

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **PROPOSAL:**

An application for rezoning has been submitted in order to permit the following uses on the former Pinecrest Public School site:

- Construct 19 row dwelling units on the vacant northerly portion of the property;
- Convert the former school building into one of the following:
  - i) 24 apartment dwelling units; or,
  - ii) In addition to Institutional uses, neighbourhood commercial uses to include personal service shop, medical office, professional office and service shop; or,
  - iii) A mixed-use building combining apartment units and neighbourhood commercial/institutional uses as described above.

### **Existing Zoning:** “I”, Institutional

The property is currently zoned “I”, Institutional under [Zoning By-law 2010-100Z](#), which permits institutional uses as follows:

Children’s home, a day care centre, a place of worship, a hospital, a private club, a non-profit or charitable institution, a group home type 1, a group home type 2, a special needs facility, a recreation and community centre, an arena, a public museum, a public library, a public business, a public fire hall, a public or private school other than a trade school, or any public use other than a public utility.

A special needs facility is defined as housing, including dedicated facilities, that are designed to accommodate individuals with specific needs and includes a crisis residence, long term care facilities and retirement homes.

### **Requested Zoning:** “I(Special)”, Institutional Special

The proposed zoning would allow all uses permitted in the “I”, Institutional zone, as well as a mix of residential and neighbourhood commercial uses.

### **Location and Site Description:**

PINs 73505-0560 & 73505-0782, Parcels 27211 & 16000 S.E.S., Lots 23, 24, 25 & 45, Plan M-347 in Lot 7, Concession 2, Township of Hanmer (1650 Dominion Drive, Val Therese)

The subject property comprises the former Pinecrest Public School on Dominion Drive. The area is fully serviced by municipal water and sanitary sewer. Dominion Drive is designated as a Collector Road and is constructed to a rural standard at this location. Lillian Street and Larocque Avenue are Local Roads also constructed to a rural standard. The closest public transit stop is located on MR80 just north of Dominion Drive, an approximate 130-metre walking distance from the subject property (Route 105).

Total area is 1.22 ha, with 64 metres of frontage on Dominion Drive and a depth of 207 metres. The site is occupied by a former elementary school with 2,033 m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area. Building height is one-storey with the exception of the gymnasium. The northerly portion of the site forms an open space area that functioned as a school yard and playing field. Parking areas are located in the front, rear and westerly corner side yards.

Three (3) single detached dwellings directly abut the northerly limit of the property. Single detached dwellings also comprise the predominant use in the surrounding neighbourhood, with the exception of a warehouse building on Lillian Street that is connected to King Sportswear.

### **Public Consultation:**

The statutory notice of the public hearing was provided by newspaper along with a courtesy mail-out to property owners and tenants within a minimum of 120 metres of the property.

The applicant was advised of the City's policy recommending that applicants consult with their neighbours, ward councillor and key stakeholders to inform area residents on the application prior to the public hearing.

The owner held a public open house on Wed., October 23, 2019 between 6 and 7:30 pm in the school gymnasium.

As of the date of this report, one (1) phone call seeking clarification has been received by Planning Services.

### **POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:**

The property is subject to the following policy and regulatory framework:

- [2014 Provincial Policy Statement](#)
- [2011 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario](#)
- [Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury, 2006](#)
- [Zoning By-law 2010-100Z](#)

Provincial Policy Statements and geographically specific Provincial Plans, along with municipal Official Plans, provide a policy framework for planning and development in the Province. This framework is implemented through a range of land use controls such as zoning by-laws, plans of subdivision and site plans.

### **2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS):**

Municipalities in the Province of Ontario are required under Section 3 of the [Planning Act](#) to ensure that decisions affecting planning matters are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

Under Section 1.1.3 of the PPS, settlement areas are the focus of growth and redevelopment. A mix of densities and residential uses is encouraged, provided sufficient infrastructure is in place to support development. Opportunities for intensification within built-up areas are promoted taking into account existing building stock and the suitability of existing or planned infrastructure. New development should occur adjacent to the existing built-up area and shall have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities.

Under Section 1.4, planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet the projected needs of current and future residents of the regional market area. All forms of housing shall be facilitated.

### **2011 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (GPNO):**

Municipalities in the Province of Ontario are required under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* to ensure that decisions affecting planning matters conform with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

The GPNO identifies Greater Sudbury as an Economic and Service Hub, which shall accommodate a significant portion of future population and employment growth and allow a diverse mix of land uses.

### **Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury:**

#### **Living Area 1**

The subject land is designated as Living Area 1, which permits a range of residential uses and neighbourhood-based institutional uses such as a retirement home.

In reviewing applications for rezoning in Living Areas, the following criteria under Section 3.2.1 of the Official Plan are to be considered:

- a. the site is suitable in terms of size and shape to accommodate the proposed density and building form;
- b. the proposed development is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood in terms of scale, massing, height, siting, setbacks, and the location of parking and amenity areas;
- c. adequate on-site parking, lighting, landscaping and amenity areas are provided; and,
- d. the impact of traffic on local streets is minimal.

#### **Residential intensification**

Section 2.3.3 of the Plan addresses residential intensification in settlement areas. Intensification will be encouraged on sites that are no longer viable for the purpose for which they were intended such as former commercial, industrial and institutional sites. It will also be encouraged where the present use is maintained but the addition of residential uses can be added in a complementary manner.

The following criteria, amongst other matters, may be used to evaluate applications for intensification:

- a. the suitability of the site in terms of the size and shape of the lot, soil conditions, topography and drainage;
- b. compatibility with the existing and planned character of the area;
- c. the provision of on-site landscaping, fencing, planting and other measures to lessen any impact the proposed development may have on the character of the area;
- d. the availability of existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- e. the provision of adequate ingress/egress, off-street parking and loading facilities, and safe and convenient vehicular circulation;
- f. the impact of traffic generated by the proposed development on the road network and surrounding land uses;
- g. the availability of existing or planned, or potential to enhance, public transit and active transportation infrastructure;
- h. the level of sun-shadowing and wind impact on the surrounding public realm;
- i. impacts of the proposed development on surrounding natural features and areas and cultural heritage resources;
- j. the relationship between the proposed development and any natural or man-made hazards; and,
- k. the provision of any facilities, services and matters if the application is made pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act.

#### Surplus institutional buildings

Under Section 4.4, rezoning applications related to the conversion of surplus institutional buildings and the rezoning of vacant lands held by institutions shall be considered based on the following criteria:

- a. the need for such lands or buildings for other public uses, and their long-term value to the community;
- b. the compatibility of the proposed uses with surrounding land uses and the intent of the policies in this Official Plan with respect to the proposed uses;
- c. for conversion to residential uses, the appropriateness of the proposed density; and,
- d. the policies of Sections 2.3.2 (Settlement Areas), 11.3.2 (Land use policies to support transit needs) and 11.8 (Accessibility), and Chapters 13.0 Heritage Resources and 14.0 Urban Design.

#### **Zoning By-law 2010-100Z:**

Various site-specific relief is required in order to accommodate redevelopment as proposed. In particular, parking relief is needed if the school is to be partially or entirely converted to commercial/institutional uses. Given that the existing zoning is to be retained, variances are required for rear and interior side yard setbacks, which is 10 metres under Institutional zoning. The location of the existing school building is legal non-complying.

The standards applied to row dwellings under “R3”, Medium Density Residential zoning should be implemented for the row dwellings proposed for the northerly portion of the site, including privacy yards, required courts, planting strips and building offsets.

### **Site Plan Control:**

The development will be subject to Site Plan Control if this application is approved.

### **Department/Agency Review:**

Development Engineering indicated that more detailed requirements related to servicing would be addressed at the site plan stage if this application is approved.

Traffic and Transportation Section has noted that the roads are not constructed to an urban standard. Concern was also expressed about the extent of parking relief required if the school were to be entirely converted to commercial/institutional uses. As a condition of development, the owner shall be required to urbanize the north side of Dominion Drive between Larocque Avenue and MR80. This requirement can be implemented at the site plan stage.

