



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 12, 2023
To: Mayor and Council
From: Robyn McIntyre and Pierre Chauvin, MCIP, RPP, Consulting
Planners for the City of Stratford
Report #: COU23-077
Attachments: Ontario Municipal Board Decision PL020497, Z09-22 By-law, Aerial
Map, Location and Zoning Map, Site Photos, Site Plan

Title: Zone Change Application Z09-22, 46 General Hospital Drive & 130 Youngs Street

Objective: The purpose of this report is to describe the application submitted by GSP Group on behalf of the Stratford General Hospital for Zone Change application Z09-22. The applicant is proposing to amend the 'Institutional Community Zone (IN1-1)' site specific provisions to reduce the required landscaped open space setback from St. Vincent Street South to the proposed parking area from 55 m to 7.7 m. This zoning by-law amendment would facilitate the construction of an 89-space parking lot for hospital staff.

Background:

Owner

Stratford General Hospital

Applicant

GSP Group c/o Rachel Bossie

Subject Site

The subject lands are municipally known as 46 General Hospital Drive and 130 Youngs Street, Stratford and are located on the northwest corner of the intersection of St. Vincent Street South and West Gore Road. The subject lands are legally described as Plan 139 Pt Youngs Street – Lots 18-24, 78-92, Pt Lots 9-17, 25-42, 49-77, and 130 Youngs Street – Plan 139 Pt Lots 1 to 8, 10-17, 41-48. The subject lands currently contain the Stratford General Hospital and a Hostel.

Maps & Attachments:

- Map 1 – Existing Zoning & Location Map
- Map 2 – Aerial Map 2020
- Map 3 – Proposed Site Plan
- Attachment 4 – Site Photos

Site Characteristics

Characteristic	Information
Existing Use	Hospital and Hostel
Frontage	248.4 m along West Gore Street 247.6 m along Cambria Street
Depth	217.3 m along John Street South 215.1 m along St. Vincent Street South
Area	53,800 m ²
Shape	Rectangular

Surrounding Land Uses

Direction	Use
North	Residential & Open Space
East	Residential
West	Residential & Institutional
South	Residential

Previous Ontario Municipal Board Appeals

In 2001, the Stratford General Hospital submitted an Official Plan Amendment (OPA No. 7) and Zoning By-law Amendment (By-law 60-2002) to the City of Stratford requesting to use a former nurse's residence as a hostel. The nurse's residence, consisting of 165 bedrooms, had a history of being rented to various students. The hospital wished to rent hostel rooms to the public without restrictions.

OPA No.7 proposed to add a Hostel as a permitted use on the subject lands. Bylaw 60-2002 proposed to restrict the size of the hostel use to within the 3,888 m² nurses residence while also establishing a maximum guest room count of 165, a minimum parking count of 60 spaces for the hostel use, a minimum parking count of 370 spaces for the entire site, and a landscaped open space area within a 55 m setback from St. Vincent Street South. The City approved the applications in 2002.

The decision to approve the OPA and ZBA was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board ('the OMB') by the Stratford and Area Hotel Motel Operator's Association (the 'Association'). The Association based their appeal on the grounds that the nurse's

residence more closely resembled a hotel than a hostel and that, as the hospital was not subject to the same debt servicing costs as hotels, the hospital had an unfair advantage.

Through the hearing, the Board determined that the policies of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment were sufficient to regulate the proposed hostel use and would not allow for the site to be developed with a large hotel, as the Association had suggested. The OMB concluded that hostels are generally restricted in size by the existing structure or by a site specific by-law, as proposed through By-law 60-2002. Ultimately, the Board approved OPA No.7 and dismissed the appeal against Bylaw 60-2002 on the grounds that this site-specific by-law was sufficient to restrict the size of the hostel and prevent future expansions.

The entirety of the decision prepared by the OMB can be found attached to this report.

Public and Agency Comments

The Notice of Application and Public Meeting was sent to property owners within 120 metres of the subject lands on February 15, 2023. Notice was also included in the Town Crier portion of the Beacon Herald on February 18, 2023. No public comments have been received as of the date of the writing of this report. Any agency or public comments received after the completion of this report will be provided to the Planning and Heritage Committee.

The application was circulated to agencies on January 4, 2023. The following comments have been received to date:

- Upper Thames River Conservation Authority: no concerns.
- Fire Prevention Department: no concerns.
- Festival Hydro: no concerns.
- Transit Department: no concerns.
- Parks Department: no concerns.

