



TOWN OF
HALTON HILLS
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REPORT

TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

FROM: Greg Macdonald, Senior Planner – Development Review

DATE: October 29, 2021

REPORT NO.: PD-2021-0068

SUBJECT: Public Meeting for a Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to permit three industrial warehouses at 0 Steeles Avenue & 8154, 8170, 8178 and 8192 Eighth Line (Premier Gateway Employment Area)

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2021-0068, dated October 29, 2021, regarding “Public Meeting for a proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to permit three industrial warehouses at 0 Steeles Avenue & 8154, 8170, 8178 and 8192 Eighth Line (Premier Gateway Employment Area)”, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT all agency and public comments be referred to staff for further report regarding the disposition of this matter.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- PLD Steeles Avenue Investment LP (Prologis), through their agent Mainline Planning Services Inc., has submitted a Zoning By-law Amendment Application proposing the development of 3 industrial warehouses at 0 Steeles Avenue & 8154, 8170, 8178 and 8192 Eighth Line (Premier Gateway Employment Area).
- To date, Town and external agency staff have identified comments regarding the proposed phasing of the development, natural heritage protection, transportation and access, urban design, site configuration and site servicing.
- Issues with the submitted Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) have also been identified that have overarching impacts for the proposal and other submission materials, which will prevent a complete review of the application from taking place until the SIS has been revised.

- No comments from the public have been received to date.
- The purpose of the Public Meeting is to obtain comments and feedback from the community. Any comments received will be thoroughly reviewed, evaluated, and included in the Final Recommendation Report to Council at a later date.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

The Town has received a Zoning By-law Amendment Application proposing the development of 3 industrial warehouses at 0 Steeles Avenue & 8154, 8170, 8178 and 8192 Eighth Line in the Premier Gateway Phase 1B Employment Area. The Applicant is seeking to phase the approval of the Zoning By-law Amendment in order to allow one of the buildings to advance to construction while issues they believe affect the other two buildings are reviewed further.

1.0 Location & Site Characteristics

The subject lands are located on the north side of Steeles Avenue between Trafalgar Road and Eighth Line in the Premier Gateway Employment Area; see **SCHEDULE 1 – LOCATION MAP**. The lands have an approximate area of 29.6 hectares (73.1 acres) and contain 360 metres (1,181 feet) of frontage on Steeles Avenue, 380 metres of flankage on Trafalgar Road (1,246 feet) and 425 metres (1,394 feet) of flankage on Eighth Line.

The property is currently vacant with natural heritage features in the northwestern and southwestern portions of the lands (aquatic features and related floodplain). Of the total 29.6 hectares, approximately 22 hectares are proposed for development. Surrounding land uses to the subject lands include:

To the North:	Vacant future employment lands (currently used agriculturally); natural heritage features; and Hope Place Centre.
To the East:	Single detached dwellings; vacant future employment lands (currently used agriculturally); and a cemetery across Eighth Line.
To the South:	Toronto Premium Outlets across Steeles Avenue; a gas station and automotive uses at the southwest corner of Steeles Ave. and Trafalgar Rd.; and a cemetery at the southeast corner of Steeles Ave. and Eighth Line.
To the West:	Future employment lands (currently agricultural with farm residences) and a gas station across Trafalgar Road.

2.0 Development Proposal

On June 14, 2021, the Town deemed complete a Zoning By-law Amendment Application (File No. D14ZBA21.012) submitted by PLD Steeles Avenue Investment LP (Prologis), through Mainline Planning Services Inc. (the Applicant). The application is required to obtain the necessary land use approvals to develop the lands for the proposed 3 industrial warehouses; see **SCHEDULE 2 – PROPOSED SITE PLAN & BUILDING ELEVATIONS**.

