



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: September 27, 2011

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**SUBJECT:** RECOMMENDATION REPORT  
The Islamic Society of Markham  
Site plan application to facilitate a place of worship at 6232  
16<sup>th</sup> Avenue (north-west corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and  
Williamson Road).

File No: SC 10 124170

**PREPARED BY:** Stacia Muradali, Ext. 2008  
Senior Planner, East District

**REVIEWED BY:** Dave Miller, Ext. 4960  
Manager, East District

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report titled "RECOMMENDATION REPORT, The Islamic Society of Markham, Site plan application to facilitate a place of worship at 6232 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue (north-west corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Williamson Road), File No: SC 10 124170", be received;
- 2) That the proposed place of worship and site plan application (SC 10 124170) be endorsed in principle, subject to the conditions attached as Appendix 'A';
- 3) That Site Plan Approval be delegated to the Director of Planning and Urban Design or his designate, to be issued following execution of a site plan agreement. Site Plan approval is issued only when the Director has signed the Site Plan;
- 4) And 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 background information regarding the site plan application for a proposed place of worship at the north-west corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Williamson Road, and to recommend that the site plan application be endorsed in principle, subject to the conditions in attached Appendix 'A'.

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**BACKGROUND:****Subject property and area context**

The 0.8 hectare (1.98 acre) property municipally known as 6232 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue is located at the north-west corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Williamson Road, at the southern edge of the Greensborough and Swan Lake communities (Figure 1). The property is generally flat with a number of mature trees and vegetation. A stormwater management pond and Brother Andre high school are located to the west of the site. Residential development has occurred to the north, and also on the south side of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A townhouse development is proposed for the land containing the heritage dwelling (the John Reesor house) at the north-east corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Williamson Road. The existing Amica retirement development and Swan Lake are located further east, on the north side of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Figure 3).

**Proposed place of worship**

The Islamic Society is proposing to construct a mosque on the subject property. The mosque will have a gross floor area of approximately 2,626 square metres (28,266 square feet) with a lot coverage of approximately 13%. It is designed to accommodate approximately 534 worshippers. The worship area and offices will occupy the ground floor and mezzanine levels, with accessory uses such as a gymnasium for sports, cultural, community and recreational activities and classrooms for religious instruction located in the basement. 188 surface parking spaces will be provided. This satisfies the Town's parking requirement (Figure 4).

The applicant will be planting ten (10) new trees along the north property line in addition to providing a two (2) metre (6.5 foot) living wall to buffer the mosque from the adjacent residents. The living wall naturalizes as well as provides an ecological privacy and sound structure. The applicant will also be planting trees within the Town's stormwater management pond along the east property line and providing landscaping and additional trees around the perimeter of the site.

The main building will have a height of approximately 10.45 metres (34 feet). The height to the top of the dome is approximately 21.35 metres (70 feet), and the minaret will have a height of approximately 41 metres (134.5 feet) (Figure 5).

**Official plan and zoning**

6232 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue is designated "Urban Residential" in the Town's Official Plan and "Urban Residential – Medium Density (Area 1) Housing" in the Swan Lake Secondary Plan (OPA 17). The Official Plan allows for places of worship and the proposed development conforms to the Official Plan.

In 2003, applications for a plan of subdivision and rezoning were approved for lands comprised of approximately 2.4 hectares (6 acres) on the north side of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, west of Williamson Road. The applications proposed residential blocks and a place of worship block. A statutory public meeting was held on November 19, 2002 and the applicant (Karvon Homes Limited) for the plan of subdivision and rezoning applications showed concept plans to demonstrate that a place of worship with adequate parking could be

appropriately accommodated on the site. The subject property was rezoned in 2003 to "Open Space Two \* 173 (Hold) [OS2\*173 (H)] to permit a place of worship. The Hold provision will be removed upon execution of a site plan agreement. The proposed place development complies with the zoning by-law.

## **OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

### **Future potential Regional road widening**

The Region's new Official Plan which is currently under appeal provides for a 43 metre right-of-way along this portion of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The previous Official Plan provided for a 36 metre right-of-way. The Region is protecting for a potential future 21.5 metre centerline setback from 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue through this site plan application if a future road widening to provide the new 43 metre right-of-way is required, however, the land will not be conveyed to the Region at this time. There is a row of 24 parking spaces located along the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue frontage within the Region's future right-of-way. The applicant will provide a future below grade, open air parking structure to accommodate these parking spaces should the Region require the road widening in the future. A future site plan showing the parking structure has been reviewed by both Regional and Town staff, and will be endorsed in principle as part of this site plan application (Figure 6). Staff will continue to work with the applicant to provide appropriate screening of the future parking structure. This future parking reconfiguration, proposed below grade parking structure, and future conveyance of lands to the Region will be secured in the site plan agreement (see Appendix 'A').

