



# FORMAL REPORT

**To:** Mayor Strathdee and Members of Council

**Prepared by:** Mark Stone, Planner

**Date of Meeting:** 9 January 2018

**Subject:** **DEV 02-2018 - Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications by 1934733 Ontario Inc. 151 Water Street, Lots 14-17, inclusive w/s Wellington Street and Lots 13-17, inclusive e/s Water Street, Registered Plan No. 225 Part of Lot 16, Concession 17, T**

## PURPOSE

To provide background information, staff comments and recommended direction for Council's consideration with respect to Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications by 1934733 Ontario Inc., 151 Water Street.

## RECOMMENDATION

THAT DEV 02-2018 Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications by 1934733 Ontario Inc. affecting 151 Water Street North, St. Marys (File No. OP01-2016 and Z06-2016) be received; and

THAT the comments received at the Public Meeting be addressed in a comprehensive report presented at a subsequent Council meeting, outlining staff recommendations on the disposition of these Applications.

## REPORT

The subject property is approximately 1.3 hectares in size and is a through lot with frontage onto Water Street North and Wellington Street North as shown on the General and Specific Location Maps (refer to Attachments 2 and 3 of this report). The property is also bounded by the Grand Trunk Trail to the north and single detached lots to the south.

The applicant is seeking to develop the subject property as an age-in-place residential development in the form of multi-storey apartment type buildings, constructed in two phases. At full build-out, the development will consist of a mix of assisted living and seniors' apartment units with shared access to a dining hall and other ancillary uses such as a hair salon, games room and theatre room. Outdoor amenities include a patio overlooking the ravine to the north, resident gardens and a barbeque area. On site parking for residents, visitors and staff will be provided via covered parking (first storey of some buildings) and surface parking areas.

On November 7, 2016, the Town's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) received an Information Report regarding the preliminary review of these applications. Several residents spoke at the meeting and provided written comments. The PAC requested that Staff prepare a follow-up report to address any issues and concerns raised at the PAC's November 7, 2016 meeting.

At the May 15, 2017 meeting, the PAC received an Information Report which provided an overview of a revised submission from the applicant, a discussion of relevant Provincial and Town Official Plan

policies, and identified issues to be addressed by the applicant. At the meeting, the PAC deferred the applications to permit the applicant the opportunity to address issues identified by staff and the community. The text portion of the May 15, 2017 Information Report is provided as Attachment 4. Issues and concerns raised prior to the May 15, 2017 PAC meeting are summarized in the May 15, 2017 Information Report. The minutes of the May 15, 2017 PAC meeting are provided as Attachment 5. Issues and concerns identified include:

- Five storey buildings will be tallest in St. Marys and inappropriate in low density neighbourhood
- Shadowing and privacy impacts on adjacent lots
- Seniors housing is needed and appropriate but concerned with scale of development including height, density and massing
- Concerns regarding location and design of loading and garbage areas, and patio
- Ability of Fire Services to respond to emergencies
- Increased traffic
- Impacts on pedestrian movements and access to trails
- Impacts on servicing infrastructure
- Creating a precedent for future similar development in Town
- More appropriate to determine policies for heights and densities through Official Plan review rather than through site-specific applications
- Potential impacts on heritage resources

In response to PAC's deferral of the applications on May 15, 2017, the applicant submitted a revised site plan, schematic elevations and 3D view plans, along with a revised planning justification report on August 25, 2017 (refer to Attachments 6 and 7). An addendum to the planning justification report (dated October 13, 2017) was also submitted and is provided in Attachment 7.

At the November 20, 2017 meeting, the PAC passed a motion receiving an Information Report dated November 15, 2017 respecting the applications. Similar to this report, the November 15, 2017 report provided an overview of the applicant's resubmission of revised plans/drawings and the revised planning justification report. The applicant also requested that the Town schedule a public meeting to formally consider the applications under the Planning Act. The motion passed by PAC also recommended that Council proceed to a public meeting scheduled for January 9, 2018. Minutes of the November 20, 2017 PAC meeting are provided as Attachment 10.

