



## **CITY OF STRATFORD PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

A public meeting was held on Monday, August 12, 2024, at 7:10 p.m., in the Council Chamber, at Stratford City Hall, 1 Wellington Street. The purpose of the public meeting was to give Council an opportunity to hear and consider comments from the public regarding the Zone Change By-law Amendment Application (Z02-24) and Official Plan Amendment Application (OPA01-24) under Section 34 and Section 21 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 that affects the property with the municipal address of 3188 Vivian Line 37.

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Mayor Martin Ritsma – Chair presiding, Councillor Brad Beatty, Councillor Taylor Briscoe, Councillor Lesley Biehn, Councillor Bonnie Henderson, Councillor Mark Hunter, Councillor Larry McCabe, Councillor Harjinder Nijjar, Councillor Cody Sebben and Councillor Geza Wordofa

**REGRETS:** Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach

**STAFF PRESENT:** Joan Thomson – Chief Administrative Officer, Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure Services, Tim Wolfe – Director of Community Services, Kim McElroy – Director of Social Services, Dave Bush – Director of Human Resources, Karmen Krueger – Director of Corporate Services, Chris Van Bargaen – Deputy Fire Chief, Tatiana Dafoe – City Clerk, Miranda Franken – Council Clerk Secretary, Danielle Clayton – Recording Secretary, Sadaf Ghalib – Climate Change Programs Manager, John Ritz – Homelessness and Housing Stability Supervisor

**ALSO PRESENT:** Pierre Chauvin – Consulting Planner from MHBC for the City of Stratford, Rachel Bossie – Senior Planner for GSP Group / agent for the applicant, Michael Serra – Planner for GSP Group, Wade Stever – peopleCare, members of the public and media.

Mayor Ritsma called the meeting to order and stated the purpose of the meeting was to give Council an opportunity to hear and consider comments from the public regarding the Zone Change By-law Amendment Application (Z02-24) and Official Plan Amendment Application (OPA01-24) under Section 34 and Section 21 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 that affects the property with the municipal address of 3188 Vivian Line 37.

The Mayor explained the order of procedure for the public meeting.

## **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Pierre Chauvin, Consulting Planner for the City, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the applications. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the subject land being located at the north end of Stratford, east of the intersection of Mornington Street and Vivian Line 37;
- the proposal being to establish a long-term care facility, inclusive of a nursing home and retirement home;
- the nursing home would consist of 288 beds and 5 storeys tall;
- the retirement home consisting of 164 beds and a mix of 5-7 storeys tall;
- a total of 245 parking spaces being provided on site; and
- the site being developed in two phases.

The Consulting Planner stated that the proposal is for an Official Plan Amendment to permit a maximum height of a 5-storey building on the north parcel and a 7-storey building on the south parcel. It is proposed that the site be rezoned to Institutional Community, with two site specific provisions for the north and south parcels, and the site specific provisions are to be tailored to the proposed uses.

The Consulting Planner advised that the following public comment themes were received as of August 2, 2024 and were attached to the staff report:

- preservation of agricultural lands;
- concerns about the request for increased lot coverage;
- concerns about the request for reduced setbacks;
- proposed retirement home accessory uses;
- concerns about the increased traffic and pedestrian safety;
- concerns about drainage, parking, and increased noise;
- the impact of the development on the existing trees; and
- the proposed building height and density.

In response to the public comments, the Consulting Planner advised that the removal of any trees will be reviewed during the site plan process and will be regulated by the by-law. There is currently a noise study in progress and the noise resulting from emergency vehicles is exempt from the Noise Control By-law under Section 4.0. The shadow study is only required for the 7-storey portion of the south building. The construction of the proposed 7-storey building would be constructed during phase 2.

The Planner noted that the subject lands are within the urban boundary and do not have provincial protection as agricultural lands. The subject lands are designated Residential Official Plan and are intended to be for development. The proposal includes internal sidewalks on site and there is a sidewalk that extends from Mornington Street to Fairfield Drive. The Transportation Master Plan was approved in 2023 and recommended a pedestrian crossing at Mornington Street and Vivian Line 37.

The Planner advised that a traffic study was not requested, and that Vivian Line 37 is a collector road. It was noted that the Official Plan intends for collector roads to "serve local travel demands providing connections within the neighbourhoods." If required in the future, the lands for a road widening would be taken from the subject lands to assist in facilitating a road widening.