### **PLANNING ANALYSIS:**

#### **Land use compatibility**

##### **a) Density**

A total of 43 dwelling units would be constructed if the school were to be entirely converted to apartment units. The resultant residential density is calculated at 36 dwelling units per hectare, which is the maximum density permitted in low density residential areas under the Official Plan.

Density requirements are also set out in the Zoning By-law, which requires a minimum 150 m<sup>2</sup> of lot area for each row dwelling unit and 110 m<sup>2</sup> of lot area for each apartment unit. A total of 5,490 m<sup>2</sup> of lot area is therefore required where 12,200 m<sup>2</sup> of lot area is provided.

The intensity of use as represented by the resultant density is therefore appropriate given the location in a low density neighbourhood.

##### **b) Built form**

The owner is proposing the adaptive reuse of the surplus school building. No major expansion of the existing building is proposed. The remainder of the property will be developed for one-storey row dwelling units that will front onto Lillian Street and Larocque Avenue. The lands are not being subdivided into lots for street townhouse dwellings and will remain as one property. One servicing connection is therefore permitted.

Given that each row dwelling will have direct driveway access to a public road, it is recommended that the driveways for each pair of units be paired and centred at the common wall to mitigate the impact of multiple driveway entrances on a road constructed to a rural standard.

Site-specific relief is required for 10-metre setbacks applied under Institutional zoning. Although the owner wishes to retain Institutional as the base zoning, the provisions applied to row dwellings under R3 zoning are the more appropriate standards to be

implemented. It is recommended that the site-specific zoning indicate that the row dwellings shall be subject to the provisions of the R3 zone in regards to privacy yards, required courts, planting strips and building offsets.

c) Buffering of low density housing

The concept plan indicates a proposed setback of 1.8 metres abutting Lots 26 and 44 of Plan M-347, which are the single detached dwellings abutting the northerly limits of the subject land. This is equivalent to the minimum width of a planting strip installed in conjunction with an opaque fence, which is required where a medium density residential use abuts an R1-5 zone. In order to address compatibility with existing uses, it is recommended that the maximum building height be limited to one storey for the row dwelling units that directly abut Lots 26 and 44, Plan M-347.

The setback for Lot 43, Plan M-347 is 16.5 metres, a portion of which will form the privacy yards of the row dwellings fronting onto Lillian Street. The setback is significant and there are no concerns related to compatibility. Furthermore, a planting strip is required for screening and buffering along all lot lines abutting the R1-5 zone.

d) Neighbourhood commercial uses

The owner is seeking to increase the viability of the redevelopment project by including a limited range of neighbourhood commercial uses, including personal service shop, medical office, professional office and service shop. A day care centre is permitted as a type of institutional use under the existing zoning.

Personal service shops such as beauty salons, barber shops, tailors, dressmaking shops and laundromats are neighbourhood commercial services that are deemed appropriate in a residential setting. This is consistent with the Official Plan, which permits local commercial uses in Living Areas. Former school buildings are also well-suited for office conversions, provided sufficient on-site parking is provided.

Similar to a personal service shop, a service shop may also serve the convenience needs of local residents. A service shop is defined as an establishment where articles or goods are repaired or serviced, such as watch repair. It does not include vehicles or industrial equipment.

### Parking

In order to provide flexibility in the redevelopment to the site, the owner is requesting consideration of three development scenarios, two of which include a limited range of neighbourhood commercial uses. The parking requirement varies widely depending on the intensity of use, and therefore forms the basis of review.

*Scenario 1:* convert school to 24 apartment units and construct 19 rows dwellings on the remainder

No parking relief is required under this scenario whereby the entire property is developed for residential uses. A total of 68 parking spaces are provided where 65 would be required based on a standard of 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit. Each row dwelling unit would have a garage (19 spaces), with additional parking provided adjacent to the school building (49 spaces).

*Scenario 2:* convert entire school to neighbourhood commercial/institutional uses and construct 19 row dwellings on the remainder

This is a more problematic scenario, as it would require significant parking relief, essentially reducing the standard in half. Utilizing gross floor area in lieu of net floor area, a total of 130 parking spaces would be required where 68 are provided, which requires a variance for 62 parking spaces. This degree of parking relief is not appropriate at this location, which is a suburban residential area with no off-site parking options. The potential spillover effect onto adjacent streets could negatively impact the neighbourhood by becoming a nuisance factor. Furthermore, the roads are not constructed to an urban standard.

