



REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Planning, Public Works and Transportation Committee

REPORT FROM: Tony Boutassis, Senior Planner – Development Review

DATE: January 6, 2020

REPORT NO.: PD-2020-0005

RE: Recommendation Report for proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to permit accessory outdoor storage on a portion of 12144 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area)

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2020-0005 dated January 6, 2020, regarding the “Recommendation Report for proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to permit accessory outdoor storage on a portion of 12144 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area)”, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Town of Halton Hills Official Plan Amendment No. 39, which amends the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan, for the lands municipally known as 12144 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area), as generally shown in SCHEDULE 3 – OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT, be adopted as an exempt Local Official Plan Amendment;

AND FURTHER THAT the Zoning By-law Amendment, to amend Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law 57-91, as amended by By-law 00-138, for the lands municipally known as 12144 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area), as generally shown in SCHEDULE 4 – ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT, be approved;

AND FURTHER THAT in accordance with Section 34 (17) of the Planning Act, no further notice is determined to be necessary.

BACKGROUND:

1.0 Purpose of the Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with recommendations concerning the final disposition of Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted

by Toromont Industries (the Applicant) to permit accessory outdoor storage on a portion of the lands municipally known as 12144 Steeles Avenue in the Premier Gateway Employment Area.

1.0 Location & Site Characteristics:

The lands at 12144 Steeles Avenue are known as the TransCanada Energy property and are occupied by a power plant. The Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) applications are intended to apply to a vacant portion of the property located at the southeast corner of Steeles Avenue and Westbridge Drive. This part of the property recently received Consent approval (File No. D10CON19.004H) to create a new lot (subject lands) to be sold to Toromont Industries.

The new lot subject to the OPA/ZBA applications is located on the south side of Steeles Avenue, generally east of Westbridge Drive and north of Highway 401; see **SCHEDULE 1 – LOCATION MAP**. The irregularly shaped lot will have an approximate area of 5.39 hectares (13.32 acres) and have roughly 92 metres (302 feet) of frontage along Steeles Avenue and also contain frontage on Westbridge Drive.

Surrounding land uses to the intended property include:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| To the North: | Rural residential uses |
| To the East: | TransCanada Energy Generating Station, a woodlot and additional industrial lands |
| To the West: | Warehouse and distribution centres |
| To the South: | Highway 401 and a truck inspection station |

2.0 Development Proposal:

As identified earlier, 12144 Steeles Avenue recently received approval of a Consent application to create a new lot. Once the Applicant has cleared the conditions of approval, the lot can formally be created and transferred to Toromont.

On November 15, 2019, the Town deemed complete Official Plan Amendment (File No. D09OPA19.002) and Zoning By-law Amendment (File No. D14ZBA19.008) applications submitted by the Applicant. The applications seek to obtain the necessary land use approvals to permit accessory outdoor storage on the south portion of the intended new lot.

Through a future Site Plan application, the Applicant is proposing to construct a 7,850m² (84,497 sq. ft.) manufacturing facility with accessory office space intended to accommodate the relocation of their corporate head office; see **SCHEDULE 2 – SITE PLAN CONCEPT**. The Applicant manufactures industrial and recreational refrigeration equipment for use in the food, dairy, cold storage and beverage sectors as well as artificial ice and snow surfaces for hockey, curling, skating and skiing.

The proposed operation of the site would include outdoor storage of finished products (compression units on skids) awaiting shipment; racked materials to be used in the manufacturing process; and, packages. It is estimated by the Applicant that roughly six (6) finished products may be stored on site at any given time, as they are built for specific orders and then shipped. The maximum height of the products stored outdoors is 3 metres. The proposed outdoor storage area would be located behind and to the south of the anticipated manufacturing facility and to the north of Highway 401.

The Official Plan Amendment seeks to apply a site specific Special Policy Area designation to the lands to permit the accessory outdoor storage component as the manufacturing facility and accessory office space are already permitted uses; see **SCHEDULE 3 – OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT**.