With respect to concerns relating to the increase in maximum lot coverage, the Consulting Planner Advised:

- for the south parcel there is a request for site specific provisions to permit a maximum lot coverage of 34.5% from the maximum 30% that is permitted;
- for the north parcel there is a request for a maximum lot coverage of 21.2%;
- both sites are intended to function together, cumulatively the sites will have a lot coverage of 25%; and
- the site will be balanced with landscaped space, amenity space, and green roofs.

With respect to the concerns regarding the reduction of the south interior side yard setback, it would apply only to the lot line between the north and south parcels. This request would facilitate a connection between the nursing home and the retirement home.

The Consulting Planner advised that the north parcel requires a minimum of 96 spaces and there are 139 parking spaces proposed. The south parcel requires a minimum of 103 spaces and there are 106 parking spaces proposed. It was noted that the personal care and

personal service establishments are intended to service on-site residents only and not the general public.

With respect to the concerns regarding the proposed density and height, it was noted by the Consulting Planner that the Official Plan does not have a maximum density requirement but does have a maximum height requirement. It was noted that the north parcel would be 5-storeys and have 288 beds. The south parcel would have a 5-storey portion and a 7-storey portion for a total of 164 beds. The proposed buildings meet the setback requirements from the neighbouring properties. The only site-specific provisions requested are for the setbacks that are internal to the site.

### **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

There were no questions from Council.

### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

Rachel Bossie, Senior Planner for GSP Group and agent for the applicant, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the applications. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the subject lands being located within the northeastern portion of the City within the City limits on the north side of Vivian Line 37 between Mornington Street and Road 111;
- the proposal being the development of a 5-storey long term care facility on the north portion of the site;
- a 5 to 7-storey retirement home including seniors' apartments being on the south portion of the site;
- phase one for the north parcel including the long term care facility and phase one for the south parcel including the driveway and sidewalk access to the north parcel; and
- phase two for the north parcel including additional parking, curbing and the building link while phase two for the south parcel is to include the retirement home and senior apartments.

The Senior Planner provided an overview of peopleCare stating that they are a Canadian owned company that provides senior housing, age in place care while providing change in care needs, memory care and housing options.

An Official Plan Amendment is requested to increase the height from a maximum of 4-storeys to a maximum of 5-storeys for the long-term care facility on the north parcel and a

maximum of 7-storeys for the retirement home on the south parcel. Currently the subject lands are split zoned as Agricultural and Urban Reserve. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application is to rezone the north and south portion of the site to two distinct Institutional Community Zones with site specific provisions on each to accommodate the proposed long-term care and retirement home development.

### **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

Councillor Henderson requested clarification on parking on the northwest corner and the northeast corner. The Senior Planner advised that these parking spaces would be dedicated to the retirement home and there will be accessory spaces required on the south portion of the site.

Councillor Henderson stated the parking for residents seems like it is a distance away. Concerns were raised regarding resident's mobility and possibly not being able to walk to their vehicles. The Senior Planner advised that this information will be taken into consideration and back to the applicant to discuss.

### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Paul Brown provided the following comments:

- opposed to the sale of the subject lands for a private long-term care facility;
- understands the needs for a certain number of not-for-profit nursing homes; and
- concerned regarding the cost of this development to taxpayers.

Brian Elliott provided the following comments:

- adjoining property owner to the subject lands;
- requested clarification on whether the property has been sold to peopleCare;
- concerned with wind and sun being blocked as his property is low lying and relies on the wind and sun to dry the property;
- concerned with the proposed 7-storey height;
- supportive of a development that is fitting to the community;

- concerns regarding increased traffic and lights from emergency vehicles;, that the trees along the back of their property will be removed due to the proposed row of parking, and that there are long term consequences of removing trees; and
- concerned about another property tax increase to support this development and requested a financial study to be undertaken.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) stated that the property is under an Agreement of Purchase and Sale with pending conditions.

Councillor Henderson stated that there has been no developments in Stratford that has caused property values to decrease.

Pam Balfour provided the following comments:

- concerns with the increase of traffic that would come from this development;
- there already being issues with the speed of vehicles on the street;
- there being a high volume of families in the area;
- vehicles not stopping for school buses; and
- concerns for the elderly trying to navigate Vivian Line 37.

George Rigor provided the following comments on behalf of his sister who is a resident of Vivian Line 37:

- concerns with the proposed development taking away from the peaceful country setting and character of the community;
- proposed development will obstruct views;
- concerned that the streets are not designed to handle the increase to traffic;
- concerned for the increase congestions, noise, flashing lights and increased pollution; and
- the loss of agricultural land is detrimental.