### **Sustainable initiatives to be incorporated within the proposed development**

The proposed development has been designed and incorporates sustainable and LEED principles. A living wall, approximately 2 metres (6.5 feet) high will be introduced along the north property line and will be approximately 100-110m (328-360 ft) in length (see Figure 6). The living wall has environmental benefits and naturalizes urban environments while providing an ecological privacy structure. The living wall is made from 100% recyclable materials and typically uses a willow shrub which is enclosed in a biodegradable wooden structure. Turfstone will also be incorporated into approximately one-third of the surface parking area (shown as the shaded area on Figures 4 and 6). The owner is considering energy conservation and limitation of CO<sub>2</sub> production through geo thermal heating and cooling as well as solar and/or wind power generation. White roofs will be provided to minimize heat gain and rain water and waste water management through grey water system for re-use will be provided.

The Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP) strives to reduce migratory bird collisions with buildings brightly lit at night and their reflective windows by day. A criterion of FLAP is the promotion of 'dark skies'. The Owner is required to submit a lighting plan for Town staff's approval, to ensure that all lighting is directional in nature to reduce any potential negative effects that the illumination of the site may cause. It is expected that the Owner will incorporate a "bird friendly" design by implementing additional FLAP criteria. The site plan agreement will include a provision to ensure that the Owner complies with FLAP guidelines (see Appendix 'A'). A more detailed list of the

sustainable measures which the applicant will be incorporating in the proposed development is attached as Appendix 'B'. The owner will be required to implement these sustainable initiatives to the satisfaction of the Town (see Appendix 'A').

**Building elevations and landscaping**

The principal entrance to the mosque is on the north side of the building and the overall building is comprised of multitude arches and domes. Beige cultured stone will be used throughout the main building and the minaret. Wood panels and sand colour stucco finish will be used for the doors and windows. The domes will be pre-finished metal cladding in a bronze colour with brass coated decorative pinnacles. Beige metal louvres will be used to screen the mechanical equipment. Staff are satisfied with the proposed building elevations (Figure 5 and coloured renderings attached).

Staff are generally satisfied with the landscaping and tree planting being provided around the perimeter of the site. Staff however, have some concern with the viability of the tree planting along the north property line given the minimal 1.5 metre landscape strip and with the minimal landscaping provided throughout the parking areas. Staff will continue to work with the applicant to ensure that the landscape buffer and landscaping throughout the parking areas are enhanced to the satisfaction of the Town (Appendix 'A').

**Technical studies and reports**

The applicant has submitted a traffic study, tree inventory and preservation plan, landscape plan, and engineering drawings and reports in support of the proposed development. Both Regional and Town staff have reviewed all of the technical drawings and reports and are generally satisfied with them, subject to minor revisions being incorporated into the final drawings and submissions (Appendix 'A').

**CONCLUSION:**

The proposed place of worship conforms to the Official Plan and is in compliance with the zoning by-law. The interface with the neighbouring residents has been addressed by orienting the mosque to the south-east corner of the site furthest away from the residents to the north as well as providing buffering through a living wall and additional tree planting along the north property line. The Town's parking requirement for the place of worship has been met and Town staff are satisfied with the proposed site plan, sustainable initiatives and building elevations. Servicing allocation is not required for the proposed development. Staff recommend that the site plan application to facilitate a place of worship be endorsed in principle subject to the conditions in Appendix 'A' and that site plan approval be delegated to the Director of Planning and Urban Design.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:**

Not applicable.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not applicable.

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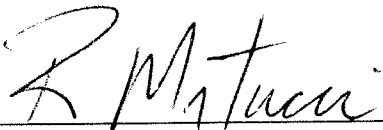
**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The proposed development enhances diverse community and recreational activities while managing growth by locating on a transit route and infill site.

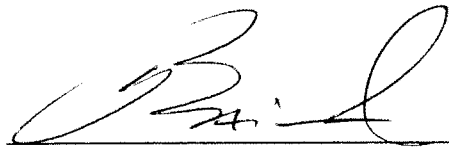
**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

All comments provided by internal departments and external agencies have been incorporated into this report and site plan conditions.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**



Rino Mostacci, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Director of Planning and Urban Design



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:          | Proposed Site Plan           |
| Figure 5:          | Proposed Building Elevations |
| Figure 6:          | Future Site Plan             |
| Appendix 'A':      | Site Plan Conditions         |
| Appendix 'B':      | Sustainable Initiatives      |
| Coloured Rendering |                              |

**APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

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