## **DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT**

As noted above, the applicant submitted a revised site plan, schematic elevations and 3D view plans, along with a revised planning justification report and addendum. The applicant has indicated that the 3D view plans provide a conceptual visualization of the proposed development however, the colours and materials used are not the same as those shown in the schematic elevations.

The following provides a summary of the proposed buildings in the revised submission:

**Phase 1 consists of 3 connected buildings along Wellington Street North and the north property line:**

1. 1 storey covered parking + 3 storeys seniors' apartments
2. Basement + 5 storeys assisted living units
3. Basement + main floor entry lobby + 4 storeys assisted living units along north property line, transitioning to basement + 1 storey amenity area

**Phase 1 Gross Floor Area – 14,784 m<sup>2</sup>**

**Phase 2 consists of 2 connected buildings along Water Street North:**

1. 1 storey covered parking + 3 storeys seniors' apartments, transitioning to 2 storeys seniors' apartments near south property line
2. Basement + 4 storeys assisted living units

**Phase 2 Gross Floor Area – 7,905 m<sup>2</sup>**

The August 25, 2017 Planning Justification Report was revised to reflect changes to the development proposal.

The following chart is intended to summarize and compare the most recent submission to the October 2016 and May 2017 submissions.

	OCTOBER 2016	MAY 2017	AUGUST 2017
<b>UNITS</b>			
Seniors Apartment	84	76	50 <sup>1</sup>
Assisted Living	115	126	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>LAYOUT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buildings along south, west and north property lines</li> <li>Parking area facing Wellington Street North</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buildings along west, north, east and part of south property lines</li> <li>Parking area internalized</li> </ul>	
<b>GROSS FLOOR AREA</b>	18,565 m <sup>2</sup>	20,829 m <sup>2</sup>	22,689 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>DENSITY (units/ha)</b>	153	155	138.5
<b>PARKING</b>	132 (58 surface + 74 underground)	167 (62 surface + 105 covered)	107 (59 surface + 48 covered)
<b>APARTMENT HEIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Phase 1</b> – 5 storeys<sup>2</sup></li> <li><b>Phase 2</b> – 5 storeys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Phase 1</b> – 4 storeys<sup>2</sup> and 5 storeys<sup>2</sup></li> <li><b>Phase 2</b> – 4 storeys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Phase 1</b> – 3 storeys<sup>2</sup> and 5 storeys<sup>2</sup></li> <li><b>Phase 2</b> – 3 storeys and 4 storeys</li> </ul>
<b>LOT COVERAGE</b>	35%		36%

Notes:

1 – 27 one-bedroom and 23 two-bedroom units

2 – part of basement above ground

In the October 13, 2017 planning justification addendum, the applicant states that “the seniors’ apartments are proposed as ‘slab-on-grade’ construction (the main floor being covered parking) and the assisted-living portion is 5-storeys over a basement. Basement levels are not normally included in descriptions of the number of storeys even though they often contain habitable areas (e.g. a building with four floors of offices and three levels of underground parking would be considered to be a 4-storey office building). Due to the existing slope of the site, the assisted living portion would have a ‘walk-out’ basement at the north end”. It is recognized that it is common practice to not include underground areas in the description of the number of storeys in a building. However, portions of basements that are above ground are noted in the chart above for information purposes.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

### Provincial Policy Statement

A summary of applicable policies in the Provincial Policy Statement were provided in the Information Report dated May 15, 2017 (see Attachment 4).

### **Town Official Plan and Zoning By-law**

The subject property is currently designated Residential in the Town Official Plan and zoned Development Zone (RD) in the Town's Zoning By-law Z1-1997. The applicant has submitted Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications to facilitate the proposed development. The proposed Official Plan Amendment would add special policies to permit a maximum density of 138.5 units per hectare and a maximum height of five storeys on the subject property. The Official Plan Amendment would also be required to add mid-rise apartments as a permitted use. A copy of the proposed Official Plan Amendment is provided as Attachment 11.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment would rezone the subject property from Residential Development (RD) to Residential Zone Six (R6) with special provisions to:

