



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: September 13, 2011

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT
Markham Free Methodist Church
22 Esna Park Drive
Application for zoning by-law amendment to permit a place
of worship in an existing industrial building

File No: ZA 11 117540

PREPARED BY: Michael Fry, Planner, ext. 2331

REVIEWED BY: Richard Kendal, Manager – Central District, ext. 6588

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report dated September 13, 2011, titled “INFORMATION REPORT, Markham Free Methodist Church, 22 Esna Park Drive, Application for zoning by-law amendment to permit a place of worship in an existing industrial building, File No: ZA 11 117540” be received.
- 2) 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 information regarding a zoning by-law amendment application to permit a place of worship within an existing industrial building.

The Chief Administrative Officer under his delegated authority, authorized Town staff to hold a statutory public meeting.

BACKGROUND:

Subject Land and Area Context

The subject property has an area of approximately 2.49 ha (6.16 ac.) and is located on the north side of Esna Park Drive, east of Woodbine Avenue. The property is irregular in shape with most of the lands situated behind 16 & 20 Esna Park Drive (Figure 1). The property was created as a result of a severance from 20 Esna Park Drive, approved by the Committee of Adjustment in March of 2010 (B/02/10). 20 and 22 Esna Park Drive are subject to mutual easements for driveway and parking access and for infrastructure maintenance.

The property contains a one storey industrial building with a gross floor area of approximately 3148 m² (33,900 ft²). The south and east portions of the property contain a parking lot and loading facilities. The north and west portions are grassed (Figure 2). There are approximately 21 trees on the property in small stands on the east and west sides of the building and in the northeast corner of the site.

To the north is a CN Rail line. To the east is a large stand of trees on private property. To the south and west are areas of one- and two-storey industrial buildings (Figure 3).

Official Plan and Zoning

The subject property is designated "Industrial- Business Corridor Area" in the Town of Markham Official Plan. A Place of Worship is permitted in a Business Corridor Area, subject to certain requirements (location on a major road, adequate site access, adequate parking, etc.), which can be satisfied by the proposed development.

The property is zoned "Select Industrial" (M) by zoning by-law no 108-81. This zoning does not permit a place of worship.

Proposal

The applicant has applied for a zoning by-law amendment to permit the proposed place of worship.

As a first phase, the applicant is proposing to renovate the interior of the south portion of the building (approximately 648 m² or 7000 ft²) for use as a place of worship, convert the paved area in front of the existing loading docks to a parking area, construct a sidewalk adjacent to the existing driveway from the main entrance to the street, and upgrade the landscaping in the front portion of the property (see Figure 4). No exterior changes are proposed to the existing building (existing elevations attached as Figure 5). The remainder of the building will remain vacant, or potentially be rented out for storage, in accordance with existing zoning permissions, until there is the need to expand the place of worship. The owner has applied for site plan approval for Phase I of the proposed site improvements.

The zoning by-law amendment is proposed to permit the new use on the entire property. A hold (H) is proposed to be placed on all parts of the property outside of the south portion of the existing building, including all areas that lie outside of the proposed first phase.

When the congregation requires additional floor space, the church will expand into additional portions of the building and extend the parking lot, as required, into the grassed area to the west of the building. These works will be subject to a future site plan application and zoning by-law amendment to remove the hold.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Identified issues

The following is a brief summary of concerns/issues raised to date. These matters, and any others identified through the circulation and detailed review of the proposal, will be addressed, as necessary, in a final report to Committee:

1. Portions of certain on-site driveways will need to be widened to meet the current width standard for the fire route, impacting several trees, some of which may need to be removed and replaced. Staff are working with the applicant to minimize the number of trees that will need to be removed.
2. The existing downstream sanitary sewer is operating at close to full capacity. While there is sufficient capacity for Phase I of the proposed place of worship, there may be the need to expand the capacity of the downstream sanitary sewer to accommodate the sewage flows generated by future phases. The zoning by-law amendment will need to include a holding provision to ensure that the place of worship does not expand beyond Phase 1 without this and other issues being addressed to the satisfaction of the Town.

Other technical issues, such as traffic, access, easements, and stormwater management, have been considered by Town staff and appear to have minimal impact given the scope of the current application. These and other issues will be addressed, through the site plan approval and the lifting of the zoning by-law hold processes.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:

Not applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable

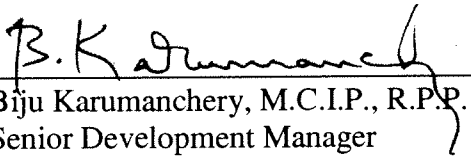
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

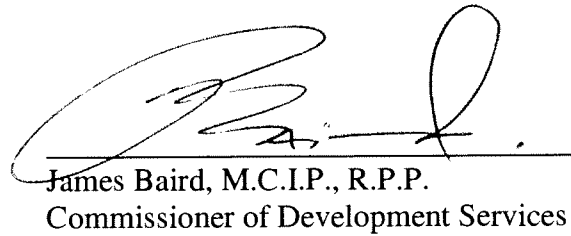
The proposed re-use of the existing building and infrastructure is in keeping with the Town's Growth Management policies.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The applications have been circulated to Town departments and public agencies for comment, which will be addressed in detail in the recommendation report.

RECOMMENDED BY:


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


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

ATTACHMENTS:

- Figure 1 - Property Location Map
- Figure 2 - Air Photo
- Figure 3 - Area Context/Zoning
- Figure 4 - Site Plan
- Figure 5 - Conceptual Building Elevations

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