

Infill development would bring six homes to Kennedy Street lot

By Brock Weir

A proposed infill development on Kennedy Street West would bring six new homes onto a 1.8 acre lot.

Council last week voted to accept a development application from a landowner looking to transform 254 Kennedy Street West, just east of Lensmith Avenue, into a condominium housing development, which, if built, will see the homes dotted along a private laneway extending from Kennedy.

If Council ratifies their decision this week, the accepted development application will then proceed through the normal public planning process.

According to a report from Marco Ramunno, Aurora's Director of Planning, while Council approved a comprehensive zoning bylaw review last year with a moratorium on new minor variance applications, this does not fall under the restrictions.

“This area wasn't captured within the interim control bylaw area because it is an area that already contains larger two-storey dwellings and that was one of the directives from Council during that discussion in developing an interim control bylaw area,” said Marco Ramunno, responding to questions from Councillor Wendy Gaertner on why this does not fall within recent provisions on infill development in stable neighbourhoods. “It is designated stable neighbourhood residential.”

She did, however, retain concerns.

“It looks like potentially lots four, five and six are comprised by environmental area,” she said.

Taking the plan to the next level, however, had majority support around the Council table, particularly from Councillors Tom Mrakas and Michael Thompson, the two local Councillors who led the charge to bring about meaningful reform to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

“I will be voting in favour of moving forward with this and allowing it to fall within our regular process,” said Councillor Mrakas at last week's General Committee meeting. “Today is April 3, which means the OMB is gone. The regulations are in, everything is good, so I think allowing applications to move forward to our regular process is absolutely fine, so I am looking forward to this new system and us, as a municipality and Council have, in essence, the final say in how we develop our Town and our municipality.”

Added Councillor Thompson: “Since Bill 139 received Royal Assent, I am a lot more comfortable moving forward with the zoning bylaw applications and I look forward to next week's discussion [from] Councillor Kim and Councillor Humfryes' Notice of Motion to remove this provision so Mr. Ramunno doesn't have to keep bringing [these recommendations] forward.”

The two Councillors propose removing the two-year moratorium on zoning amendment applications.

If this motion is passed by Council this week, it will allow the Town of Aurora to receive all classes of residential zoning amendment applications once again.

Despite this week's Notice of Motion, Councillor Humfryes still had questions over this particular proposal for Kennedy Street West.

While she said she supported this new development, a bone of contention might be the private laneway proposed in the application which, if carried out, will be on the other side of a number of back yards on Lensmith.

“I just couldn't imagine living with a street behind me,” said Councillor Humfryes.