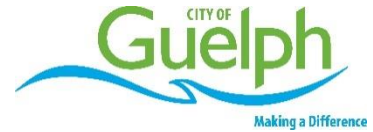


Committee of Adjustment Comments from Staff, Public and Agencies



Application Details

Application Number: A-65/24
Location: 50-60 Fife Road
Hearing Date: October 10, 2024
Owner: UpBuilding! Non Profit Homes (Guelph) Inc.
Agent: Mia Trana, Tim Welch Consulting Inc
Official Plan Designation: Medium Density Residential
Zoning Designation: RM.6 (Medium density residential 6)

By-Law Requirements:

The property is located in the Medium Density Residential 6 (RM.6) Zone. Variances from Table 5.3, Section 5.9(b) and Section 6.18 of Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended, are being requested. The By-law requires:

- a) a minimum of 1.5 parking spaces per unit for the first 20 units in an apartment building, and 1.25 spaces per unit for more than 20 units; 1 parking space per unit for an existing townhouse unit; and 1.2 parking spaces per unit for the proposed townhouse units [total of 102 parking spaces required];
- b) a minimum of 80 percent of total required parking spaces for multi-unit buildings with 3 or more dwelling units, townhouse – cluster, stacked, stacked back-to-back, and mixed-use buildings shall be provided as designed electric vehicle parking spaces; and
- c) a minimum buffer strip of 3 metres is required around the perimeter of surface parking lots.

Request: The applicant is seeking relief from the requirements of Zoning By-law (2023)- 20790, as amended, to permit:

- a) a minimum of 95 off-street parking spaces for the existing apartment building, existing townhouse units, and proposed multiple attached dwellings;
- b) 0 designed electric vehicle parking spaces; and
- c) a minimum buffer strip of 1 metre around the perimeter of the surface parking lot and to permit the placement of a transformer within the buffer strip.

Staff Recommendation

Approval

Comments

Planning Services

The subject lands are designated "Medium Density Residential" in the Official Plan. This designation applies to residential areas within the Built-Up Area of the City which are currently or planned to be medium density in character. The predominant land use in this designation is residential and includes townhouses and apartments. As the proposed stacked townhouse dwellings are a permitted use, staff are satisfied that the proposal conforms with the Official Plan.

The subject lands are zoned "Medium Density Residential" (RM.6) in Zoning By-law (2023)-20790. To facilitate the development of 18 new dwelling units the applicant applied for and received a minor variance to the 1995 Zoning By-law in early 2023. Now that the 2023 Zoning By-law is in effect, three additional required variances have been identified. Staff have examined the requested variances individually below:

A. Minimum Parking Requirement

The applicant is requesting a variance to permit a reduce parking rate of 95 off-street spaces for the existing apartment building (37 units), existing townhouse units (29 units), and proposed dwelling units (18 units). The 2023 Zoning By-law requires a minimum of 102 parking spaces for the 84 existing and proposed dwelling units, an average of 1.21 per dwelling units. The proposed parking rate of 95 spaces for 84 units represents 1.13 parking spaces per dwelling unit. Staff note that a variance to the 1995 Zoning By-law for a minimum of 95 parking spaces for this proposal was approved as part of the variance in early 2023.

The intent of minimum parking requirements for residential developments is to ensure that there is adequate off-street parking for both residents and visitors to the site. As indicated by the applicant, the existing and proposed dwellings are a mixture of rent-geared-to-income and market rate housing, and typically see lower parking demand than many other developments in Guelph. The proposal would allow for one parking space per dwelling unit, with an additional 11 parking spaces for visitors or secondary resident vehicles. Staff are satisfied that the proposed minimum parking rate meets the intent of the Zoning By-law.

Adding additional parking spaces through the provision of underground or structured parking would add considerable costs to the proposal and would reduce the affordability of the existing and proposed dwelling units. Without the creation of a structured parking facility, the proposal can accommodate 1.13 parking spaces per dwelling unit. For these reasons, staff are of the opinion that the proposed minimum parking requirement is minor in nature and desirable for the appropriate development of the lands.

