

# LACH

*Working Group for 101 Meadowlily Rd S OPA/ZBA/DPC – Tues. Feb. 23, 2021*

Location: Online

Time: 7:30pm-8:30pm

Present: S. Bergman, M. Bloxam, J. Manness, E.J. Rath, M. Whalley

## **DRAFT RECOMMENDATION TO LACH:**

THAT the 101 Meadowlily Working Group recommends to LACH as follows:

- 1) *THAT LACH recommends to Planning & Environmental Committee that the Heritage Impact Assessment by Thor Dingman (Dec 2019) be received and the recommendations contained therein be accepted;*

*AND THAT the Revised Conceptual Development Plan by Dillon (2020-11-11) be received and the revisions made in keeping with the mitigation measures in the HIA be supported as follows:*

- *Removal of all direct access from Meadowlily Road from the townhouse blocks;*
  - *Minimum 6m setbacks from the road widening together with internal block in front of townhouse blocks on the west side of Meadowlily*
  - *Maximum building height of 2.5m*
- 2) *THAT the following matters be referred to staff for further review during the Site Plan Approval process:*
    - *Landscape Plan for a naturalized buffer to be located on the proposed Block within the condominium plan on the west side of Meadowlily*
    - *Entrance Feature design and location*
    - *Fencing, Walls and Stormwater facilities, if any, along the west side of Meadowlily*
  - 3) *THAT the Developer be encouraged to revisit the townhouse block elevation for the units facing Meadowlily Road in order to achieve a design more harmonious with the rural setting as recommended by the HIA. For reference, this appears to have been achieved by the conceptual elevation facing Meadowlily for the single units (Units 1 & 36).*

*AND THAT a copy of this report be provided to the File Planner. LACH requests to be kept informed by the Heritage Planner as approvals progress and consulted, if and when deemed necessary, on HIA related matters.*

## **NOTES:**

E.J. Rath chaired the meeting as the coordinator.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the revised Concept Plan for the OPA/ZBA/DPC application in support of a proposed residential vacant land condominium at 101 Meadowlily Road South. The working group members had received a copy of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) at the February LACH meeting together with the latest Concept Plan.

The Working group also received a document comparing the original proposal to the revised concept and a summary of the proposal. For the purpose of this report and recommendations to LACH, the Working Group notes have been prepared in order of the “Mitigation” items recommended by the Heritage Consultant to address the impacts on the designated heritage feature (Park Farm) as outlined in Section 6.2 of the HIA (specifically items 3.1.1 and 3.1.3).

## **1. Transition between proposed Urban settlement on west side and Park Farm on east side of Meadowlily Road**

The HIA identified that the development as originally proposed would introduce a “*stark and sudden*” contrast and transition between an urban settlement or landscape and the rural/natural landscape of Park Farm along Meadowlily Road. To address these impacts, the HIA recommends mitigation measures through buffering, setbacks, gates, lighting.

### **a. Entrances**

The Working Group appreciated the changes made to the layout based on the revised concept plan. Specifically, all of the direct accesses to Meadowlily Road South from the townhouse units had been removed. Access to the condominium would be limited to two entrances - one at the southern end and another at the northern end of the proposed development.

It was understood that two entrances would be required to meet Fire Code and other requirements for safe access. While a single, southerly entrance might have been preferred, the revisions were considered a positive change which provides for a buffer on the west side of Meadowlily. This would soften the transition between the urban development and the rural character of Park Farm.

While not necessarily within the mandate of LACH, Working Group members wondered whether northern access point should be the main entrance, with the possibility of one-way streets within the development. This might allow the width of the entrances to be reduced, particularly the southerly “exit” across from the Park Farm driveway.

### **b. Buffering**

The Working Group concurred with the HIA recommendation that there be buffering west of Meadowlily to reduce the impact and visual contrast between the proposed development and Park Farm.

In particular, it was recommended that a landscape plan be developed by a qualified landscape architect for a proposed buffer of native species to the west of the Meadowlily road widening. The Working Group recommended that this landscape plan include an appropriate number/size of evergreens to address the issue raised by the HIA Consultant in relation to visual impacts when deciduous trees are not in leaf.

While the revised concept plan noted the existing cedar trees within the road widening, the Working Group noted that there would be no assurance that these trees would remain long term. In particular, the road allowance, including the proposed road widening, might need to accommodate public sidewalks (as per the London Plan) and/or other services within the municipal right of way. For this reason, the required buffer should be located on private property with its installation and long-term maintenance governed by the site plan for the condominium. (Block 4 on the revised concept plan)

Further, the Working Group recommends that the buffering plan be circulated to the Heritage Planner for review and comment as part of the site plan approval process. It would be also beneficial to LACH if the Heritage Planner could provide an update on the buffering plan and/or consult with LACH, if deemed appropriate.

**c. Setbacks**

***Single Dwelling Units***

The Working Group supported the minimum 6m setback required for the two single dwelling units adjacent to Meadowlily Road (Units 1 & 36 on the revised Concept Plan).

***Townhouse Units***

In relation to the townhouse units, the proposed minimum 6m setback would be acceptable with the proviso that the actual setback as shown in the revised concept plan would be variable and well in excess of the minimum. In other words, the revised concept plan includes a proposed Block 4 between the road widening and the townhouse blocks. This block is the recommended location for the landscape buffering above which increases the overall setback.

**d. Gates**

The HIA recommendation is that any proposed gates for the development be “*of a sympathetic design, material and scale to the rural setting of Park Farm and Meadowlily Road.*” In addition, large walls and massive gate posts were not deemed appropriate. The Working Group concurred that any entrance feature should be “complimentary” rather than a “copy” of the Park Farm gate posts. Further it was suggested that a more appropriate term may be “entrance feature” rather than specifically “gates”. The Working Group voiced concerns that – due to the close proximity of the Park Farm entrance and the southern access for the new development – gate posts immediately across the road could detract from this unique and historic feature.

