

Townhouses slated for portion of Addison Hall Business Park

More than 200 townhouse units will be coming to the Leslie Street corridor following Council's approval of a new residential development in a corner of the Addison Hall Business Park.

Council last week signed off on an Official Plan Amendment that will see a portion of the business park area, across from William Graham Drive, converted from employment lands to make way for 201 townhouse units.

?Council approved an Official Plan amendment and Zoning Bylaw amendment for 25 and 55 Addison Hall Circle to facilitate the development of 201 townhouse dwelling units,? said the Town in a statement following the final Council meeting of 2025. ?The proposed development conforms to the provincial, regional, and municipal policies. By converting these lands for residential use, the Town can better meet the need for housing with minimal impact to employment lands required to meet the Town's job density target.?

The Addison Hall Business Park was designated in 2014 for 32 blocks of ?prestige employment lands? and the report before Council notes the portion of the property in question ? 25 and 55 Addison Hall Circle ? encompasses a total area of 10.92 acres.

?Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed land use change is in keeping with the general direction of the Town's Official Plan and more specifically the employment land conversion policies,? said staff in their report. ?The conversion of employment land is appropriate because these properties have remained unsold and underutilized for the past 10 years. This indicates there is a limited market demand for industrial or commercial units within these blocks of the employment area. By converting these lands for residential use, the municipalities can better meet the need for housing.?

The report notes the applicant has stated that the housing in question can be built in a shorter timeframe than industrial and business units and the conversion of this portion to residential use will not negatively impact the surrounding business park area.

While Council members expressed some reluctance of converting lands designated for employment for residential use ? land Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo described as ?sacrosanct? ? the conversion ultimately won the day.

?I'm? 95 per cent content with going from Business Park to Residential. I'm satisfied we have enough employment lands. I'm not convinced that no one else will show up and want to do the same thing and we may not be able to accommodate, but I'm stuck a little bit on this concept of allowing one application to move forward as opposed to others,? said Councillor Gallo on the various residential applications that are moving their way through Town Hall but are on hold following future water and wastewater allocation from the Region of York.

Marco Ramunno, Aurora's Director of Planning, told Council that Aurora has a ?small reserve? of allocation that would provide for this townhouse development and the applicant was ?anxious to get moving? and be out to market as soon as this spring.

?This developer, Treasure Hill, we know they are anxious and they can deliver,? he said. ?The other four ? two of them are relatively small applications, one was George Street, four-storey building, 33 units that Council approved just last month? they haven't come to us with their timings to move forward. The other two, the larger ones, are Phase 2 of Smart Centres, the former Canadian Tire site. Phase One, they have allocation, about 500 units, so they're not pushing for Phase 2 allocation because they haven't moved forward yet on Phase 1.

?The other big one that has a hold on it is the northeast corner of Industrial Parkway and Wellington, the old Metropolitan Square site. It's four buildings, twelve storeys, a total of 950 units?. However, they have allocation for approximately 224 units from their original eight-storey proposal?. In that instance, we don't have a site plan yet for them.?

This information satisfied many questions asked by Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson who said Council often talks ?about the

fact that we have a lot of units approved, but nobody's building.?

?We'd like to see more building. We didn't see a lot of building this year. That's created some problems for us with regards to finances and Development Charges and fees and so forth,? he said. ?Here we have somebody that sounds like they're ready to move forward and build. I personally don't see a reason to delay that based on the fact it sounds like it won't preclude or prevent other developers who have similar situations from moving forward and plans if they so choose. I personally don't see any reason to further delay this and hopefully they'll get shovels in the ground sooner rather than later.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter