



Staff Report for Council Public Meeting

Date of Meeting: May 27, 2025
Report Number: SRPBS.25.038

Department: Planning and Building Services
Division: Development Planning

Subject: **SRPBS.25.038 - Request for Comments –
Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment
Applications – Centerfield Properties Inc. – City
Files OPA-24-0003 and ZBLA-24-0005**

Owner:

Centerfield Properties Inc.
401 Bowes Road
Concord, Ontario
L4K 1K2

Agent:

KLM Planning Partners Inc.
64 Jardin Drive
Concord, Ontario
L4K 3P3

Location:

Legal Description: Block 68, Registered Plan 65M-4696
Municipal Address: 0 Longworth Avenue

Purpose:

A request for comments concerning proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications to permit a mid-rise, high density mixed-use residential/commercial development on the subject lands.

Recommendation:

- a) **That Staff Report SRPBS.25.038 with respect to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by Centerfield Properties Inc. for lands known as Block 68, Registered Plan 65M-4696 (Municipal Address: 0 Longworth Avenue), City Files OPA-24-0003 and ZBLA-24-0005, be received**

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for information purposes only and that all comments be referred back to staff.

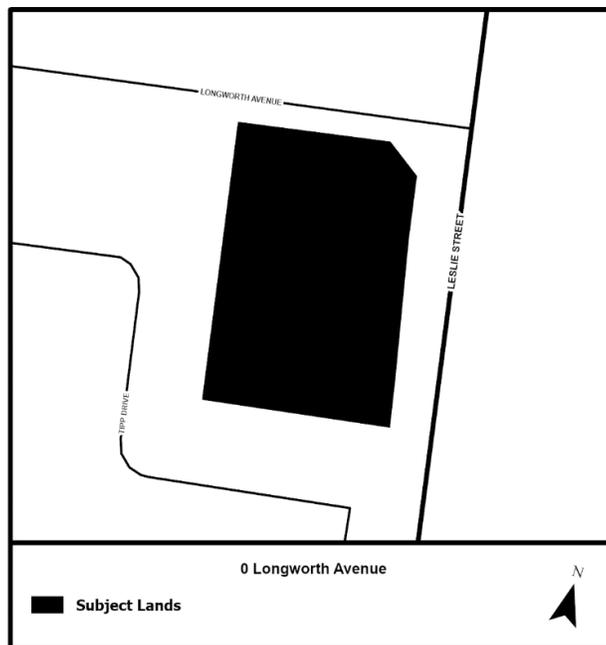
Contact Persons:

- Giuseppe Russo, Planner II, 905-771-2403
- Deborah Giannetta, Director of Development 905-771-5542
- Gus Galanis, Commissioner, Planning and Building Services, 905-771-2465

Report Approval:

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

Location Map:



Key Messages:

- the applicant is seeking approval of Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications to permit a mid-rise, high density mixed-use residential/commercial development to be comprised of two (2) five (5) storey buildings at a density of 2.03 Floor Space Index (FSI), containing a total of 201 apartment dwelling units, 779.8 square metres (8,393.70 square feet) of commercial space at-grade, and 371 parking spaces on its land holdings; and,

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- the purpose of this report is to seek comments from Council and the public with respect to the subject applications, pursuant to the statutory Public Meeting and associated notice requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Background:

The subject Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications were received by the City on August 8, 2024, and subsequently deemed to be complete on December 5, 2024. The applications and supporting materials were circulated to relevant City departments and external agencies for review and comment. The purpose of this report is to seek comments from Council and the public with respect to the subject development applications, pursuant to the statutory Public Meeting and associated notice requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Discussion:

Site Location and Adjacent Uses

The subject lands are located at the southeast corner of Leslie Street and Longworth Avenue within the West Gormley Community. The lands have a lot frontage of 88.95 metres (291.83 feet) along Longworth Avenue, 108.04 metres (354.46 feet) along Leslie Street, and a total lot area of 0.95 hectares (2.35 acres). Surrounding land uses include Longworth Avenue to the north beyond which are single detached and townhouse dwellings, Leslie Street to the east beyond which are agricultural lands within the Countryside area of the Oak Ridges Moraine, and single detached and townhouse dwellings to the south and west. Within the vicinity of the subject lands is the Oak Ridges Corridor Conservation Reserve and associated recreation trails, Gormley Go Station, and the Islamic Society of York which is subject to applications for Zoning By-law Amendment, draft Plan of Subdivision and draft Plan of Condominium which currently under review to permit a high density mixed-use development (City Files D02-22006, SUB-22-0003, and CON-22-0001).

Development Proposal

The applicant is seeking Council's approval of its Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications to permit the construction of a mid-rise, high density mixed-use residential/commercial development to be comprised of two (2) five (5) storey buildings at a density of 2.03 FSI, containing 201 apartment dwelling units, 779.8 square metres (8,394 square feet) of commercial space at grade, and 371 parking spaces on its land holdings. The proposal includes indoor and outdoor amenity space, including an outdoor rooftop patio proposed for each building. Parking spaces are to be provided at-grade and in a one (1) and a half level underground parking garage. Vehicular access to the site is to be provided from Longworth Avenue at the northwest corner of the site (refer to Maps 5 to 7). The following is a summary table outlining the relevant statistics of the applicant's development proposal based on the plans and drawings submitted to the City:

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- **Lot Area** 0.95 hectares (2.35 acres)
- **Lot Frontage (Leslie St.)** 108.04 metres (354.46 feet)
- **Lot Frontage (Longworth Ave.)** 88.95 metres (291.83 feet)
- **Total Number of Units:** 201 units
- **Density:** 2.03 FSI
- **Total Gross Floor Area:** 19,259.1 sq metres (207,303 sq. feet)
 - **Residential Area:** 18,479.3 sq metres (198,910 sq. feet)
 - **Commercial Area:** 779.8 sq metres (8,394 sq. feet)
- **Building Height:** 5 storeys and 19.45 metres (62.81 feet)
- **Total Parking Spaces:** 371
 - **Residential:** 284
 - **Visitor:** 50
 - **Commercial:** 37
 - **Bicycle:** 135
- **Total Amenity Space:** 1,118 sq. metres (12,034 sq. feet)
 - **Indoor:** 424.10 sq. metres (4,565 sq. feet)
 - **Outdoor:** 693.90 sq. metres (7,469 sq. feet)

Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications

The applicant is seeking Council's approval of its Official Plan Amendment to redesignate the subject lands within the West Gormley Secondary Plan from **Neighbourhood Commercial** to **Residential Mixed Use** and to add site-specific exceptions to permit the proposed high density mid-rise mixed-use development. The site-specific policies proposed by the applicant are as follows (refer to Appendix "A"):

- to permit high density, mid-rise residential and commercial uses;
- to permit a maximum building height of five (5) storeys;
- to permit outdoor amenity space on the rooftops; and,
- to permit underground and surface level parking.

The related Zoning By-law Amendment application would rezone the subject lands from **Neighbourhood Commercial (NC) Zone** under By-law 54-15, as amended, to **Residential Mixed Use (RM) Zone** under By-law 54-15, as amended, with site-specific development standards to implement the proposed development (refer to Appendix "B").

Supporting Documentation/Reports:

The applicant has submitted the following documents/information to the City in support of the proposed development:

- Planning Justification Report;
- Draft Official Plan Amendment;
- Draft Zoning By-Law Amendment
- Development Application Summary;
- Registered Plan 65M-4696;

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- Architectural Site Plan;
- Underground Parking Plans;
- Floor Plans;
- Elevation Drawings;
- Cross Sections Drawings;
- 3D Renderings;
- Transportation Impact Study and Parking Analysis;
- Urban Design Brief;
- Landscape Rendering;
- Functional Servicing Report;
- Grading Plan;
- Site Servicing Plan;
- Hydrogeological Report; and,
- Arborist Reliance Letter.

Planning Analysis

Staff has undertaken a preliminary review of the applicant's development proposal based on the policy framework contained within the *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024* (the "PPS"), the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017* (the "ORMCP"), the Regional Official Plan, 2022 (the "ROP"), and the City of Richmond Hill Official Plan, 2010 (the "Plan"). Staff notes that the City is currently conducting a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to update the Plan as necessary to align with recent Provincial and Regional planning direction. The following sections provide an overview of the policies relevant to the subject applications.

York Region Official Plan

On June 6, 2024, *Bill 185, Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act* received Royal Assent bringing into effect a series of changes to the *Planning Act* among which included the removal of planning responsibilities from the Regional Municipality of York (the "Region"). Effective July 1, 2024, the Region no longer has planning responsibilities under the *Planning Act* and is no longer the approval authority of the City's Plan or its amendments. Accordingly, the ROP is now deemed to be an Official Plan of the City of Richmond Hill.