Further details about the development are outlined below:

Design Elements	Application Proposal
Gross Floor Area	Building DC3 (Phase 1) – 45,480 m ² (489,542 sq. ft.) Building DC2 (Phase 2) – 43,346 m ² (466,572 sq. ft.) Building DC1 (Phase 3) – 33,812 m ² (363,949 sq. ft.)
Height	1 storey (17.5 m)
Parking	806 spaces
Loading Spaces	236 vehicular parking spaces and 286 commercial vehicle waiting spaces
Vehicular Access Points	1 access to Eighth Line for smaller vehicle access only (no large trucks). 1 temporary signalized access to Trafalgar Road for trucks subject to Region of Halton review (to be removed upon access being available to the East/West Collector Road). Possible future 2 nd vehicular access only (no large trucks) to Steeles Avenue subject to Region of Halton review. Future access driveway to the East/West Collector Road for truck access.

The proposed overall site concept plan and a conceptual building elevation (all three building would have similar architecture) are provided for illustrative purposes. See Figures 1 and 2 below:

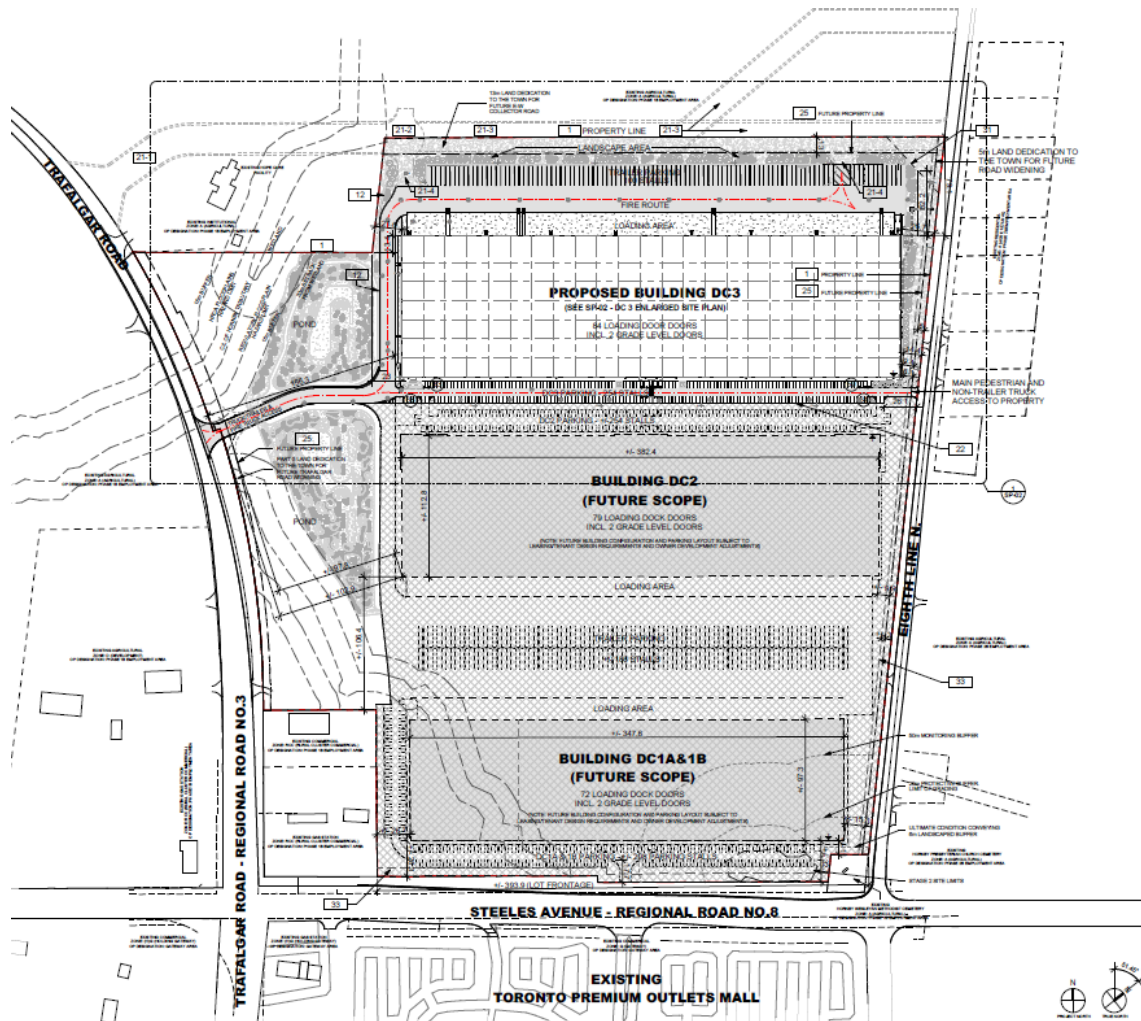


Figure 1



Figure 2

Under Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law 2010-0050 the entirety of the property is zoned Agricultural (A), which does not permit industrial uses. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to rezone the portion of the site proposed for industrial uses from Agricultural (A) to a site-specific Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone with special provisions, which include:

- increasing the maximum building height from 14.0 m to 18.0 m;
- reducing the minimum required landscaped open space from 20% to 15%;
- eliminating the requirement that the number of commercial vehicle waiting spaces cannot exceed the total number of loading bays; and
- eliminating the requirement that not more than 20% of the required vehicle parking spaces are permitted in a yard abutting Steeles Avenue.

The portions of the property proposed for storm water management purposes and natural heritage protection (portions of the west side of the property) are intended to be zoned Conservation Special (O3-1); see **SCHEDULE 3 – DRAFT ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT**.

A list of reports and drawings submitted in support of the applications is attached as **SCHEDULE 4 – SUBMISSION MATERIALS** to this report.

The Applicant has indicated a desire to develop the property in phases, with the northern of the three buildings (Phase 1) occurring first. The Applicant believes that there are fewer site and zoning constraints affecting the northern portion of the property; therefore, they are seeking to phase the approval of their Zoning Amendment application. Should the Zoning By-law Amendment be approved, the proposed buildings would require Site Plan approval. The Applicant has already submitted a Site Plan Application for Phase 1 (File No. D11SPA21.005), which has been under review concurrently with the Zoning By-law Amendment application.

3.0 Planning Context