- reduce the minimum lot area requirement from 550 m<sup>2</sup> for the first dwelling unit plus 90 m<sup>2</sup> for each additional dwelling unit to 550 m<sup>2</sup> for the first dwelling unit plus 69 m<sup>2</sup> for each additional dwelling unit
- reduce the minimum front yard requirement from 7.5 to 3 metres
- reduce the minimum rear requirement from 10.5 to 6 metres
- increase the maximum building height requirement from 13.5 to 19.1 metres
- increase the maximum number of storeys permitted from 3 to 5
- deem Wellington Street North as the front lot line and Water Street North as the rear lot line

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

A summary of comments received from Town Departments and agencies is provided in the May 15, 2017 Information Report. Town Staff provided the following additional comments based on the August 2017 submission.

#### **Town Fire Chief**

- No issues

#### **Town Public Works**

- Capacity for municipal water and sanitary services, and stormwater management will need to be confirmed by the applicant at the detailed design / site plan approval stage.

Copies of submissions received since the submission of these Applications is provided in Attachment 12. Following the November 20, 2017 PAC meeting, three additional submissions were received from members of the public as summarized below:

- Letter from Bill Hance, 30 Ann Street, St. Marys dated November 4, 2017 (received in December 2017). Concerns with proposed development, citing Official Plan policies limiting height of buildings to a maximum of three storeys and other relevant policies.
- Letter from the Staffen family, St. Marys Golf and Country Club Limited dated December 18, 2017. Supports proposed development for a number of reasons including local construction investment, increased tax assessment, traffic and noise impacts will be less than previous use of property (school), and seniors will contribute to local economy. Concerns noted relate to "size, possibly not units but in access and available parking" and need for green space.
- Letter from Laurie Graham, Leslie Shower, Rob Staffen, Murray Mitchell and Ron Hunter, Presbyterian Church Enduring Mission Legacy Fund dated December 18, 2017. Supports proposed development due to increased local tax assessment and additional shopping

opportunities/customers for businesses in the downtown. Notes that there is limited parking at the St. Marys Presbyterian Church; concerned that there will be inadequate parking provided for visitors, staff and tenants of the seniors' complex. Also noted that the Town needs to ensure there is adequate green space related to the project.

Copies of the three submissions are provided in Attachment 12.

## **PLANNING ANALYSIS**

As noted, the PAC deferred a recommendation on these applications to permit the applicant the opportunity to address concerns and issues identified by PAC, Town staff and the community. The applicant has reduced the height of the most southerly portion of the Phase 2 building along Water Street from four to three storeys. In addition, the height of the most southerly Phase 1 building along Wellington Street North has been reduced from four to three storeys. Taller buildings have been maintained in particular in the northeast quadrant of the property which is on the periphery of the neighbourhood, in close proximity to vacant land northeast of the Wellington Street North/Egan Avenue intersection and in the Thames Crest Farms development to the north. The total number of proposed units has decreased by approximately eleven percent (22 units) but it is noted that the 50 proposed seniors' apartment units consist of one and two bedroom units. The total proposed gross floor area and site coverage has increased slightly.

In the October 13, 2017 addendum to the planning justification report, the applicant contends that Section 3.1.2.3 of the Official Plan that speaks to residential infilling type development is permitted provided it is in keeping with the attributes of the neighbourhood in terms of building type, form and spatial separation, would not apply since "this policy is intended to guide consideration of Zoning By-law Amendment and Minor Variance applications for infilling developments". It should be noted that other policies of the Official Plan applicable to this development proposal speak to development being designed to be in keeping with the character of the area. Criteria used to determine the character of an area can be based on attributes such as setbacks, massing, scale and height.