The subject lands are designated **Urban Area** in accordance with Map 1 (Regional Structure) of the ROP and more specifically designated as **Community Area** in Map 1A (Land Use Designation) and **Designated Greenfield Area** in Map 1B (Urban System Overlays) of the ROP. The **Urban Area** is considered the primary location for growth and development within York Region which includes Towns, Villages, Centres and Corridors. The **Community Areas** are intended to support a wide range and mix of urban uses and to accommodate a significant portion of planned growth within York Region. The **Designated Greenfield Area** is considered the primary location for new greenfield development to assist the municipality in meeting its density targets.

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In accordance with **Section 4.4** of the ROP, intensification shall be directed within strategic growth areas, which include Regional Centres, Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs), Regional Corridors, and Local Centres and Corridors. The subject lands are not located within a strategic growth area, including a protected or future MTSA as identified in the ROP. However, the subject lands are located approximately 450 metres from the Gormley GO station.

Notwithstanding the above, the City's Plan is to be relied upon to set out more specific policies related to land use and design that refine the broader direction established in the ROP.

City of Richmond Hill Official Plan

The subject lands are designated **Neighbourhood Commercial** in accordance with Schedule A – Land Use Plan, of the West Gormley Secondary Plan (refer to Map 4). In accordance with **Section 8.6.3** of the Plan, lands within the **Neighborhood Commercial** area permit a range of uses including retail, commercial and office uses. Development within the **Neighbourhood Commercial** area is further subject to a maximum site area of 1 hectare (2.47 acres) and a maximum building height of two (2) storeys. Accordingly, the applicant has submitted an Official Plan Amendment application to redesignate the subject lands to **Residential Mixed Use** to permit the proposed high density, mid-rise residential and commercial development.

Notwithstanding the above, the **Residential Mixed Use** designation within the West Gormley Secondary Plan permits a range and mix of uses, including commercial and residential uses where they are integrated within a mixed-use building format. Further, mixed-use residential and commercial developments shall be encouraged to locate on an arterial street in order to address the public street and shall include a service street access in order to minimize points of access to the arterial street. In accordance with **Section 8.6.2.4** of the Plan, prior to adoption of a Zoning By-law to permit development of any parcel of land designated as **Residential Mixed Use**, a detailed Concept Plan is required in accordance with **Section 5.2** of the Plan to address matters relating to the proposed massing, siting, orientation, and heights of buildings, including with respect to the relationship of the proposed buildings to adjacent streets, open spaces and adjacent uses including pedestrian circulation and connections to open space systems as well as with the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Additionally, **Sections 3.1.5.3** and **3.1.5.6** of the Plan require a minimum of 25% of new housing units to be affordable and that 5% of units within high density developments contain three (3) or more bedrooms. The applicant is not proposing any affordable units, however, 20 of the 201 total dwelling units proposed are to be three (3) bedroom units (i.e. 10% of the total units) proposed within the two (2) buildings.

The subject lands are further situated within the **Settlement Area** of the Oak Ridges Moraine, in accordance with Schedule A3 - Settlement Area of the Plan and the ORMCP, and within an area of High Aquifer Vulnerability in accordance with Schedule

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A5 of the Plan. Under the provisions of the ORMCP and according to **Section 3.2.1.1.18** of the Plan, all uses which are otherwise permitted under the Plan, shall be permitted within the **Settlement Area** and shall be subject to the requirements of Section 19(3) and 31(4) of the ORMCP.

A more detailed review and evaluation of the proposed applications in the context of the applicable policies of the Plan will form part of a future recommendation report to Council.

Zoning By-law

The subject lands are presently zoned “**Neighbourhood Commercial (NC) Zone**” under By-Law 54-15, as amended (refer to Map 3). The **NC Zone** permits a full range of commercial uses including, but not limited to, bake shops, offices, clinics, convenience retail stores, supermarkets, and restaurants. The proposed residential/commercial mixed-use apartment buildings are not permitted under the **NC Zone** category. Accordingly, the applicant is seeking Council’s approval to rezone its land holdings to “**Residential Mixed Use (RM) Zone**” which is not currently a zone category within By-law 54-15, as amended. The following table provides a summary of the proposed **RM Zone** development standards as proposed by the applicant:

