

To: SPECIAL COUNCIL (STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING)

Meeting Date: 5/31/2022

Subject: Public Meeting Report – 180 Groh Avenue – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment (180 Groh Avenue Limited)

Submitted By: Lisa Prime, Chief Planner

Prepared By: Rachel Greene, Senior Planner

Report No.: 22-036-CD

File No.: OR14/21

Wards Affected: Ward 2

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 22-036-CD Public Meeting Report – 180 Groh Avenue – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment (180 Groh Avenue Limited) be received;

AND THAT; application OR14/21 for 180 Groh Avenue be referred back to staff for a subsequent report and staff recommendation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

- This report has been prepared for the statutory public meeting required by the Planning Act to introduce the requested Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to Council and the Public, which if approved, would facilitate the development of the property with twelve (12) blocks of stacked townhouses containing a total of 288 dwelling units and 518 parking spaces.

Key Findings

- The subject lands have a split designation of Business Industrial and Employment Corridor in the City's Official Plan. The proposed Official Plan Amendment is considered as employment land conversion.
- The Region of Waterloo's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) is currently underway and includes the review of employment land needs/conversions. The subject lands were considered for employment conversion which have been endorsed by the City (Report 21-065(CD)) and the Region (Report PDL-CPL-21-

16). Approval of the Official Plan Amendment cannot occur until the completion of the Regional Official Plan Amendment, as part of the MCR process.

- The proposal provides an opportunity to transform a vacant, underutilized brownfield site.
- The proposed development would support the City's objective of directing 45 percent of new development within the built-up area as well as providing for a range and mix of housing options.
- The proposed development represents an efficient use of the subject lands. The proposal would utilize existing municipal services.

Financial Implications

- Any costs of the application are borne by the applicant. The future recommendation report will provide additional financial implications.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- ☐ Strategic Action; or
☒ Core Service

Objective(s): PLANNING FOR GROWTH - Provide for a mix of development, uses and amenities in order to meet the needs of a changing and diverse population

Strategic Action: Increase housing options

Program: Land Use Planning

Core Service: Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments

The development of the land for townhouse dwellings would contribute to the City of Cambridge's housing options by providing for a mix and range of housing types.

BACKGROUND:

Property

The applicant has submitted Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to facilitate the development of the subject lands known municipally as 180 Groh Avenue and legally described as PLAN 908 PT LOTS 15&17 PT RESERVE LOTS B&D, PLAN 907 PT LOT 11, RP67R1091 PT 1, RP 67R 2518 PTS 7, 8,11 TO 14, City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo. The property has an approximate area of 4.51 hectares (11.2 acres) and has a frontage along both Groh Avenue and Bechtel Street.

The subject lands were previously used as a metal plating facility until 2010. In 2016 the former building was demolished and the site is currently vacant. There is an existing Locally Significant Natural Area environmental feature on the southwest corner of the site that is to remain.

The subject lands are located south of Groh Avenue to the west of Bechtel Street. The subject lands are shown on Figure 1.



Figure 1: Aerial Map of 180 Groh Avenue

Existing/Surrounding Land Uses:

The surrounding land uses are characterized by a mix of employment, commercial and institutional uses. North of the subject property are industrial and office uses, to the east is Jacob Hespeler Secondary School, to the south are employment uses including an industrial mall, office, and wholesale/distribution use, and to the west is an industrial property used for warehousing and seminary college. A range of retail and service commercial uses are located along Holiday Inn Drive to the west.

The subject lands are not located within the Hespeler Regeneration Area. The boundary for the Regeneration Area includes the properties north of Groh Avenue which are anticipated to transition from existing industrial uses to non-employment uses; however, existing industrial uses are permitted to continue.

ANALYSIS:

The applicant has submitted Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications for the subject lands in order to rezone the property from its existing split M2/M3 Industrial zone to RM3 Multiple Residential to permit the development of 288 stacked townhouse units with site specific provisions to permit an increase in density, reduced parking rate, and reduced setbacks from habitable windows to driveways/parking stalls.

The proposed amendment will also establish a Holding (H) provision on the subject lands, to be removed upon the approval of a Record of Site Condition and receipt of a Letter of Acknowledgement from the Ministry of Environment and Conservation and Parks.

A statutory public meeting is a requirement of the Planning Act, which provides Council and members of the community an opportunity to review the proposed application and to provide input on the proposal.

Following the statutory public meeting, City Planning Staff will review comments received from the public meeting, City departments and external commenting agencies and will work with the applicant to address any concerns prior to moving forward with a final recommendation to Council.

The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications are currently under review by City staff and applicable commenting agencies. Considerations for the review of these applications include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Consistency with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement (2020);
- Conformity with A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020); Region of Waterloo Official Plan; City of Cambridge Official Plan; and, the City of Cambridge Zoning By-law No. 150-85;
- Employment Land Conversion policies
- Land use compatibility with surrounding existing development and overall character of the existing neighbourhood;
- Appropriateness of the proposed Official Plan designation for increased residential density and building height;

- Appropriateness of the proposed site-specific zoning request associated with the proposed development; and,
- Comments received from members of Council, public, City staff and agency circulation.

