

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MAY 16, 2005

**THORNHILL CENTRE STREET STUDY
CITY OF VAUGHAN OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT
OPA #672 (CENTRE STREET SPINE)
RELATED FILE: 15.92**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

- “1. That residential uses within the “Mixed Use Residential/Office” designation of proposed Official Plan #672 BE RETAINED.”

Economic Impact

There are no requirements for new funding associated with this report.

Purpose

On May 9, 2005, Council requested a report from the Commissioner of Planning on the feasibility of removing the residential use component from the “Mixed-Use Residential/Office” designation of Official Plan Amendment #672. This designation is proposed in Section 4.1.2 of the OPA, for the north portion of Centre Street between Concord Road and Vaughan Boulevard. The following additional information is provided to advise Council of the background related to the proposed “Mixed-Use Residential/Office” designation, and the reasons why it is considered important to retain the residential use component.

Background-Analysis and Options

The Thornhill Centre Street Study undertaken by IBI Consulting Group recommended that the portion of the Centre Street Spine between Concord Road and Vaughan Boulevard be re-designated to Mixed-Use Residential/Office (MURO). This designation permits the following uses:

- street, block and stacked townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings
- small scale office uses
- mixed-use residential and office development; and,
- religious institutions, day care centres, schools, and libraries

The recommendation to include the combination of residential/office use was based on contextual factors, and the existing policy framework of the Provincial and Regional governments. The following is provided as a summary of the primary considerations leading to the introduction of the “Mixed-Use Residential/Office” designation.

- (i) The introduction of a Rapid Transit System along Centre Street from Highway 7 to Bathurst Street, and north on Bathurst Street will mean the transformation of Centre Street from an auto-oriented thoroughfare to a multi-modal corridor that will provide more opportunity for travelers to walk, cycle and take transit. The “Mixed Use Residential/Office (MURO)” designation promotes urban, pedestrian-friendly and transit supportive development by encouraging a combination of residential/office development.

- (ii) The visioning sessions conducted with the Stakeholder Consultation Group (SCG) for the Thornhill Centre Street Study, endorsed mixed-use development at the proposed scale, and viewed the mixed residential/office designation as an appropriate moderate transitional use, for this portion of the corridor which is currently primarily older, single-family residential development.
- (iii) The retention of residential uses and moderate intensification will support the Thornhill Town Centre and general commercial uses in the vicinity.
- (iv) The moderate increase in residential density along the Centre Street Corridor reinforces the need for public transit, without increasing concerns and volumes respecting traffic in the area.
- (v) The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) supports a range and mix of housing densities, residential intensification and public transit ridership.
- (vi) The York Region Official Plan (ROP) states that corridors are intended to have increased potential for new residential and employment growth at densities that would make frequent transit service possible.

Conclusion

In view of the aforementioned considerations, the Planning Department supports the retention of residential uses within the "Mixed-Use Residential/Office" designation as per proposed Official Plan #672.

Attachments

1. OPA #672, Schedule A: Land Use

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Respectfully submitted,

JOHN ZIPAY
Commissioner of Planning

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May 16, 2005
Not to Scale



Policy Planning & Urban Design Department

OPA 672, Schedule 'A'
Land Use

Part Lots 4, 5, 6,
Concession 2

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