Development Standard	Proposed Residential Mixed Use (RM)
Minimum Corner Lot Frontage	30 metres (98.43 feet)
Minimum Front Yard Setback	3 metres (9.84 feet)
Minimum Side Yard Setback	0 metres (0.00 feet)
Minimum Flankage Yard Setback	3 metres (9.84 feet)
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	0 metres (0.00 feet)
Minimum Floor Space Index	1.5
Maximum Floor Space Index	2.03
Minimum Height	2 storeys
Maximum Height	5 storeys
Minimum Amenity Space	1.5 square metres/unit (4.9 square feet/unit)
Minimum Parking Rate	1 space/unit
Minimum Bicycle Parking Rate	0.6 spaces/unit

In addition to the above, the applicant is seeking Council’s approval to establish site-specific defined terms, permitted uses, permissions for shared visitor and commercial parking spaces, small car parking standards, and standards with respect to permitted projections and encroachments in order to permit the subject development proposal (refer to Appendix “B”). The draft Zoning By-law submitted by the applicant in support of its development proposal is currently under review. The appropriateness of the proposed zoning category, development standards, land uses, as well as the need for additional standards and/or restrictions will continue to be evaluated through the review

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of the submitted development applications with regards to policy conformity, compatibility, design and function.

City Department and External Agency Comments:

The subject Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications and associated background studies and reports submitted in support of same have been circulated to various City departments and external agencies for their review and comment. At the time of writing this report comments have been received from the City's Building Services – Zoning Section, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), York Region, Alectra Utilities, Metrolinx, York Catholic District School Board, York Region District School Board, and Enbridge Gas. These City departments and external agencies have no objections to the applications and/or have provided comments to be considered by the applicant during the more detailed implementation stage of the approval process and have not been appended to this report.

The applications remain under review by City's Financial Services Division. The following is a summary of the main comments received to date.

Heritage and Urban Design Section

The City's Heritage and Urban Design Section staff have reviewed the applicant's development proposal in accordance with the City-wide Urban Design Guidelines and have provided comments with respect to the applicant's proposed site-specific Official Plan policy amendments, Zoning By-law amendments and built form. Specifically, staff have recommended that proposed Building 'B' be reoriented to address and articulate a pedestrian street wall along Leslie Street and to increase the building setback to the west lot line to provide for transition to the existing adjacent low-rise residential development. In this regard, staff have recommended the applicant reduce the height of the building along the west property line to three (3) storeys.

Staff have further provided comments relating to the setbacks, stepbacks, and facing distances proposed, as well as ground floor heights and opportunities to increase the amount of retail space proposed at grade and amenity space proposed on site. Staff have recommended the applicant relocate surface parking and unsightly elements (exhaust vents, transformers, and other utilities) away from Leslie Street and from the view of the public realm. Detailed comments relating to weather protection for entrances, bird safe treatment, and incorporation of LID measures have been provided to the applicant that are to be addressed through a future Site Plan application. Additionally, staff have requested clarification on the provision related to balcony projections within the submitted draft Zoning By-law (refer to Appendix "C").

Infrastructure Planning and Development Engineering Division

The City's Infrastructure Planning and Development Engineering Division staff have reviewed the subject development applications and provided technical comments relating to functional servicing and stormwater management, noise, transportation, and hydrogeological matters. Staff have requested revisions to the plans and materials

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submitted to address comments related to parking, access, internal site-lines, and transportation analyses, in addition to providing comments to be addressed at the detailed design stage through a future Site Plan application. Staff have further noted that the lands are located with the upper portion of Oak Ridges Aquifer Complex (ORAC) and that permanent dewatering within the ORAC is not supported and therefore additional monitoring wells are requested to ensure that the proposed underground parking does not result in permanent dewatering (refer to Appendix “D”).

Park and Natural Heritage Planning Section

The City’s Park and Natural Heritage Section staff have reviewed the subject development applications and have requested that a minimum of 2 square metres (21.53 square feet) per unit of amenity space be provided. Additionally, staff have advised that the applicant will be required to provide detailed Landscape Plans at the Site Plan application stage for review and comment (refer to Appendix “E”).

Community Services – Waste Management Section

The City’s Community Services Division – Waste Management Section staff have reviewed the development applications and have requested additional information to demonstrate achievement of the City’s waste standards and specifications related to access route design details, specifically pertaining to minimum travel route widths, turning radii and vertical clearances. Comments have also been provided with respect to waste storage, separation and collection for the proposed development including with respect to the suitability of the size and location of waste areas and loading spaces proposed (refer to Appendix “F”).