Additionally, to accommodate the accessory outdoor storage use, the Applicant is proposing to apply a site specific 401 Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone to the lands; see **SCHEDULE 4 – ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT**. Through the Zoning Amendment, a new Holding (H) Provision will also be applied to the entirety of the newly created lot. The conditions of this new Holding (H) Provision are discussed later in this report.

Should the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications be approved, the proposed development will require the submission of a Site Plan application.

COMMENTS:

This section of the report will identify, analyze and respond to key matters of interest associated with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications. The section is broken down into the following three subsections:

- 1.0 Planning Context and Policy Framework
- 2.0 Town Department and External Agency Comments
- 3.0 Public Comments

1.0 Planning Context and Policy Framework:

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications against the relevant Provincial, Regional and Town policy framework to determine conformity with the applicable policies and guidelines.

1.1 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS):

The 2014 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. The proposal is required to be consistent with the relevant policies of the PPS in accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act.

Planning staff is of the opinion that the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications are consistent with the policies of the 2014 PPS.

1.2 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, 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.

Planning staff is of the opinion that the proposed development is in conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

1.3 Region of Halton Official Plan (ROP):

The 2009 Regional Official Plan 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. With regards to the Employment Area Overlay, 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.

Regional staff has confirmed that the applications are in conformity with the ROP.

1.4 Town of Halton Hills Official Plan (HHOP):

The subject lands are located within the Town's Premier Gateway Employment Area and are designated Prestige Industrial Area. The goal of the Prestige Industrial Area designation is that the predominant use of land will be for employment uses, located in well-designed buildings and structures established on landscaped lots in a visually attractive environment.

The Prestige Industrial Area designation permits a number of employment type uses including manufacturing and warehousing facilities as well as business and professional office uses; however, accessory outdoor storage is not permitted. To accommodate the accessory outdoor storage on the southern portion of the newly created property the Official Plan Amendment seeks to change the designation to a site specific Prestige Industrial Special Policy Area.

Historically outdoor storage has not been permitted in the Premier Gateway because it is seen as having the potential to create unsightly views, especially from Steeles Avenue and Highway 401, and considered incompatible with the vision for the prestige industrial nature of the Gateway. Planning staff generally agrees with the approach to not permit outdoor storage in the Gateway. However, staff is supportive of the proposed

site specific Official Plan Amendment to allow accessory outdoor storage on this individual property for the following reasons:

- Toromont's manufacturing and office facility is the type of employment use that is desirable for the Town and the Premier Gateway. The accessory outdoor storage represents a small component of their operation;
- The accessory outdoor storage would be limited to finished products and some racked materials used in the manufacturing process. The products and materials would be no taller than 3 metres in height and would not remain outside for long periods of time;
- The portion of the site dedicated to outdoor storage is limited in size and located behind the proposed industrial building;
- The subject lands provide a number of existing conditions that will provide natural screening of the outdoor storage area from both Steeles Avenue and the 401 that do not exist on most properties in the Gateway. A relatively large woodlot on the TransCanada property will be maintained that will obstruct views of the site from Steeles Avenue, while an existing berm and other natural vegetation exists adjacent to Highway 401 to provide screening. Toromont has agreed that through the Site Plan process they will also supplement the existing screening, where needed, to further ensure the outdoor storage is not visible from either roadway.

Staff's support for the proposed Official Plan Amendment is specific to Toromont's proposal. For this reason, the permission for accessory outdoor storage on this site will be restricted to a manufacturing/office use only to ensure that the permission could not be used by a less desirable operation should Toromont's plans to relocate their office to this site not occur for some reason.

1.5 Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law 00-138:

The subject lands are zoned 401 Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone under Zoning By-law 00-138. The M7 Zone permits a wide range employment type uses including manufacturing facilities and office uses but prohibits outdoor storage. The Applicant is proposing to re-zone the property to a site specific 401 Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone to permit accessory outdoor storage.

Staff supports the proposed Zoning Amendment for the same reasons the site specific Official Plan Amendment is seen as appropriate.

A Holding (H) Provision also applies to a portion of the subject lands that is subject to the following provisions:

- an appropriate Site Plan Agreement has been executed;
- payment of the required securities has occurred; and,
- the ability to connect to Regional water and wastewater services.