*Scenario 3:* convert school to a mixed-use building and construct 19 row dwellings on the remainder

The owner has not provided a breakdown of the floor area allocated to commercial/institutional uses and the number of dwelling units should the school be converted to a mixed-use building. The analysis is therefore based on the amount of commercial space that could be accommodated based on the availability of on-site parking. The proposed commercial uses are intended to be small-scale with a focus on neighbourhood services, such as a personal service shop or medical office.

Allocating 500 m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area to commercial uses, with the remainder of the building converted to apartment units, would allow a viable mix of uses that could be accommodated by the limited parking on the site. Under this scenario, approximately 81 parking spaces would be required for the entire site where 68 are provided, assuming that the remainder of the building could be converted to 18 apartment units based on the estimated size of a typical unit. The final layout of the building may result in a lower parking requirement, depending on the net floor area calculations and the actual number of apartments installed, as determined at site plan stage.

It is therefore recommended that a maximum of 500 m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area allocated to commercial use be permitted, to include personal service shop, medical office, professional office and service shop. As a comparison, this is more than three times the floor area typically permitted for local commercial uses under the Official Plan (maximum 150 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space per location).

### Local road improvements

Local roads in this area are not constructed to an urban standard. There are no sidewalks, curbs or storm sewers. Drainage is conveyed through open ditches, some of which are quite shallow. Given these existing conditions, the owner was required to submit a stormwater management report as part of a complete application. Staff are satisfied that drainage can be adequately addressed at the site plan stage based on their initial review of the report.

Through the pre-consultation process, it was determined that a Traffic Impact Study was not required. There were no specific concerns expressed by Traffic and Transportation Section related to local traffic impacts given the former use of the property. However, there is concern related to inadequate on-site parking under the scenario whereby the school is entirely converted to neighbourhood commercial/institutional uses.

Traffic and Transportation Section is requesting that the owner upgrade the north side of Dominion Drive from Larocque Avenue to Municipal Road 80 to an urban standard. This will provide direct and safe access to the transit stop on MR80, located just north of Dominion Drive. Staff advised that the raised paved shoulder on the west side of MR80 is maintained year-round and functions as a sidewalk. Furthermore, the construction of a sidewalk on the east side of MR80 has commenced and is expected to be completed next year. This requirement can be implemented as part of the Site Plan Control Agreement.

#### Official Plan conformity

The proposal conforms to the Official Plan based on the following observations:

- Municipal services are adequate, including sewage capacity, water pressure and fire flows;
- The residential density is appropriate for the location and conforms to Official Plan policies related to low density areas;
- Low density development includes townhouses under the Phase 1 amendments to the Official Plan;
- Traffic generation would not exceed the former school use;
- Matters related to parking, lighting, landscaping and amenity areas will be addressed at site plan stage;
- The site is sufficiently large to accommodate the proposed uses and provide adequate on-site parking, provided the commercial uses are limited in size; and,
- Public transit is available within comfortable walking distance.

#### 2014 Provincial Policy Statement

The application addresses several key policies of the PPS, as outlined in the Policy and Regulatory Framework section of this report. The subject property is located within settlement area boundaries in a fully serviced area designated for development. The proposal is a form of adaptive reuse that takes into account existing underutilized building stock and presents an alternative to demolition or dereliction. As an infill development, the project will contribute towards residential intensification targets required under the PPS. Furthermore, existing infrastructure is adequate to support development including sewer and water services. A mix of uses is proposed, consistent with the policies applied to new development in designated growth areas.

The application is consistent with the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement.



### 2011 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario

The proposal would expand the range of housing accommodation available across all areas of the City, in keeping with Greater Sudbury's designation as an Economic and Service Hub under the GPNO. This is particularly applicable to the Valley East Urban Area, where historically the emphasis has been on single residential development.

The application conforms to the 2011 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Planning Services recommends that the application for rezoning be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the Resolution section of this report