

Report to Community and Protective Services Committee Meeting

To: Chair and Members, Community and Protective Services Committee Meeting
From: Kevin Dickins, Acting Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home
Subject: 345 Sylvan Street and Stabilization Space Update
Date: December 15, 2020

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Acting Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, the following actions be taken with respect to 345 Sylvan Street that;

- (a) The Acting Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, in partnership with the Housing Development Corporation, London (HDC), be directed to prepare the property at 345 Sylvan Street for a zoning by-law amendment which promotes a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan up to and including demolition of the existing structure as deemed necessary;
- (b) Civic Administration be directed to pursue Federal and Provincial funding opportunities for preparing the property at 345 Sylvan Street that promote a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan; and,
- (c) Civic Administration be directed to continue to pursue operational funding opportunities and secure alternate locations for the operation of stabilization spaces, as intended within the scope of the Council approved Core Area Action Plan (CAAP).

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the City of London Civic Administration be authorized to:

1. Immediately advance site preparation which promotes a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan of 345 Sylvan Street; this includes all necessary work related to rezoning the subject property for redevelopment.
2. Develop and implement community engagement strategies to involve impacted neighborhoods.
3. Pursue alternate locations for Stabilization Space as this remains a priority in our community.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London (2019)

London's Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan, Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London (2019), is the approved guiding document for homeless prevention and housing in the City of London, and was developed in consultation with Londoners. Developing housing and creating Stabilization Space program support the implementation of key strategies in the Housing Stability for All Plan.

Core Area Action Plan

The CAAP was developed in consultation with community members, employees, business and other stakeholders and includes the following four needs:

1. People struggling with homelessness and health issues need help;
2. People need to feel safe and secure;
3. Businesses need an environment that allows them to be successful; and,
4. The Core Area needs to attract more people.

Through the initiatives identified in the Plan, helping people struggling with homelessness and health issues is planned to be addressed through strengthening the Coordinated Informed Response program, focusing on housing, and creating daytime Resting Spaces and Stabilization Spaces. London's CAAP identifies the need to establish stabilization space to support individuals who are experiencing in-the-moment crisis.

Council Strategic Plan

London *Council Strategic Plan* includes efforts to reduce the number of individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness which align with Provincial directives for CHPI funding and Federal directives for Reaching Home funding.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Municipal Council Approval Of The Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024 as Required Under The Housing Services Act, 2011 (CPSC: December 3, 2019)
- Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan 2010 – 2024 (CHLC: November 18, 2013)
- Core Area Action Plan (SPPC: October 28, 2019)
- 22nd Meeting of Council (7. Property Acquisition – 345 Sylvan Street: November 26, 2019)

2.0 Key Issues and Considerations

2.1 345 Sylvan Street

On November 26, 2019, City of London Council approved financing for the purchase of 345 Sylvan Street. The property was acquired following consultation with Corporate Realty Services. During acquisition, a short-term goal of civic administration was to use the building as Stabilization Space. However, a formal approval by Council for this site was never sought for this purpose. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, operational funding through the Ministry of Health to staff the stabilization space has not materialized as hoped and this has necessitated the request from civic administration to consider alternative uses for the site.

In the fall of 2019, the City of London Homeless Prevention team conducted public consultation with members of the South London community that may be impacted by the City's initial plan for 345 Sylvan Street to provide for a Stabilization Space.

Feedback from this community included:

- Concern for community safety;
- Concern for property values;
- A desire to keep the neighborhood residential and,
- A lack of transparency in the purchase and consultation process.

The long term strategy for the property is an appropriate form of residential development, including a multi-residential built form. The aforementioned recommendations reflect an opportunity to respond to community feedback and prepare the site for a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan in partnership with HDC and the City of London.

2.2 Property Description

The subject property municipally known as 345 Sylvan Street is located on the west side of Wellington Road and north of Baseline Road West.

Address: 345 Sylvan Street

Official Plan: Low Density Residential
London Plan: Neighbourhoods Place Type
Zoning: CF – Community Facility – permitted uses include Group Homes
Site Area: 1.44 acres
Building: 2-storey multi-level detached dwelling constructed circa 1960

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

At this time, associated costs to support the next steps include any necessary site assessment work and studies as well as the costs to demolish the existing building on site (if necessary).

The City has applied and been approved for CMHC seed funding to assist with the pre-development assessment work and future funding for the demolition of the existing building (if deemed appropriate) will be required. The cost of demolition is currently unknown and will be determined by HDC through a Demolition Tender process, if required.

Funding to complete the required work to support the conversion to a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan will be sought through available Provincial or Federal funding streams, potentially supplemented by municipal funding as required. Civic Administration will report back to a future meeting with more details, including the source of financing, for the conversion of the property that promote a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan.

Next Steps

HDC and the Civic Administration will prepare 345 Sylvan Street to promote a range of uses that conform to the Official Plan including all necessary work related to land use change and applications for demolition of the existing structure, as necessary. Civic administration will report back in 2021 to Council outlining details of actions taken. Civic administration will explore potential Federal and Provincial funding initiatives to support the site preparation work and potential redevelopment of the site.

Civic Administration will continue to work with homeless prevention service agencies to identify alternate and appropriate locations for Stabilization Space and seek potential Federal and Provincial funding initiatives to support with the operationalization of Stabilization Space locations. A progress report to Council outlining suitable locations and possible funding opportunities will be provided in early 2021.

Prepared by: Craig Cooper, Manager, Homeless Prevention

Recommended by: Kevin Dickins, Acting Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Deerness Home