Development Planning Division

Planning staff has completed a preliminary review of the applicant’s development proposal, including plans and materials submitted in support of the proposed development. In consideration of the policies of the Plan that are relevant to the evaluation of the proposed development, staff provides the following preliminary comments:

- the proposed five (5) storey high density, mid-rise mixed-use residential/commercial buildings are not permitted within the **Neighbourhood Commercial** area of the West Gormley Secondary Plan. The applicant’s request to redesignate the subject lands to **Residential Mixed Use** requires additional review in the context of the applicable policies of the ROP and the Plan. In this regard, the applicant is required to submit a Concept Plan in accordance with **Section 5.2** and **Section 8.6.2.4** of the Plan for further review and comment;
- staff note that the requested Official Plan amendments to permit outdoor amenity space on the rooftops of the proposed buildings and to permit underground and surface level parking are not required to facilitate the proposed development. Staff will continue working with the applicant to confirm the applicable site-specific Official Plan Amendment clauses to support the development;

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- the applicant is proposing to rezone the subject lands from **Neighbourhood Commercial (NC) Zone** to **Residential Mixed Use (RM) Zone** under By-law 54-15, as amended, to facilitate the proposed development. The appropriateness of the proposed new **RM Zone** category and the site-specific development standards as proposed by the applicant will be reviewed in the context of the suitability of the Concept Plan to be submitted;
- the applicant will be required to demonstrate how the applications meet the intent of **Policies 3.1.5.3** and **3.1.5.6** of the Plan which requires a minimum of 25% housing to be affordable and a minimum of 5% of units to contain three (3) or more bedrooms. Currently, the proposed development does not include a minimum of 25% of affordable housing units but 10% of the total units are to contain three (3) or more bedrooms;
- the applicant is encouraged to work with staff to explore opportunities to provide additional at-grade/ground level retail and outdoor private amenity space to support the proposed development;
- the proposed development will be assessed based on the City-wide Urban Design Guidelines as it relates to design, compatibility and acceptable transition within the public realm. In this regard, Urban Design comments have identified areas of concern which must be satisfactorily addressed;
- the applicant must satisfactorily address comments and requirements identified by City departments and external agencies that have been requested to review the development proposal; and,
- future Site Plan and draft Plan of Condominium applications will be required to facilitate the proposed development.

Financial Implications:

The recommendation of this report does not have any financial, staffing or other implications.

Relationship to Strategic Plan 2024-2027:

The recommendation of this report does not have any direct implications with respect to Council's 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan. An overview of how the subject applications are aligned with the Strategic Plan will be included in a future recommendation report to Council following a comprehensive review and evaluation of the applicant's development proposal.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Appendix "A" – Draft Official Plan Amendment
- Appendix "B" – Draft Zoning By-Law Amendment

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- Appendix “C” – Memo from Heritage and Urban Design, dated January 30, 2025
- Appendix “D” – Memo from Infrastructure Planning and Engineering Services, dated March 6, 2025
- Appendix “E” – Memo from Park and Natural Heritage Planning, dated January 24, 2025
- Appendix “F” – Memo from Community Services – Waste Management, dated January 10, 2025
- Map 1 – Aerial Photograph
- Map 2 – Neighbourhood Context
- Map 3 – Existing Zoning
- Map 4 – West Gormley Secondary Plan Land Use Plan
- Map 5 – Proposed Site Plan
- Map 6 – Proposed Elevations
- Map 7 – Concept Rendering

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPBS.25.038.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appendix A - Draft Official Plan Amendment.docx- Appendix B - Zoning By-Law Amendment.docx- Appendix C - Comments-HUD-2025-01-30.pdf- Appendix D Engineering Comments.pdf- Appendix E PNHP Comments.pdf- Appendix F Waste Comments.pdf- Map 1 Aerial Photograph.docx- Map 2 Neighbourhood Context.docx- Map 3 Existing Zoning.docx- Map 4 West Gormley Secondary Landuse.docx- Map 5 Proposed Site Plan.docx- Map 6 Proposed Elevations.docx- Map 7 Concept Rendering.docx
Final Approval Date:	May 7, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Deborah Giannetta - May 7, 2025 - 10:46 AM

Gus Galanis - May 7, 2025 - 10:49 AM

Darlene Joslin - May 7, 2025 - 11:34 AM