The planning justification report provides additional discussion including:

- There is an identified shortage of senior's housing options in the St. Marys area that is expected to worsen with the aging population. The proposed development would significantly reduce this shortfall, and would broaden the supply and choice of housing for existing and future residents of the community.
- The location of the subject property is well suited to the provision of senior's housing. As a population, seniors are more prone to mobility issues, so the proximity of the site to the commercial amenities of downtown St. Marys and recreational amenities like the Grand Trunk Trail is important.
- The proposed development represents an innovative reuse of a former school property. Making use of such a property to provide housing for seniors takes advantage of the size of the property and its location in a stable residential neighbourhood that is close to commercial and recreational amenities. The proposed facility incorporates a number of design elements, described in the Planning Justification Report, that ensure it does not significantly impact adjacent land uses, and that it generally maintains the character of the area. The proposed buildings are positioned near the street, mainly to avoid loss-of-privacy and shade/shadow impacts, but with the additional benefit of filling a major gap in the streetscape established by the existing single-detached dwellings on both Water Street North and Wellington Street North. The design of the proposed facility represents an innovated approach to development that is consistent with current design and planning principles.
- The proposed development is not expected to have a significant impact on the existing housing stock, although by providing a new housing type for seniors, it could help reduce instances of 'over-housing' in St. Marys (i.e. people would move out of houses that are too large and difficult to maintain for them).

- The proposed development would replace a vacant former school site with mid-rise residential construction which, although different in many ways from the former school and from the surrounding single-detached dwellings, has been designed to reflect the masonry construction of the prominent buildings in the area. The proposed facility will enhance the character of the area.
- Between the attractive design elements and the communal recreation facilities provided for future residents, the proposed development would provide an attractive and enjoyable living environment within the Town.
- This development will provide 180 senior's rental units in St Marys. These will be a mix of senior's apartments and senior's assisted living units. This development will feature shared amenities for the senior resident population.
- The proposal will both intensify and redevelop the site, providing an opportunity for the Town to accommodate population growth within current boundaries. This will encourage the protection of surrounding farmland and facilitate the efficient use of municipal infrastructure.
- The proposed development will greatly increase housing options within the Town through the addition of approximately 130 senior's assisted living units and 50 senior's apartment units. The proposal is located in an established residential neighbourhood and its construction would allow for inter-mixing of residential housing types.

With respect to the question of this proposed development setting a precedent for the approval of future higher density residential development in existing lower density neighbourhoods, the applicant contends that "an approval of one application does not obligate an approval authority to approve a similar application in the future. Each planning application is approved or refused on its individual merits. This isn't to say that an approval couldn't be used as an example by those seeking future approvals (or those opposing them), but there would still be no obligation to approve or refuse such applications". It should be noted that this issue was raised by members of the public and in response to the applicant's reference in the Planning Justification Report to a number of approved applications / developments in the Town.

As noted previously in this report, the applicant requested that the Town schedule a public meeting to formally consider the applications under the Planning Act. Although staff believes that additional review and discussion will be required regarding a range of issues, staff recommended that the Town proceed with the setting of a public meeting. Additional discussion will be required regarding the impacts of grades, specific interfaces, bulk and massing of buildings, pedestrian movements and access to trails, loading and garbage areas, etc. Town staff will provide a final opinion to Council respecting these applications following a review of comments as a result of the statutory public meeting.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not known at this time.

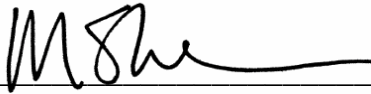
## **ATTACHMENTS**

- 1) Application for Approval of Official Plan and a Zoning By-law Amendments
- 2) General Location Map
- 3) Specific Location Map
- 4) May 15, 2017 Information Report to PAC (text only)
- 5) May 15, 2017 Planning Advisory Committee meeting minutes
- 6) Site Plan, Schematic Elevations and 3D View Plans (August 2017)
- 7) Revised Planning Justification Report (August 25, 2017) and Addendum (October 13, 2017)
- 8) Concept Site Plan and Building Elevations (October 2016)
- 9) Concept Site Plan and Building Elevations (May 2017)
- 10) November 20, 2017 Planning Advisory Committee meeting minutes
- 11) Proposed Official Plan Amendment

12) Correspondence received

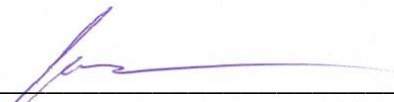
**REVIEWED BY**

**Recommended by the Department**



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Mark Stone  
Planner



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Grant Brouwer  
Director of Building and Development

**Recommended by the CAO**



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Brent Kittmer  
CAO / Clerk