Through the Zoning Amendment, the Holding (H) Provision will be extended across the entire new lot and be modified to also include the following provision:

- The appropriate studies and actions have been undertaken to address the requirements of the Region's Protocol for Reviewing Development Applications with Respect to Contaminated or Potentially Contaminated Sites, to the satisfaction of the Region of Halton.

2.0 Town Department and External Agency Comments:

The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications were circulated to Town departments and external agencies for review and comment on November 21, 2019. Staff from various departments and agencies have completed their review and indicated that they have no concerns or objections with the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments.

3.0 Public Comments:

The development proposal was presented to the public by way of Report No. PLS-2019-0079 through a Statutory Public Meeting on December 9, 2019. There were approximately two (2) interested persons in attendance at the meeting, one (1) of whom spoke at the meeting and also submitted a letter outlining their position.

The following sections outline the individual's comments and provide a staff response:

3.1 Location and Function of Outdoor Storage:

The member of the public indicated that the outdoor storage should be limited to the southern portion of the site (between Highway 401 and the proposed manufacturing facility) and that the outdoor storage should be directly linked to the use of the manufacturing facility.

Staff Response

The Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments have been prepared so that the outdoor storage is linked directly with a manufacturing/office use and the Zoning Amendment requires the outdoor storage to be situated behind the proposed building.

3.2 Other Issues and Concerns:

The member of the public also outlined the following site specific issues and concerns:

- Screening of the outdoor storage;
- Limiting noise associated with the use of the outdoor storage (e.g. forklifts, reverse alarms);
- Limiting light spill-over associated with the outdoor storage;
- Restricting traffic access to Westbridge Drive;
- Widening the landscape buffer along Steeles Ave. to incorporate existing mature trees.

Staff Response

The above issues are all items that Town staff have flagged and will address through the Site Plan process. However, Toromont has confirmed that they have every intention of developing the site in a way that will address these concerns.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The proposed development is most closely aligned with Strategic Direction C – Foster a Prosperous Economy, the goal of which is:

To maintain and enhance the economic vitality of the Town through the provision of a wide range of opportunities for economic development.

The Strategic Direction is to be achieved as it relates to this application in part through Strategic Objectives:

- C1.** *To ensure an adequate supply of employment lands to provide flexibility and options for the business community and provide a range of job opportunities.*
- C4.** *To protect strategic employment lands from conversions to non-employment uses.*
- C7.** *To promote the Town's strategic location in the Greater Golden Horseshoe for economic development purposes.*
- C8.** *To facilitate the establishment of a competitive business environment that is easily able to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities.*

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate financial impact to the Town budgets as a result of this application.

CONSULTATION:

Planning staff has consulted with the appropriate Town Departments and the Region of Halton in the preparation of this Report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications were presented to the Public through a Statutory Public Meeting on December 9, 2019 (Report No. PLS-2019-0079).

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life. The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy's implementation.

This report supports the Environmental Health and Economic Prosperity pillars of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is Very Good.

Compliance with the Town's Green Development Standards will be addressed through the approval of the required Site Plan application for the proposed manufacturing facility and accessory office space. The application of the Green Development Standards to this project will help achieve energy and water efficiencies with other sustainable objectives.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Public Notice of Council's decision regarding the passage of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments will be completed in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

CONCLUSION:

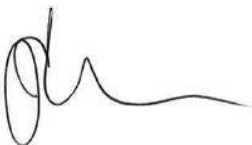
Staff has completed our review of the proposal to allow accessory outdoor storage on a portion of 12144 Steeles Avenue. Relevant policies, supporting documentation and public comments were all considered and staff is of the opinion that the proposal has merit and should be supported.

For these reasons, Planning staff recommends that Council approve the Official Plan Amendment as generally shown in **SCHEDULE 3** of this Report and also approve the Zoning By-law Amendment generally shown in **SCHEDULE 4** of this Report.

Reviewed and Approved by,



Jeff Markowiak, Manager of Development Review



John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development



Jane Diamanti, Acting Chief Administrative Officer