In accordance with Planning Act requirements, the City is required to process complete planning applications which includes circulation, review of issues, and consideration of all input, along with making a future recommendation to Council. For this report, staff is providing the standard recommendation to refer the applications back to staff to continue the processing of the planning applications.

Planning decisions are subject to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). An appeal may be filed if the application is refused or if a decision is not made within the timeline for processing the applications set out in the Planning Act.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

City of Cambridge Official Plan, 2012, as amended

The City of Cambridge Official Plan (2012) designates the subject lands as “Built-up Area” on Map 1A and has a split designation of Business Industrial and Employment Corridor on Map 2 (included in this report as Appendix C).

The Built-Up Area encourages the intensification of lands as part of the City’s growth management strategy and directs that “infill, intensification, and redevelopment within existing neighbourhoods will be minor in nature and will be designed to respect existing character and provide connections and linkages where possible.”

As these lands are not located within the Regeneration Area, a conversion of employment lands is required to permit the proposed development. The conversion of employment lands within employment areas to non-employment uses may only be permitted through a municipal comprehensive review where it has been demonstrated that:

- a) There is a need for the conversion;
- b) The employment forecasts pursuant to this Plan will be met;
- c) The conversion will not adversely affect the viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and any other policies of this Plan;
- d) There is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion;
- e) The lands are not required over the long-term for the employment purposes for which they are designated; and

f) Cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

The Region of Waterloo is currently undergoing the MCR process which includes the review of employment land needs and conversions. Based on Regional staff report PDL-CPL-21-16, the Region has endorsed the request for the employment conversion of the subject lands to a non-employment use. Final approval of the employment conversion through the Regional Official Plan Amendment will be required prior to making a final recommendation of the Official Plan and Zoning Amendment applications on the subject property.

The applicant is requesting to re-designate the lands to High Density Residential. Lands within this designation are required to have a between 0.5-2.0 Floor Space Index (FSI). The City will promote compatible higher density development in locations which meet the criteria for multi-unit residential development outlined in Section 8.4.3 of this Plan and the compatibility criteria in Section 8.4.2 of the OP.

The proposal to re-designate the lands as residential introduces a sensitive land use near existing industrial uses. As such, the industrial land use compatibility policies in the OP will also be required to be addressed by the applicant in order to minimize any impacts to the residential development and to ensure there is no negative impacts on the existing industrial uses ability to continue operations.

City of Cambridge Zoning By-law 150-85, as amended

The subject lands are currently split Zoned M2/M3 Industrial which permits general industrial uses. A zoning map depicting the current split zoning has been included as Appendix D.

The applicant is proposing to rezone the property RM3 Multiple Residential in order to permit the development of stacked townhouses with a maximum of 288 dwelling units on the subject lands.

The site-specific provisions proposed include the following:

Development Standard	Required	Proposed
Maximum Density	40 units per hectare	75 units per hectare
Minimum Parking	1.25 spaces per unit (includes visitor parking)	1.2 spaces per unit
Minimum setback between habitable room window and access driveway, aisle, parking stall, or parking lot	6.0m	4.5m

A (H) Holding provision will be applied to the zoning which can be lifted upon the approval of a Record of Site Condition and receipt of a Letter of Acknowledgement from the Ministry of Environment and Conservation and Parks.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Any costs of the application are borne by the applicant. The future recommendation report will provide additional financial implications.

PUBLIC VALUE:

Engagement:

The intent of the Statutory Public Meeting is to provide an opportunity to the public to be involved in the decision-making process with respect to new development proposed in their neighbourhoods. Participants are able to share their feedback, whether that be in support of the application or in opposition. This opportunity will allow for engagement between the community and the applicant, as well as with staff, in order to gain insight on the impacts the development may have on surrounding residents and the area. The Public Meeting is a key milestone in the planning approval process that introduces the development to the community and allows for further engagement and dialogue between stakeholders.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

Advisory Committees Consulted:

Not applicable.

PUBLIC INPUT:

The statutory public meeting being held under the Planning Act is being held May 31, 2022 and official notification was provided in the Cambridge Times. In addition, notice was provided to all assessed property owners within a 120 metres (393.7 feet) radius of the subject lands and anyone else requesting notice. Any interested parties and members of the public will be provided with an opportunity to speak to this proposal at the May 31, 2022 public meeting. The studies provided in support of the applications are available on the City of Cambridge Current Development website: [Current Development Applications - City of Cambridge](#)

All public comments received will be considered as part of the review of the application and will be included in the future recommendation report to Council.

Posted publicly as part of the report process.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

The applications have been circulated to the departments and commenting agencies listed in Appendix E. Any comments received will be included in a future planning recommendation report.

CONCLUSION:

Staff will provide further comments and analysis regarding this application as part of the future recommendation report to the Planning and Development Committee. A statutory public meeting is required by the Planning Act to provide an opportunity for the public and members of Council to give input on the proposal.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **No**

APPROVALS:

This report has been reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and City Solicitor.

It has been reviewed and approved by the Director, Deputy City Manager and City Manager.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 22-031 Appendix A – Proposed Site Plan
2. 22-031 appendix B – Concept Elevation
3. 22-031 Appendix C – Existing Official Plan Map
4. 22-031 Appendix D – Existing Zoning Map
5. 22-31 Appendix E – Internal/External Consultation & List of Supporting Studies