In Ontario, when reviewing applications looking to amend Zoning By-laws, development proposals are expected to conform with and meet the intent of applicable Provincial, Regional and Municipal policy documents. This section discusses the relevant policy framework that applies to the subject site and proposal.

Provincial Policy Statement

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides broad based policies that promote an appropriate range and mix of employment, including industrial and commercial uses, to meet the long-term needs of residents and make appropriate use of infrastructure to support the development of healthy communities. Policy direction pertaining to employment areas is set out in Section 1.3 of the PPS.

Section 2.1 of the PPS addresses the protection of natural heritage features including a requirement that development not be permitted on adjacent land without studies to determine that there would be no negative impact on the feature.

The proposal is required to be consistent with the relevant policies of the PPS in accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act.

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Growth Plan directs new growth to locations that make efficient use of transportation and servicing infrastructure and sets out general policies for employment and commercial lands. Under the 2019 Growth Plan (with 2020 amendments), the subject lands fall within the new Provincially Significant Employment Zone, which is considered an area of high economic output that is strategically located to provide stable, reliable employment across the Region.

As per Section 3 of the Planning Act, the proposal shall conform and not conflict with the Growth Plan.

Region of Halton Official Plan

The 2009 Regional Official Plan (ROP) designates the subject lands as Urban Area with an Employment Area overlay. Section 76 of the ROP states that the range of permitted uses and creation of lots within the Urban Area are to be in accordance with Local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. The ROP includes a number of objectives that speak to providing an appropriate range and balance of employment uses including industrial, office and retail and institutional uses to meet the long-term needs. More detailed policies for Employment Areas are set out in Section 77.1 of the ROP. Section 89 of the ROP requires all development within the Urban Area to be on full municipal services.

The portion of the subject property that contains natural heritage features are identified as forming part of the Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS). The goal of the Natural Heritage System is to increase the certainty that the biological diversity and ecological function within Halton will be preserved and enhanced for future generations. ROP policies direct that there should be no alteration of any component of the RNHS, unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the natural features or their functions. Section 116.1 of the ROP allows for the boundaries of the RNHS to be refined through the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which could result in additions, deletions and/or boundary adjustments.