The Working Group noted that if the northern entrance were to become the “main entrance” then there might be less visual competition between any entrance feature for the new development and the Park Farm gate posts. In addition, as there is a wider buffer area along the west side of Meadowlily Road in the northern section, this might allow any entrance feature to be set further back into the private property. As this entrance feature would be a site plan rather than an OPA/ZBA/DPC matter, the Working Group recommends that any entrance feature proposal be circulated to the Heritage Planner for review and comment as part of the site plan approval process. It would be also beneficial to LACH if the Heritage Planner could provide an update on the entrance feature design and/or consult with LACH, if deemed appropriate.

**e. Lighting**

The HIA recommends that the development “*utilize lighting design that controls and prevents lighting bleed and glare onto Park Farm.*” The concept plan did not provide any details in relation to either streetlighting, entrance lighting and/or exterior lighting on the proposed units. As this entrance feature would be a site plan rather than an OPA/ZBA/DPC matter, the Working Group recommends that the lighting plan be circulated to the Heritage Planner for review and comment as part of the site plan approval process. It would be also beneficial to LACH if the Heritage Planner could provide an update on the lighting plan and/or consult with LACH, if deemed appropriate.

## 2. **Townhouse massing, roof lines and building design**

The HIA recommends several mitigation measures in relation to the impacts on the historic landscape, particularly in relation to the massing roof lines and building design for the townhouse blocks.

### a. **Massing**

The HIA recommends that the massing of the townhouses be *“articulated to break down the potential monotony of a streetscape of seven buildings in a row sharing identical footprints”*. The Working Group noted that the revised concept plan includes three building blocks, with four townhouses each, facing Meadowlily Road. The revised concept plan also shows a setback between each of the three buildings. The Working Group felt that the reduction in the number of units per building and spacing was a positive revision for the townhouse blocks, in keeping with the HIA.

### b. **Roof lines**

The HIA recommends that *“roof lines de-emphasize the three-storey height where possible and delineate multiple eave heights”*. The Working Group noted that the maximum height under the revised proposal would be 2.5 storeys. In addition, the revised concept plan limited the height of the three townhouse blocks facing Meadowlily to 2 storeys.

The Working Group appreciated that the reduced height of the structures would facilitate the recommended buffering of these townhouses on the west side of Meadowlily.

### c. **Design**

The HIA recommends that the *“architectural design should harmonize with the rural and natural surrounding rural landscape of Park Farm and Meadowlily Woods ESA. Building design may incorporate rural Ontario vernacular language but should avoid weak imitations. A visually complex design and rhythm is critical to soften the monotony of seven buildings in a row sharing identical footprints.”*

The Working Group felt that the revised concept elevation for the townhouses had failed to achieve this goal. The latest design of the three buildings facing Meadowlily was decidedly modern, almost institutional in character.

The Working Group contrasted the concept elevation for the Meadowlily facing townhouses with the architectural attributes of the concept elevation for the two single units also facing Meadowlily. The elevations for proposed single units appear to have achieved the delicate balance between a new build and the language of “rural Ontario vernacular” in both its material choices in visually complex roof line.

While design is technically outside of the OPA/ZBA/DPC review, the Working Group encourages the developer to harmonize the architectural elements of the townhouses facing Meadowlily with the proposed elements of the two single units, even if this requires a moderate increase in the height of the roofline over the entrances on front façade (up to 2.5 storey maximum).

**3. Fencing and Walling**

The HIA indicates that *“opaque fencing and walls that cut off the views to open space and beyond are not appropriate”*.

**a. Walls**

The Working Group noted that no walls appear to be proposed on the revised concept plan and concurs.

**b. Fencing**

The Working Group noted that no fencing is proposed in front of the townhouse blocks facing Meadowlily on the revised concept plan and concurs.

The Working Group noted that the revised concept plan indicates that any fencing on the west side of Meadowlily adjacent to the two single units cannot extend in front of the dwelling units and concurs with this design limitation. It is further noted that the HIA recommends that any openings be more typical of rural areas.

The Working Group recommends that Heritage Planner review and comment on any walls and/or fencing as part of the site plan approval process.

**4. Storm Water Infrastructure**

The HIA recommends that storm water infrastructure should *“avoid or minimize industrial scaled structures and facilities and integrate naturalized landscaping”*.

The Working Group noted that stormwater management was beyond its mandate and no details had been provided. If Block 4 is intended to serve as part of the stormwater management facilities, then there may be an opportunity to integrate naturalized landscaping as part of the recommended buffer.

**5. LACH Consideration and Implementation of the recommendations**

E.J. Rath would prepare notes of the meeting including the various recommendations. A draft of the notes would be circulated for comment/review to the Working Group members, LACH Chair, Heritage Planner and LACH coordinator. In particular, this review would include the form and content of the official recommendation to LACH (PEC) to ensure that the wording falls within the Advisory Committee mandate.

These notes would be then be forwarded to Jerri for the next LACH agenda.

The Working Group felt that it would be beneficial to LACH if the Heritage Planner could provide an update any of the items referred to the site plan approval process. The intent was not to become directly involved in site plan process but rather be in the loop on what items had been addressed (and how). This would also give the Heritage Planner an opportunity if and when deemed appropriate to seek input from LACH on such items as the landscape buffering and entrance feature.

For items beyond the scope of the LACH mandate, which were suggestions only, a copy of the notes would be provided to the File Planner as information.

cc. File Planner Mike Corby