A Public Meeting for this application was held on March 20, 2023 at 4:30pm. At this meeting, there were various comments provided by residents in the following categories:

- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations;
- Sidewalks;
- Berms to provide headlight buffer;
- Snow storage and snow removal;
- Accessible parking spaces;
- Removing parking lot access to Youngs Street;
- Traffic Safety along Cambria Street; and
- Street and parking lot lighting.

Detailed Design Stage

Landscape details, such as the inclusion of berms or dense vegetation to block headlights, would be determined at the site plan stage when the details of the design are being discussed. Sidewalks, snow storage locations, and parking lot lighting would also be discussed at the site plan stage.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

The City of Stratford's Zoning By-law does not currently contain requirements or provisions for providing electric vehicle parking. As such, while the applicant could contemplate the inclusion of electric vehicle parking spaces independently, the City cannot require such parking spaces be provided.

Accessible Parking Spaces

Section 5.4 of the Zoning By-law states that for a parking lot with 201 to 1,000 parking spaces, barrier free parking spaces are to be provided at a rate of 2 plus 2% of the total number of spaces. For the subject lands, this equates to 12 parking spaces as the parking lot at Stratford General Hospital would have approximately 462 spaces with the proposed expansion. The existing parking lot contains 16 parking spaces and meets the minimum requirement.

Given the location of the proposed parking lot expansion is not near any building entrances, it is likely not an ideal location for additional barrier free parking spaces to be established.

Traffic Safety along Cambria Street

At the public meeting, a delegate discussed the lack of safety along Cambria Street as a result of speeding vehicles. In response to these comments, City Engineering staff completed a traffic study at the end of March.

The traffic study took place over a one week period from March 28th to April 4th, 2023 along Youngs Street from St. Vincent Street South to Birmingham Street. This location was chosen as the proposed parking lot's main access point would be from Youngs Street. The study showed that the 50th percentile of vehicles travelled 33 km/h and the 85th percentile of vehicles travelled 48 km/h.

Currently, there is a yield sign for traffic existing 130 Youngs Street towards St. Vincent Street. Stratford's Engineering Department has confirmed that between 2014 and 2022, there have been no accidents reported at the intersection of St. Vincent Street South and Youngs Street. Staff have advised that as this intersection is operating as designed with no reported collisions, there is no need to change the existing traffic signage from a yield sign to a stop sign.

Analysis:

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS)

The PPS discusses how long-term economic prosperity should be supported by optimizing the long-term availability and use of lands. Currently, the Stratford General Hospital provides overflow parking for hospital staff off-site at 86 John Street South. As this off-site property is being heavily relied upon to provide additional staff parking, the long-term development potential of 86 John Street South is inhibited. The requested Zoning By-law amendment proposes to construct an additional parking lot to provide staff parking at the hospital.

Further, the PPS states that settlement areas, such as the City of Stratford, shall be the focus of growth and development. Land use patterns in settlement areas shall be based on a mix of land uses that efficiently use land and resources. By providing additional staff parking on the same site as the Stratford General Hospital, the subject lands are being used more efficiently.

Official Plan

The subject lands are designated 'Residential Areas' in the City of Stratford's Official Plan and are located within Special Policy Area 10.

In addition to low and medium density residential uses, the 'Residential Areas' designation allows certain non-residential uses which are complementary to, or compatible with, the neighbourhood or which meet neighbourhood needs, and which do not individually or cumulatively undermine essential neighbourhood qualities. The Hospital located at 46 General Hospital Drive and 130 Youngs Street meets this criteria.

Special Policy Area 10 allows the subject lands to include a Hostel as a permitted use within the former nurse's residence building. This is a result of OPA No. 7 as previously discussed in this report.

The subject lands are located in a Stable Residential Area where new development and redevelopment are limited. Here, new development is generally evaluated based on the following criteria: scale and massing; streetscape; rear yard and open space relationships; building siting; density; heritage; residential lotting patterns; grading, drainage, and stormwater management; access from a public road; alignment of proposed streets; servicing; protection of significant trees; orderly development; and urban design and landscape.

The proposed parking lot is scaled and located to accommodate the requested parking lot expansion. No new buildings or streets are proposed, and no additional servicing is required. The proposed parking lot would be accessed from 130 Youngs Street and would be placed in an area that is currently open space. The agent has indicated that this open space is not used as amenity area.

The City's Official Plan includes direction on the design of streetscapes with respect to the layout of streets, configuration of lots, and the siting of buildings. Though no new streets, lots, or buildings are proposed, these policies include direction on the siting of parking areas.

