



TOWN OF
HALTON HILLS
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REPORT

TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

FROM: Greg Macdonald – Senior Planner, Development Review

DATE: May 20, 2022

REPORT NO.: PD-2022-0034

SUBJECT: Public Meeting for a proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to allow existing private residence rooms to include kitchen and laundry facilities within the Watch Tower site at 13983 Highway 7 (Esquesing)

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2022-0034, dated May 20, 2022, regarding a “Public Meeting for a proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to allow existing private residence rooms to include kitchen and laundry facilities within the Watch Tower site at 13983 Highway 7 (Esquesing)”, 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:

- Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada has submitted an application for a Zoning By-law Amendment proposing to allow existing private residence rooms to include kitchen and laundry facilities within Residence Buildings 1 and 2 on their site at 13983 Highway 7 (Esquesing).
- Staff continues to review the materials submitted in support of the application, although no departmental or agency concerns have been identified at the time of writing of this report.
- No public comments or concerns 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 to allow existing private residence rooms to include kitchen and laundry facilities within the Watch Tower site at 13983 Highway 7 (Esquesing).

1.0 Location & Site Characteristics

The subject lands, municipally known as 13893 Highway 7 (Esquesing), are located on the north side of Highway 7, just outside of the Georgetown Urban Boundary, west of Glen Williams. A small portion of the property also abuts 22 Side Road and Wildwood Road; see **SCHEDULE 1 – LOCATION MAP**. The site has an approximate area of 78.3 hectares (193.5 acres).

The lands currently contain a range of institutional buildings relating to the religious activities of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada. These includes buildings housing production and storage of religious printed materials, administration, recreation, storage and accessory buildings as well as two large residence buildings (Residence 1 and Residence 2 containing a combined total of 284 residence rooms) and a number of much smaller residences. The lands are also used for accessory food production and agricultural uses.

Surrounding land uses to the subject lands include:

- To the North: Rural residential and agricultural lands
- To the East: Hamlet residential lands within Glen Williams
- To the South: Low Density residential lands within Georgetown (south of Hwy. 7)
- To the West: Agricultural lands (west of Hwy. 7)

2.0 Development Proposal

On December 14, 2021, the Town deemed complete Zoning By-law Amendment application D14ZBA22.004 submitted by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, through their agent Korsiak Urban Planning (the Applicant). The application is seeking to obtain the necessary land use approvals to allow the existing private residence rooms within Residences 1 and 2 to include kitchen and laundry facilities. In order to accommodate these renovations a number of existing single rooms within Residence 1 would be combined to create double rooms. As a result of the change, the total number of private rooms combined between Residence 1 and 2 would decrease from 284 to 252 (Residence 1's room count would decrease from 116 to 84 while Residence 2's room count would remain at 168). It is not anticipated that the total number of persons housed within the residences would change; therefore, the Applicant has suggested that parking demand and water and sanitary usage would remain the same as existing. The Applicant has indicated that the purpose of the introduction of the private kitchen and laundry facilities into each private room is to accommodate the changing lifestyle preference of residents who wish to have the flexibility to prepare their

own meals and do their laundry in their own rooms, rather than always utilizing communal food services and laundry facilities, which will still be available; see **SCHEDULE 2 – LOCATION OF RESIDENCES 1 AND 2**.

Under Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law 2010-0050, as amended, the portion of the subject lands containing Residences 1 and 2 is zoned Institutional (I)(45), which permits a range of institutional uses and the existing residence buildings (168 rooms in each building). As per the definitions within site-specific (I)(45) Zone, the on-site residence units are currently only permitted to have communal (i.e. shared) culinary and laundry facilities. The subject Zoning By-law Amendment application seeks to modify the (I)(45) Zone provisions, as identified in **SCHEDULE 3 – DRAFT ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT**, to:

- amend the site-specific definitions to allow for kitchens and laundry facilities within private on-site residence rooms;
- permit a maximum of 252 private rooms on-site (instead of 168 in each building), to reflect that some single rooms would be combined to accommodate the proposed alterations;
- introduce a flat minimum number of 284 parking spaces for the residence buildings (instead of the current 1 space per private room standard) in order to ensure adequate on-site parking is available should additional single rooms be merged in the future; and,
- Other administrative changes to setbacks to recognize the existing location of various on-site accessory buildings.

A list of reports and drawings submitted in support of the applications is attached as **SCHEDULE 4 – SUBMISSION MATERIALS** to this report. Should the Zoning By-law Amendment application be approved the proposed building renovations would require the submission of Building Permits.

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 of housing types that make efficient use of infrastructure and public service facilities as well as institutional uses (including places of worship) to meet long term needs. While major institutional uses are generally to be located within settlement areas, the existing Watch Tower facility is an existing use, which is not proposed to be expanded through the subject application.

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 subject lands are part of the Rural Area. The 2019 Growth Plan contains policies that speak to the provision of a diverse range and mix of housing, employment and other uses that create an urban form that will optimize infrastructure to support the achievement of complete communities. While major institutional uses are generally to be located within settlement areas, the existing Watch Tower facility is an existing use, which is not being expanded through the subject application.

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 lands are designated as Agricultural Area in the 2009 Regional Official Plan (ROP) with a portion of the property also falling within the Regional Natural Heritage System (NHS). Existing uses are listed as permitted uses within both the Agricultural Area and the Regional Natural Heritage System designations (sections 100(2) and 117.1(3) respectively).

Town of Halton Hills Official Plan

The subject lands are designated “Major Institutional Area” on Schedule 1 – Land Use Plan of the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan. It is the objective of the designation to recognize the existing major institutional complex adjacent to the Georgetown Urban Area (i.e. the Watch Tower facility). This designation permits a range of institutional uses including buildings used for educational/religious instruction and administrative offices as well as complementary uses such as residential accommodation for persons carrying out a permitted use.

Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law

The portion of the subject property containing Residences 1 and 2 is zoned Institutional (I)(45) under Zoning By-law 2010-0050, as amended, which permits the range of existing institutional uses and residence buildings associated with the Watch Tower facility. The Applicant is proposing to modify provisions of the site-specific (I)(45) Zone to allow for kitchen and laundry facilities in the existing private rooms located within Residences 1 and 2 (and other related modifications), as outlined earlier in this report.

The remainder of the subject lands are zoned Protected Countryside (PC). No amendments or alterations are proposed to this portion of the site through the subject application.

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

- Staff continue to evaluate the proposal to ensure it complies with the applicable land use planning policies.

Region of Halton

- Regional staff are reviewing the submitted Water Usage and Sanitary Discharge Report to determine whether there may be a need for a Functional Servicing Report and Wastewater Assessment (to ensure the existing wastewater system won't be impacted by the proposed alterations).

5.0 Public Comments

As of the date of this report, Planning staff have not received any public comments or concerns. 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:

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| May 18, 2022: | Notice of Received Application and Notice of Public Meeting were mailed out to all property owners within 120 m of the subject lands |
| May 18, 2022: | Sign posted on the subject lands explaining the purpose of the applications |

May 19, 2022: Notice of Public Meeting published in the Independent & Free Press

June 9, 2022: Courtesy Notice of Public Meeting to be published in the Independent & Free Press

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, Chief Administrative Officer