



**VIA EMAIL**

May 20, 2020

Members of Planning Advisory Committee  
The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys  
175 Queen Street East  
St. Marys, ON  
N4X 1B6

Dear Members:

**Re: Applications for Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law  
Amendment (OP02-2019 and Z04-2019)  
Randy Warkentin  
665 James Street North**

**Our File: HHL/TSM/19-01**

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On behalf of Randy Warkentin, are pleased to provide the following information for your consideration regarding the Official Plan Amendment (“OPA”) and Zoning By-law Amendment (“ZBA”) applications for the low-rise apartment development located on lands known as 665 James Street North in the Town of St. Marys.

We would like you to note that our client has considered the comments received from the Planning Advisory Committee (“PAC”), and the public, at the meeting of February 18, 2020 and has made significant revisions to the proposed development. In summary, the following changes have been made to the proposal:

- The height of the building has been reduced from 5-storeys to 4-storeys;
- The total number of units has been reduced from 46 units to 35 units. The resulting density of the proposed development has reduced from 124 units per hectare to 95 units per hectare;
- Doors and patios are now provided for the ground floor units;
- The at-grade commercial unit(s) have been removed. The building is now purely residential.
- The overall length of the building footprint has been reduced by approx. 3.5m, and the building has been positioned 2.65 m further away from the easterly property line;
- The underground parking garage and access ramp have been eliminated;

- The minimum number of parking spaces required by the Zoning By-law are provided as surface level spaces;
- The location of the external on-site garbage pick-up area and internal garbage room have been relocated (to the west side of the buildings entrance), and the associated vehicle turning movements are denoted on the site plan; and
- Coloured architectural drawings have been prepared to further illustrate the high quality design of the proposed development.

In addition, we provide the following responses to some of concerns voiced by PAC Members and local residents at the meeting on February 18, 2020:

i. Transition and compatibility

In evaluating the compatibility of a development to the existing character of the area, it is important to understand that a degree of built form transition is necessary and expected when introducing a mix of building types and densities. Transition can typically be accomplished by means of a buffer. Buffers can be introduced in different ways, including most commonly through setbacks, vegetation or fencing, and/or a graduation in scale.

The proposed apartment building has been positioned as close as possible to the James Street North and Glass Street road allowances. Thereby creating a vibrant street wall and a strong street edge, while providing appropriately sized areas for on-site surface parking, loading and landscaping, and maximizing the separate distances from the neighbouring properties. These separation distances will help maintain privacy levels for the surrounding properties, as well as allow appropriate opportunity for boundary fencing, and/or landscaping to create visual separate. The future Site Plan Approval process will provide the opportunity to consider and address detailed matters with respect to landscaping and fencing, amongst other matters.

The proposed apartment building will contribute to the mixture of unit types and built form existing in the surrounding neighbourhood. It is acknowledged that the proposed built form varies in general scale to the surrounding lands which contain a mix of building types and scales. It is our opinion that it is appropriately positioned and sized for this corner lot fronting an Arterial Road, and will provide a transition to the surrounding two-storey townhouses, semi-detached properties, and single detached dwellings beyond. The proposed low-rise apartment building is generally regarded as a compatible form of infill development within a low-density residential context.

A number of options for site layout, vehicle access location and building orientation were considered as part of the initial design work. Considerable efforts have been made during the design of the project to ensure that the building is located and orientated appropriately, and that potential vehicle conflicts are minimized by proposing a single vehicle access off the higher order street i.e. James Street North (an Arterial Street). It was determined that the current arrangement makes the most efficient use of the available developable land, whilst minimizing potential significant impacts for surrounding properties.

- ii. Environmental Site Assessment: Rubicon Environmental (2008) Inc. are qualified environmental consultants that were retained by the landowner to

undertake a Phase One and a Phase Two Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the subject property.

The Phase One ESA was conducted in accordance with O. Reg. 153/04, as amended by O. Reg. 511/09. As part of the Phase One ESA completed by Rubicon Environmental (2008) Inc., a number of contaminants of potential concern were identified at the Site. Given the identification of these contaminants and the historical nature of the previous use on the subject lands, which included an automobile repair garage, it was recommended by Rubicon that a Phase 2 ESA be prepared.

The Phase Two assessed the property using the Table 2 standards for commercial land use, non-potable groundwater, coarse textured soil from the Ministry of Environment (MOE) document "Soil, Ground Water and Sediment Standards for Use under Part XV.1 of the *Environmental Protection Act*"

Based on the findings of the Phase One investigation, a professional judgmental sampling approach was implemented by Rubicon Environmental (2008) Inc. The Phase 2 ESA investigation completed on the subject property included the advancement of five (5) boreholes (BH) and the monitoring of six (6) existing monitoring wells was completed on-site. The locations of the boreholes were strategically placed to fully investigate and identify any contaminants of concern which may be present on, in or under the subject property.

Soil analysis completed during the Phase Two ESA indicated that soil met the MOE Table 2 Standards for all parameters tested which includes potential contaminants of concern. In addition, groundwater analysis completed during the Phase Two ESA indicated that groundwater met the MOE Table 2 Standards for all parameters tested which included potential contaminants of concern.

As a result of the findings of the Phase Two ESA, it is the professional opinion of Rubicon Environmental (2008) Inc. that there is no known environmental conditions in the land or the water on, in or under the subject property to warrant further environmental investigation. It is Rubicon's professional opinion that the Site is suitable for the filing of a Record of Site Condition ("RSC") with The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The RSC is currently with the MECP for review and ultimate approval.

- iii. Accessible Units: Six (85%) of the seven proposed ground floor units are generously sized 2-bedroom units (i.e. up to approximately 1035 sq. ft.), which if desired, could be designed to meet accessibility standards for a future occupier. The inclusion of an elevator within the building will ensure all of the proposed units are accessible to future occupiers.
- iv. Affordability: It is our professional opinion that the first step to improving access to affordable housing options in St. Marys is to increase housing supply. Furthermore, offering a wider mix of housing types provides improved access to affordability options. It is our understanding that rental units (such as proposed) are a needed form of housing in St. Marys, and the proposed apartment dwellings will help contribute to the supply of affordable and alternative housing options in the area. At this preliminary stage, the future rental value for the proposed units has not been determined. Best efforts will be made to ensure that the units align with affordable targets, however it should be acknowledged that it

is generally difficult to deliver meaning affordable housing in periphery locations such as this which are earmarked for lower density residential.

- v. Electrical Vehicle Chargers: The landowner intends to provide two electric vehicle charging stations for the use of future residents. The location of the stations will be determined during the future site plan approval process.

In summary, the proposed development continues to provide all the required requisite facets to deliver a high-quality development. All required parking spaces (standard and BF) are provided; as well as peripheral areas for outdoor amenity area, landscape buffering and tree planting. The future Site Plan Approval process will refine matters pertaining to architectural design, landscaping, fencing, and lighting.

Based on the above, we believe that the proposed OPA/ZBA, is appropriate and represents sound land use planning principles consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, and the existing and emerging Official Plan policies. The proposed development is compatible with, and respects, the surrounding uses while at the same time responding to and achieving the goals of the Province of Ontario and the Town of St. Marys as it relates to residential intensification and infill development in appropriate locations.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide the above comments on behalf of our client and we look forward to your consideration of the OPA/ZBA at the next available PAC meeting. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours very truly,

**ZELINKA PRIAMO LTD.**



Dave Hannam, BRP, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Associate

Cc: The Client (Via Email)