Town of Halton Hills Official Plan – Phase 1B Secondary Plan

Under the Town's Official Plan, the property is located within the Premier Gateway Employment Area Phase 1B Secondary Plan area (OPA 31A). This plan identifies most of the subject lands as being designated "Prestige Industrial Area" which permits a wide range of employment related industrial uses including warehouses. This designation generally covers the portion of the property proposed for industrial land uses.

Additional parts of the property are identified as "Natural Heritage System", "Wetland and Headwater Drainage Feature – Potential Relocation", and "Residential Special Policy Area". Policy H5A.8 notes that a Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) is required in support of any complete development application. The natural heritage system limits

are permitted to be refined without an Official Plan Amendment through review of a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment or similar study.

A new Collector Road that would connect Trafalgar Road to Eighth Line is also identified as running generally along the northerly limits of the subject lands under the Secondary Plan.

The Official Plan also states that all new development requiring Planning Act approval shall conform to the Urban Design policies in Section F2 of the Plan (Section D1.4.1). The proposal must also demonstrate conformity with Section H5A.14 of the Secondary Plan and the Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines.



Figure 3

Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law

The subject property is zoned Agricultural (A) under Zoning By-law 2010-0050, as amended which does not permit industrial uses. The Applicant is proposing to rezone the property from Agricultural (A) to a site-specific Corridor Prestige Industrial Zone (M7) Zone and to the Conservation Special Zone (O3-1) Zone to facilitate the proposed development.

4.0 Department and Agency Circulation Comments

The Zoning By-law Amendment Application was circulated to Town departments and external agencies for review. The below sections outline the comments, issues and concerns identified by staff to date.

Planning

- Internal departmental and external agency staff have identified fundamental issues with the Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) submitted in support of the Zoning By-law Amendment application. Given the recommendations of the SIS may impact the locations of different aspects of the development proposal (e.g. buildings, roads, parking areas, stormwater management ponds, etc.) as well as the zoning limits of the proposed M7 and 03-1 Zones, a complete analysis of the development proposal and some of the other submission materials cannot occur until the SIS is revised to address the identified issues; see Conservation Halton and Region of Halton comments below for more information.
- It has been identified by Regional and Town staff that the permanent, primary truck access to the lands must occur from the new East/West Collector Road identified in the Phase 1B Secondary Plan. The SIS must be advanced to a satisfactory stage to allow for proper design of the road, which also requires cooperation of abutting landowners. The direct mid-parcel access to Trafalgar Road proposed by the Applicant would only be allowed by the Region on a temporary basis, but its final location is also dependent on advancement of the SIS. The Applicant, along with other abutting landowners, will be responsible for the design and construction of the East/West Collector Road. The Applicant's current preferred orientation of the roadway is not consistent with the approved Secondary Plan; further discussions on the orientation of the roadway must still occur. An interim solution to only construct half of the road to provide the property with access to Trafalgar Road until the final design is confirmed, may be considered.
- The Applicant is proposing to phase the approval of the Zoning By-law Amendment to allow construction of the northern building to occur first while they continue to work with staff on issues they believe are specific to other areas of the site. While staff do not object to the idea of phasing the approval, truck access to Trafalgar Road and an appropriate stormwater management solution for the northern building needs to be designed and approved first. Trafalgar Road access and stormwater management designs are both dependent on the Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS). The current issues with the SIS prevent staff from appropriately considering options for the phasing of the Zoning By-law Amendment at this time.
- Other issues identified that will require further discussions with the Applicant include:

- Justification and clarification of the site-specific zoning modifications, particularly as it relates to commercial vehicle waiting spaces and outdoor storage.
- Site design pertaining to the location of truck parking and whether it can be moved further to the interior of the site;
- Landscaping improvements, berming and architectural design on the portions of the property adjacent to existing and future public roadways.

Heritage

- Additional visual space is recommended to buffer the abutting cemetery from the proposed southern building.

Urban Design and Recreation & Parks

- Details pertaining to compliance with the Town's Urban Design Guidelines, tree preservation, site plan standards (including landscaping) and cash-in-lieu of parkland will be addressed once the Zoning By-law Amendment application and Site Plan Control application have progressed further.