The policies state that parking areas shall generally assist in the creation of high-quality streetscapes and shall have regard to framing the street space. Non-residential parking areas are to be designed to minimize areas where they directly front onto a street. Where they do front on a street, non-residential parking areas shall utilize the following direction to minimize their visual impact on the adjoining streetscape: screen with low fencing, walls, and landscape buffers; locate parking in a manner which reduces impact on street; reduce the scale of large parking areas through compartmentalization into smaller areas with landscaping; and joint access to said parking lots where feasible.

The parking lot is proposed to be set back from the adjacent roadways and would not front directly on a street. The main entrance will be from 130 Youngs Street and the lot will also be connected to an existing parking lot at 46 General Hospital Drive to provide multiple access options. Buffer areas of 9.0 m to West Gore Street and 9.2 m to St. Vincent Street South are proposed. These buffers include a 1.5 m road widening allowance in addition to a 7.5 m landscape area facing West Gore Street and a 7.7 m landscape area facing St. Vincent Street South. These buffer areas would include a variety of landscape options to act as a screen between the parking lot and the adjacent streets. Landscaping is also proposed internal to the proposed parking lot per the provided concept plan to further compartmentalize the parking areas and reduce the perception of their overall scale throughout the site.

The Official Plan also states that where buildings are located close to the street line, no parking shall be permitted between the buildings and the street. The location of the proposed parking lot is not directly in the front yard of any buildings on site. Generally, the hospital and hostel are located near the centre of the sites and are not considered close to the street line.

Details such as grading, drainage, stormwater management, snow storage, landscaping, and tree retention will be evaluated during the detailed design of the parking lot at the Site Plan Amendment stage.

Zoning Bylaw

The subject lands are zoned 'Institutional Community Zone (IN1-1)' with site specific provisions. The IN1-1 zone permits a variety of uses including a hospital. The site-specific provisions allow a hostel within the 3,888 m² Nurse's Residence building only, with a maximum of 165 guest rooms. Parking minimums are 60 parking spaces for the hostel use and 370 parking spaces for the entire site. Additionally, the site-specific provisions require the existing landscaped open space from St. Vincent Street South be maintained.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment proposes to reduce the existing landscaped open space area setback from 55 m to 7.7 m.

As previously discussed, the 2002 OMB decision imposed the setback to limit the size of the hostel use. Also contributing to this size restriction are the site-specific provisions that establish a maximum hostel size of 3,888 m² and a maximum number of 165 guest rooms. Therefore, as the size of the hostel use will remain restricted through other site specific provisions, staff are of the opinion that the proposed reduction to the landscaped open space setback will not affect the intent of the setback and the decision of the OMB will be maintained.

As per the provisions for the IN1-1 Zone, the site is required to maintain a minimum landscaped open space rate of 35%. The applicant has indicated that, with the proposed parking lot, the subject lands will provide a minimum landscaped open space area of 35.1%, exclusive of the landscaping islands to be provided in the proposed parking lot.

Generally, the Zoning By-law requires parking for a hospital is to be provided at a minimum rate of 1.0 space per 2 beds. As the Stratford General Hospital has approximately 118 beds, this equates to 59 required parking spaces. However, the site-specific provisions for the subject lands allocate more onerous requirements. The site-specific provisions require a minimum of 370 parking spaces on site, of which, 60 are to be dedicated to the hostel use. The parking rate provided by the Zoning Bylaw is a minimum, and the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment would allow 89 parking spaces to be added to the subject lands.

Financial Implications:

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications anticipated to support the subject application.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Strengthening our Plans, Strategies, and Partnerships

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Widening our Economic Opportunities

Strengthening Stratford's economy by developing, attracting and retaining a diversity of businesses and talent.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Equity and Local Economy

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Staff Recommendation: THAT application Z09-22 to amend the site-specific zoning at 46 General Hospital Drive to permit the expansion of a parking lot BE APPROVED for the following reasons:

- 1. The request is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement;**
- 2. The request is in conformity with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Official Plan;**
- 3. The zone change will provide for the expansion of a parking lot that is appropriate for the subject lands; and**
- 4. The public were consulted during the application circulation and comments that have been received in writing or at the public meeting have been reviewed, considered, and analyzed within the Planning Report.**

AND THAT Council pass a resolution that no further notice is required under Section 34(17) of the Planning Act.

Prepared by:

Reviewed by

Recommended by:

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