

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE DECEMBER 3, 2001

**INFORMATION ITEM
OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT FILE OP.98.006
ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT FILE Z.98.033
PLAN OF SUBDIVISION FILE 19T-98V03
F. & F. REALTY HOLDINGS INC.
BLOCK 32 WEST
WOODLOT AND NORTH/SOUTH PRIMARY ROAD EXTENSION**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

- (i) That this item BE RECEIVED for information purposes;
- (ii) That the applicant meet with Vaughan Engineering Staff to determine suitable traffic calming measures for Street "A" of the subject draft plan, including but not limited to road design, medians, and entry features;
- (iii) That City Staff meet with the Developers Group for Block 32 West respecting the submission of additional traffic calming objectives for the entire length of Vellore Woods Blvd. north of Hawkview Blvd. to Major Mackenzie Drive;
- (iv) That the Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association be included in the review of the future commercial site development application for the subject lands, including landscaping, and screening along Hawkview Blvd. and Vellore Woods Blvd.; and,
- (v) That a follow-up meeting of the representatives of the Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association, the Ward 1 Sub-Committee, Vaughan Staff and the Applicant, be held once the foregoing initiatives have commenced.

Purpose

On November 26, 2001, Council directed Staff to address the concerns of deputants speaking on behalf of the Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association.

Background

The subject lands are located on the northwest corner of Rutherford Road and Highway #400, in Lot 16, Concession 5, City of Vaughan. The site has a total area of 5.99 ha with a 327 m frontage on Rutherford Road and contains a woodlot.

The concerns raised by the Ratepayers Association included the development approvals to date, the extension of Vellore Woods Blvd. to Rutherford Road, and the status of the woodlot.

Development Approvals

The history of development approvals for the subject lands is chronologically summarized as follows

- April 24, 1995: Vaughan Council modified the approved OPA #400 by re-designating the easterly portion (Block 1) to "Neighbourhood Commercial Centre".

- June 29, 1995: OPA #400 was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs; designating Block 1 as “Neighbourhood Commercial Centre”, and Block 2 as “Medium Density Residential/Commercial”.
- September 15, 1997: Council endorsed the Block 32 West Block Plan, which identified the easterly block (Block 1) as “Neighbourhood Commercial Centre” and the westerly block (Block 2) as part of “Study Area #2”.
- April 8, 1998: Applications OP.98.006, Z.98.033, and 19T-98V03 (F. & F. Realty Holdings Inc.) were considered at a Public Hearing.
- August 30, 1999: The subdivision plan to create the two blocks and the road allowance was draft approved by Council; Council also removed the “Study Area 2” from Block 2.
- May 8, 2000: Council resolved the following:

“That the request by the applicant to remove the subject woodlot in advance of a signed subdivision or site plan agreement not be approved at this time and that the removal of trees on the road allowance be allowed following the approval of the road alignment and engineering drawings.”
- May 14, 2001: Council approved applications to rezone Block 1 and 2 to C4 Neighbourhood Commercial with site-specific exceptions, and to re-designate Block 2 to “Neighbourhood Commercial Centre”.
- July 24, 2001: Applicant applied for a Fill Permit to allow the removal of trees within the planned road allowance of Plan of Subdivision 19T-98V03. The Fill Permit was subsequently issued on November 20, 2001.

Vellore Woods Blvd. Extension

The Block 32 road system was based on extensive background studies for Official Plan Amendment #400, including the comprehensive traffic report for Block 32 West, prepared by Cole, Sherman and Associates (August 1996), and approved by the Ministry of Transportation. The Vellore Woods Blvd. connection to Rutherford Road is reflected in the approved Official Plan, the approved Block 32 West Plan, and the approved Plan of Subdivision 19T-98V03 (F. & F. Realty Holdings Inc.). Also, traffic calming features have been designed to promote road safety within the residential neighbourhood and to discourage through-travel by external traffic.

A careful planning process was undertaken to establish a workable network for Block 32 West, which is, in turn, integrated with the broader City network. Completing the road pattern will avoid forcing much of the Block 32 traffic through the Weston Road/Rutherford Road intersection, which continues to undergo significant traffic pressure. The Vellore Woods Blvd. connection to Rutherford Road is a crucial component of the overall transportation and transit planning for the community.

Woodlot

The woodlot on the subject site was identified as Woodlot #3 in the December 1993 Subwatershed Study Background Report on Existing Environmental Conditions and Functional Assessment, prepared by the City’s environmental consultant, Gartner Lee Limited. Woodlot #3 was evaluated and assessed as having a “Low” degree of natural significance for the following reasons:

- (i) it offers no linkages to other woodlots or natural systems;
- (ii) the woodlot has limited habitat value; and,
- (iii) the tree health is poor and consists largely of scrub and soft woods.

The woodlots which were assessed as having "high" or "moderate" natural significance were designated "Woodlot" in OPA #400, comprising approximately 300 acres within the three urban villages. The urban villages of OPA #400, as amended by OPA #600, are subject to the City's Woodlot Acquisition By-law, which requires all landowners to contribute \$1,000.00/unit upon registration of each plan of subdivision, towards the City's acquisition of designated woodlots.