Jane Marie Mitchell provided the following comments:

- supportive of the increase in number of beds returning to the community;

- cautioned the City on accepting any and all conditions in the proposed plan;
- concerned with the possibility of overcrowding, lack of features for residents and there should be an increase in parking spaces;
- questioned how many electrical vehicle charging stations would be on site;
- questioned where the open, natural space would be for residents to use;
- will there be a dedicated space for residents who need contained areas to ensure safety for dementia or Alzheimer's;
- questioned if there are plans for an on demand cross-walk on Mornington Street; and
- questioned what the water efficiency plans are, how their carbon footprint will be reduced, what is the lifespan of the proposed buildings, and will there be adaptive reuses for the building.

Todd Foster provided the following comments:

- questioned if there was a timeline on when construction would begin; and
- questioned if the City's Fire Department and emergency services have the capacity to handle 5-7-storey buildings.

The Deputy Fire Chief indicated that the City's Fire Department has the capacity to handle the proposed size of the building.

The CAO stated that a timeline will be brought forward.

The agent for the applicant advised that electrical vehicle charging stations will be looked into as well as the possibility of increasing accessible parking spaces. The agent thanked members of the public for their comments.

## **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

Councillor Henderson questioned if the landscaping that is adjacent to all property's boundaries would be maintained. The agent for the applicant advised that there is landscaping proposed.

Councillor Briscoe questioned if the proposed plan is adaptable as the development process would be a phased approach. The agent for the applicant advised that the applicant is aware that the proposed development may change based on the needs of the community at

the time of building. Phase one would be approved for the fire route and driveway on the east side and then in the future it would come in for site plan approval.

Councillor Henderson requested clarification that site plan approval is not required to come to Council under the new legislation that the Ford Government has put in place. The Senior Planner advised that change was implemented a while back and in the City of Stratford site plan approval has been delegated to staff for a while now. Councillor Henderson questioned if future developments would be reviewed by staff and not brought to Council. The Senior Planner advised that if the Zoning By-law amendment and the Official Plan amendment are approved, and as long as the development complies with what is approved, it would not require a public approval process but would require site plan approval through staff.

Councillor Hunter requested clarification on the proposed build schedule for the development. The agent for the applicant advised that peopleCare Communities is working closely with the Ministry of Long-Term Care and expect to receive approval by November 2024, to move forward with the construction of the long-term care home. From there, peopleCare Communities will continue to work with the City and their partners to accelerate the project and will share updates with the public on their website as they move through the process should the applications be approved by Council.

Councillor Biehn requested clarification on where green space would be located within the proposed development and if the province requires a specific amount of green space for long-term care homes. The agent for the applicant advised that they will speak with peopleCare Communities regarding whether there is a provincial requirement for the amount of green space. The agent advised that there is a contained courtyard for residents and on the south parcel there will be green space.

Councillor Wordofa questioned if there would an elevator on site. The agent advised that this will be discussed with the architectural team on the interior designs and that there will be elevators. It was noted that the capacity of the elevators will be noted during the building permit process.

Sheila Elliott noted that her property surrounds two sides of the proposed development. She indicated that surveyors have been out to stake the property lines. It was noted that the property lines that have been shown on the drawings are not correct while being compared to what is actually staked out. It was questioned what can be done about the survey line as it is detrimental to their property. The agent advised that a draft reference plan of the property can be shared with the property owner.



Councillor Sebben requested clarification on the parking requirements that were presented for the south lot. It was questioned if the parking requirements were done for 5 or 7-storeys. Pierre Chauvin, Consulting Planner advised that the 7-storey building was included in the parking space calculation. Councillor Sebben questioned if the density for the proposed 7-storey building was taken into consideration. The Consulting Planner advised that all calculations were based on the proposed 7-storey building being in place.

Councillor Briscoe questioned if it was possible to conduct a speed study of the area due to the concerns and issues that are already happening in the area. It was questioned if any traffic calming measures could be implemented. Councillor Briscoe supported the suggestion of having an on-demand crosswalk and traffic calming measures. The Consulting Planner noted that it would be the responsibility of the applicant and that staff and Council could provide direction.

Councillor Wordofa questioned if the public was consulted on the design process. The agent advised that this public meeting is where public consultation takes place to gather feedback and comments on the proposed development.

The Mayor noted that this matter will be considered at the August 22, 2024, Special Council meeting and that a video recording of the meeting would be posted to the City's website.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

**The following individuals requested to receive further information from the public meeting on August 12, 2024:**

- Brian Elliott
- Pamela Balfour