B. Minimum 'Designed' Electric Vehicle Parking Requirement

The applicant is requesting a variance to permit a reduced 'Designed' Electric Vehicle (EV) parking spaces to 0 per new dwelling unit constructed. As the

majority of the units predate the requirement for EV parking spaces, required EV spaces and required 'designed' EV spaces are calculated based on the proposed new dwelling units only. For the proposed 18 dwelling units, the 2023 Zoning By-law requires 4 EV parking spaces and 14 'Designed' EV parking spaces.

A 'Designed' EV parking space is defined in the Zoning By-law as: "A parking space designed and constructed to be electric vehicle ready, allowing for the future installation of electronic vehicle supply equipment that conforms to Section 86 of the Electrical Safety Code."

The proposal plans to provide the 4 required EV parking spaces but requests a variance to eliminate the need to provide the 14 'designed' EV parking spaces.

The intent of the minimum required 'designed' EV parking spaces is to allow for parking spaces to be easily retrofitted to accommodate an EV charging station in the future. The rationale is that it is more cost effective and less disruptive to design new parking areas to accommodate EV charging equipment than it is to retrofit an existing conventional parking area with EV charging equipment. No new parking areas are proposed in the case of this proposal. As a result, there would be no cost-savings or mitigation of disruptive construction by providing the 'designed' EV spaces now rather than in the future when there is more demand for EV spaces. For this reason, staff are satisfied that the proposed reduction in required 'designed' EV spaces meets the intent of the Zoning By-law, is minor in nature, and is desirable for the appropriate development of the lands.

C. Minimum buffer strip adjacent to parking area

The applicant is requesting a variance to reduce the minimum required buffer strip around the perimeter of surface parking lots to 1 metre abutting the proposed dwellings.

The intent of the minimum landscaped buffer requirement is to ensure that parking areas are framed with greenspace wide enough to accommodate a tree or other vegetation. This would help to increase the City's tree canopy coverage and create a more desirable property.

In the case of the subject land, most of the parking area abutting the proposed dwelling units would have between 1.95 metres and 2.5 metres of landscaped buffer, with the accessibility ramp requiring a reduction of the landscaped buffer to 1 metre. Staff note that as the existing parking area predates the requirement for the 3 metre landscaped buffer, the parking area does not conform with the required landscaped buffer where it abuts the existing townhouses and apartment building. The parking area's landscape buffer varies from 0 metres to 1.5 metres across the length of all the existing townhouses on site. Taking this into consideration, the proposed dwellings offer a more generous buffer than the existing townhouses, as the buffer

would only be less than 1.95 metres where the proposed accessibility ramp would be located.

For these reasons staff are satisfied that the proposed reduction in the minimum required buffer strip adjacent to the parking area maintains the intent of the Zoning by-law, is minor in nature, and is desirable for the appropriate development of the lands.

Staff are of the opinion that the proposed development meets the general intent of the Zoning By-law and Official Plan, is desirable for the appropriate development of the lands, and is minor in nature.

Staff recommend approval of minor variance application number A-65/24.

Engineering Services

Engineering has no concerns with the requested variance. We agree with the recommendations made by Planning and Building staff.

Building Services

The subject property is zoned Medium Density Residential 6 (RM.6) under Council approved Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2023)-2079, as amended. Multiple attached dwellings are a permitted use on the property as per approved Committee of Adjustment Application A-6/23. Other permitted uses in the zone include back-to-back townhouses, cluster townhouses and an apartment.

Committee of Adjustment Application A-6/23 was applied for and approved under the 1995 Zoning By-law prior to the 2023 CZBL being Council approved April 18, 2023. Since the site plan application for the development was not approved prior to the 2023 CZBL being council approved, the site plan is to be reviewed under the 2023 CZBL where the additional variances under the 2023 CZBL were identified.

A building permit is required prior to any construction, at which time requirements under the Ontario Building Code will be reviewed.

Building Services has no concerns with the application and supports Planning and Engineering recommendations.

Comments from the Public

None

Contact Information

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