Woodlots receiving a "low" assessment are encouraged to be retained to the extent that they do not interfere with the planned configuration of lots, road networks and other approved land uses. Since Woodlot #3 is rated as "Low Natural Significance", the lands were designated for urban use. It is expected that most of the woodlot will be removed upon development of the lands, except where it is practical to retain some trees through site plan review.

In March of 1998, Vaughan Council endorsed the "Woodlot/Tree Preservation and Removal Policy In Advance of a Signed Subdivision Agreement". This policy establishes a separate process to permit woodlot tree preservation/removal prior to the execution of a subdivision agreement; and to exempt lands from the York Regional Tree Bylaw. Under the policy, the applicant is required to enter into an agreement with the City in the form of a "Fill Permit", to remove trees. A "Fill Permit" is issued after the applicant has fulfilled the following to the satisfaction of the Vaughan Urban Design Department:

- development is in accordance with an approved Block Plan and an Environmental Management Plan;
- the subject lands have received draft plan approval; and,
- the Owner has submitted a "Tree Preservation and Removal Plan".

In July of 2001, F. & F. Realty Holdings Inc. applied for a fill permit to remove the trees on the planned road allowance of Draft Plan of Subdivision 19T-98V03. The permit was issued on November 20, 2001.

Meeting of November 28, 2001 Respecting the Residents' Concerns

On November 28, 2001, representatives of the Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association met with the Ward 1 Sub-Committee, Staff, and the Applicant to discuss the concerns raised in this report and to explore possible solutions. At the meeting, Staff reviewed the planning approvals which have been granted to the subject lands, and to Block 32 West in general, and the difficulties involved in changing approvals granted by the City. At this meeting, the residents indicated displeasure with the Vellore Woods Blvd. connection to Rutherford Road, and the removal of most of the woodlot.

At the close of the meeting, the following recommendations were agreed to by all of the parties in attendance:

- (i) That the applicant meet with Vaughan Engineering Staff to determine suitable traffic calming measures for Street "A" of the subject draft plan, including but not limited to road design, medians, and entry features;

- (ii) That City Staff meet with the Developers' Group for Block 32 West respecting the submission of additional traffic calming objectives for the entire length of Vellore Woods Blvd. north of Hawkview Blvd. to Major Mackenzie Drive;
- (iii) That the Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association be included in the review of the future commercial site development application for the subject lands, including landscaping and screening along Hawkview Blvd. and Vellore Woods Blvd.; and,
- (iv) That a follow-up meeting of the representatives of the Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association, the Ward 1 Sub-Committee, Vaughan Staff and the Applicant, be held once the foregoing initiatives have commenced.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Vellore Woods Blvd. was identified as an integral part of the primary road system through the background studies undertaken for Official Plan #400. The primary road connection to Rutherford Road is reflected in the Official Plan, the Block 32 West Plan and approved Plan of Subdivision 19T-98V03, and is essential to the orderly flow of traffic through the Vellore Village Community.

Woodlot #3 was also evaluated as part of the Official Plan #400 background studies, and was identified as having a "Low" degree of natural significance. As a result, the woodlot is not designated in the Official Plan or subsequent Block 32 West Plan for acquisition. The subject site is designated "Neighbourhood Commercial" and has been approved for the corresponding C4 Commercial zoning.

As such, both the road connection and the woodlot on the subject lands have been considered through a long planning process with extensive public input, dating back to the early 1990's. The subject lands are designated and approved for two commercial blocks separated by a primary road, which completes the Block 32 road network.

At the meeting held on November 28, 2001, representatives of the City, Ratepayers Association and the Applicant determined that the traffic and landscaping concerns of the residents would be further considered through the steps contained in this report. The Ward 1 Sub-Committee concurred with this conclusion and recommendation of this report.

Attachments

1. Location Map
2. Block 32 West Plan
3. Approved Draft Plan of Subdivision 19T-98V03

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DeANGELIS
Commissioner of Planning


JOANNE R. ARBOUR
Director of Community Planning

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**ATTACHMENT '1'
LOCATION MAP**


FILE #	REPORT #	 SUBJECT LANDS	DATE: 11/27/2001
	SECTION: PART LOT 18, CON. 5	CITY OF WALDHAM PLANNING DEPARTMENT	SCALE: NOT TO SCALE
		APPROVED: F. & T. REALTY HOLDINGS	



ATTACHMENT '2'

FILE #	REPORT #	<input type="checkbox"/> SUBJECT LANDS CITY OF VALESHAM PLANNING DEPARTMENT	DATE: 11/27/2001
SECTION	PART LOT 15, CON. 5		APPLICANT: F. & F. REALTY HOLDINGS



ATTACHMENT '3'	FILE #	REPORT #	 SUBJECT LANDS	DATE: 11/27/2001
	LOCATION PART LOT 15, CON. 5	CITY OF VAUGHAN PLANNING DEPARTMENT		APPLICANT: F. & F. REALTY HOLDINGS