Engineering

- The initial application submission has been prepared without the inclusion or identification of the required East West Road from Trafalgar Road to Eight Line. Further information is needed on the design of the roadway to inform the storm water management design for the site as the road may require storm sewer connection(s) and accommodation in the storm pond proposed on these lands.
- The SIS and FSR must be amended to show and discuss the full build out of all phases of the property. Through the Site Plan review process, consideration and evaluation of a phased construction approach can occur. Some of the reports and drawings provided in support of the Zoning By-law Amendment do not identify immediate impacts to subsequent phases from works that would be associated with the proposed Phase 1.

Transportation

- Transportation staff continue to review the submission materials including the Traffic Impact Study (TIS). The review is focusing primarily on the need for the East/West Collector Road and its configuration; how to ensure Eighth Line is not used for truck access and general on and off-site transportation matters (TDM, on site maneuvering, pedestrian and cycling improvements, etc.).

Region of Halton

- The Regional review of this proposal is progressing in collaboration with Conservation Halton staff. This review is focusing on matters of Regional

interest such as: conformity with applicable Provincial and Regional policies and standards; phasing of the EIS and SIS; potential impacts to the Regional natural heritage system; potential impacts to archaeological resources; addressing any potential contamination on the subject property; evaluating the proposed municipal servicing in the context of Regional standards and the approved Area Servicing Plan; potential impacts to groundwater and private wells in the vicinity of the property; stormwater management as it relates to potential impacts to Regional Roads; implications to Trafalgar Road (Regional Road 3) and Steeles Avenue (Regional Road 8); review of proposed accesses to Regional Roads and the provision of the east-west collector road.

Conservation Halton

Conservation Halton (CH) staff has noted that the information submitted with the Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) is insufficient to meet all the objectives of an SIS as per the Premier Gateway Phase 1B Scoped Subwatershed Study (SWS) and Secondary Plan. Based on the SIS, CH staff cannot confirm the extent of the area available for development. There are also various aspects of the proposal that are inconsistent with the guiding Secondary Plan. A summary of the preliminary key issues is provided below:

- The SIS should be updated to be completed as one comprehensive study (without phasing) on a sub-catchment basis, irrespective of construction phasing and to include all deliverables and objectives outlined in the Scoped SWS (April 2020), Secondary Plan, and previous agency comments.
- For CH regulated watercourses, the SIS must provide analysis and delineation of natural hazards for the entire subwatershed.
- The SIS should determine detailed alignment and configuration of the East-West Collector Road.
- Additional modelling, floodplain mapping, and erosion controls are required for the entire Hornby Tributary and must be refined through the SIS along with the SWM strategy to control post-development flows to pre-development levels.
- Additional information is needed to assess whether the southern wetland can be relocated, and what buffers required. A feature-based water balance for all wetlands is required and all development must outside of the applicable regulatory allowances and buffers
- Lands within the Natural Heritage System (NHS) should be zoned for protection and placed into public ownership

5.0 Public Comments

As of the date of this report, Planning staff have not received any public comments. The purpose of the Public Meeting is to obtain additional comments and feedback from the community. Any additional comments received from the public will also be reviewed, evaluated, and included in the final Recommendation Report to Council.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have an impact on the Town's Strategic Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement has been conducted as follows:

Public Notification

June 22, 2021:	Notice of Received Application was mailed out to all property owners within 120 m of the subject lands
June 25, 2021:	Signs posted on the subject lands explaining the purpose of the proposed applications
October 19, 2021:	Public Meeting Notice mailed out to property owners within 120 m of the subject lands
October 21, 2021:	Notice of Public Meeting published in the Independent & Free Press
November 11, 2021:	Courtesy Notice of Public Meeting to be published in the Independent & Free Press

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment was considered at the April 30, 2020, Development Review Committee Pre-Consultation Meeting (File No. D00ENQ20.011). The Applicants were provided with preliminary comments from various Town Departments and external agencies at the meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have any financial implications.

Reviewed and approved by,

Jeff Markowiak, Director of Development Review

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development

Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer