintenance measures. The boundaries of the woodlot would need to be confirmed to the satisfaction of the Town before the requested amendments could be finalized. As a condition of site plan approval of the proposed development, the woodlot would be required to be conveyed to the Town.

Holding provisions

The requested zoning by-law amendment would need to incorporate holding provisions to secure a number of items including:

- Servicing allocation (allocation has not been assigned by the Town and the Markham Centre Landowners Group to the proposed development)
- Approval by the Town of a traffic impact study and a TDM (transportation demand management) plan
- Execution of a Section 37 agreement
- Site plan approval

Applicant has not applied for site plan approval

The conceptual plans submitted in support of the requested Official Plan and zoning by-law amendments are intended to validate the proposed height, massing and residential density program and to provide the basis for the preparation of a zoning by-law amendment. The project plans would need to be further developed in consultation with the Town Architect to the level of detail required for a site plan submission to address the Town's normal expectations and requirements to be reflected in implementing documents and conditions, including:

- compliance with the Town's urban design guidelines including maximum tower floor plate and tower separation.
- assessment of shadow impact.
- building design that is bird-friendly and promotes dark skies at night.
- incorporation of sustainable development practices including LEED certification and TDM measures.
- connection to District Energy.
- the provision of a pedestrian crossing of the GO Rail line.

The proposed development would also need to be presented to the Markham Centre Advisory for evaluation against the Performance Measures document.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)

Not applicable at this time.

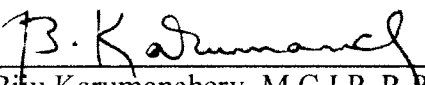
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

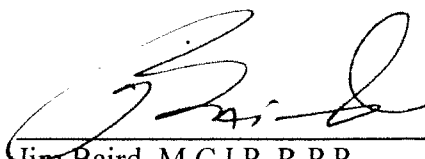
The proposed development needs to be reviewed in the context of the Town's "Building Markham's Future Together" strategic initiatives including Transportation and Transit (higher density transit oriented development in close proximity to a mobility hub), Growth Management (intensification) and Environment (woodlot).

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The proposal has been circulated to other Town departments and public agencies for review and comment.

RECOMMENDED BY:


Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Senior Development Manager


Jim Baird, 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 – Representative Elevations
Figure 6 – Rendering
Figure 7 - Schedule 'AA' to Markham Centre Secondary Plan
Figure 8 - Schedule 'DD' to Markham Centre Secondary Plan

APPLICANT/AGENT:

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