

Development Planning Division
Town of Aurora
100 John West Way, Box 1000
Aurora, Ontario L4G 6J1

March 3, 2023
File 11201

Attn: Peter Fan, Secretary – Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment

RE: Minor Variance Application Submission
1588 St. John's Sideroad (Block 5 & 6) - Part of Lot 26 Concession 3
File No. MV-2022-45
Related Application: SUB-2015-02 and SP-2020-08

Weston Consulting is the authorized planning agent for Haven Developments (2352107 Ontario Inc.), the registered owner of the property municipally known as 1588 St. John's Sideroad East, in the Town of Aurora. This letter has been prepared to supplement a request for minor variance application to permit the development of a one-storey multi-unit industrial building. The proposed development is located on Blocks 5 and 6 ("subject lands") of Draft Plan of Subdivision dated February 6, 2017, and red-lined October 23, 2020 (the "Draft Plan") as seen in Figure 1. The minor variance application is scheduled for the March 9, 2023 Committee of Adjustment meeting.

The purpose of the minor variance application is to seek relief from regulations in the Town of Aurora Zoning By-law 6000-17, which provides various development standards for development within the Town.

Further to a complete submission of minor variance application on the subject lands, a request for a supplementary calculation confirming the suitability of employment uses on the property has been requested.

Background

Applications for Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment were filed in 2015 to permit a business park with a total of 19 blocks comprised of employment lands, environmental protection, and open space. Conditions of Draft Plan Approval were secured on February 5, 2018, and later revised on February 3, 2021.

Block 1 of the Draft Plan of Subdivision is currently under construction and is intended to support commercial uses. A Site Plan Application has been submitted for Blocks 5 and 6 and it is anticipated that the development of these Blocks will be reviewed and processed concurrently. The development of the remainder of the subdivision blocks will be initiated as part of a future phase.

Justification

The subject lands are zoned *Employment – Business Park* and subject to site-specific *Exception 503 (E-BP 503)* per the Town of Aurora Comprehensive Zoning By-law 6000-17, as amended by By-Law 6108-18.

The permitted uses include a range of employment uses including, but not limited to, office, industrial, manufacturing warehousing and personal services. The proposed multi-unit industrial building is considered an industrial/warehousing use which is permitted under Section 24.503.1 of the By-Law.

The site-specific zoning by-law was approved in 2017 and since then our client has consulted marketing teams to identify the most efficient use of the lands. Upon their discussions, it was determined that there has been a departure from traditional office uses which are now in decline, due to current market forces. Factors such as the evolving economy during and following the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a change the demand of employment uses/spaces that are available for businesses.

Employment lands are directed to be secured in Provincial Policy and Official Plan documents to reserve and protect lands with uses that will provide employment. Employment lands have traditionally comprised of business parks with multiple storey office and industrial uses, however due to the above, demand for multi-storey office is in decline due to home office and flex-space capabilities and would not be financially viable. Also, current trends in the market reflect a built form which depart from multi-floor buildings to single storey buildings. The need for industrial-related uses has risen, as those uses require physical sites with ancillary office use.

The revised proposal provides for industrial-related uses within a single storey, which are still permitted Employment uses but have been configured to adapt to current market trends, as well as the physical constraints within the site. The reduction in gross floor area provides for a more efficient use of land, balancing built form to generally comply with Town parking requirements. If additional gross floor area is required, a larger volume of parking would be required and would be difficult to achieve within the site.

In addition, the applicable secondary plan requires that Business Park lands achieve a minimum density of 40 jobs per developable hectare. The following table illustrates a job/density calculation for as a whole of the subject lands and for the respective block:

Proposed Land Use	Area (ha)	Gross Floor Area (sq. ft)	Sq. ft. per Employee	Employees	Jobs per hectare
Employment Use Block 5 & 6	1.35	88,735.52	850	104	77

Conclusion

Based on the information provided in this letter together with previously submitted materials in support of the minor variance application, it is our opinion that the proposed use of the lands satisfies the employment criteria set out in Provincial Policy and applicable Official Plans.

Should there be any questions or additional information that is required, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at 905-738-8080 extension 290 or Eleni Mermigas at extension 320.

Yours truly,
Weston Consulting
 Per:

Paul Tobia, BURPI, MCIP, RPP
 Senior Planner

c. 2352107 Ontario Inc.