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Urban Design Study: Paaji Heights **1115 Tenth Street East, Owen Sound, Ontario, N4K 6B1**

Part 1 of Park Lot 3, Range 4, East of the Garafraxa Road

Owner

3580 East Bayshore Road, Owen Sound, Ontario, N4K 5N3

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A.1 Context and Background:

- .1 The City of Owen Sound Official Plan approved by the County of Grey on February 15, 2022 is referenced as “OP” within this Urban Design Study. The project is located within an area that is designated as residential in the Official Plan.
- .2 The Paaji Heights project is located at 1115 Tenth Street East, City of Owen Sound.
- .3 The site had formerly been occupied by a single-storey long-term care home and the condition of the building and its small size made Georgian Heights Long-Term Care Home obsolete. The construction of a new long-term care home nearby resulted in the closure of the smaller facility.
- .4 The existing building had been constructed at the level area at the rear of the site likely to ease construction. The general state of the property, including crumbling pavements and the vacancy of the building has encouraged the Owner to consider this proposed development.
- .5 The current owner proposes to renovate the original building as a first phase. This more modest project will help to correct damage and permit cash flow which would support the higher cost of the larger addition.
- .6 The larger, proposed expansion adds additional residential dwelling units and places the building in a forward position as part of the urban design. This would be constructed as a second phase.

A.2 Paaji Heights Residential Apartment Building Official Plan Commentary:

- .1 OP Section 3.1 Residential:
 - .1 OP 3.1.1.b Permits apartment buildings.
 - .1 The Paaji Heights project consists of the renovation of an existing building to create residential dwelling units and the development of an apartment building as an addition to the existing building.
 - .2 OP 3.1.2 Residential Density:
 - .1 OP 3.1.2.1 Establishes permitted densities. The proposed Paaji Heights development is a Medium Density development because 46 units per hectare are proposed.
 - .2 The proposed project data are as follows:
 - .1 Lot area: 7899.16 sq. m or 0.79 Hectares.
 - .2 Total number of residential units: 36 (fourteen 1-bedroom units; twenty-two 2-bedroom units).
 - .3 Density in Units per Hectare: 46 (45.575).
 - .4 Number of residential units within the existing building: 11 (two 1-bedroom units; nine 2-bedroom units).
 - .5 Number of residential units within the proposed addition: 25 (twelve 1-bedroom units; thirteen 2-bedroom units).
- .3 OP 3.1.2.5 “Density shall be allocated in residential areas in accordance with the following:
 - a. Lands shall have access to hard services at sufficient capacity for the intended density.
 - b. Adequate soft services such as parks, schools, emergency services, transit and similar shall be available as required to support the intended density.

c. Lands intended for medium and high-density uses should have direct access to collector or arterial roads and proximity to compatible land uses including but not limited to local institutional and neighbourhood commercial uses."

.1 **Comment:** The Paaji Heights proposed development is within an existing residential neighbourhood which is served by adequate sewer and water piping available in Tenth Street East. We believe that these points will satisfy 3.2.2.5(a). The project is connected directly to Tenth Street East and local schools, trails and parks and shopping and restaurants exist in close proximity to the site. There is a bus stop in front of the property and the distance to the Owen Sound Hospital could be walked. Therefore, we believe that the requirement of 3.2.2.5.(b) and 3.2.2.5.(c) are met.

.4 OP 3.1.3 "3.1.3 General Policies

3.1.3.1 Lands designated Residential shall have access to full municipal services, including piped water supply, storm drainage and sanitary sewer systems, installed according to requirements of the City and other applicable agencies."

.1 **Comment:** the site is served with piped water and piped sanitary sewer.

.5 OP 3.1.3.5 "The City will plan to assist the County in achieving the growth allocation targets established in the County Official Plan by establishing a target of 15% of new residential units by way of intensification. For the purposes of this Plan, intensification may include: redevelopment and revitalization; enabling 'as of-right' permissions for ARUs in residential areas and residential over retail; the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas or existing built-up areas; and the expansion or conversion of existing buildings."

.1 **Comment:** the site has been a long-term care home on a lot that currently has a Residential OP Designation. The proposed project will create residential units on a serviced site by means of rehabilitation and conversion of the long-term care home and expansion by means of an addition. Therefore, we believe that the intent of this aspect of the Official Plan will be met.

.6 OP 3.1.8 Residential Intensification:

3.1.8.2 "Housing intensification, infill development, and/or conversion of non-residential buildings to a residential use is supported subject to the following policies:

a. The proposed development meets locational and other criteria of this Plan.

Comment: the development is in an area with a Residential designation in the OP and the development will meet the location and other criteria described throughout this study.

b. The type, size and scale of the proposed development is compatible with adjacent development and planned land use.

Comment: the development is in an area which features other medium density developments, single family homes and large institutional uses including Georgian College, East Ridge Community School and the Owen Sound Hospital. The proposed project fits well into the site and does not over-shadow the existing built form adjacent to it.

c. The existing infrastructure, including sewer and water services, can support additional development.

Comment: the development is in an area which is well-served by sewer and water services. There is a bus stop in front of the building and Tenth Street East traffic travels at moderate speed due to nearby schools. We believe this infrastructure can accommodate this relatively modest development.

d. The existing community and recreational facilities, such as schools and parks are adequate to meet the additional demand.

Comment: East Ridge Community School, Georgian College are very near the site. Access to sports fields is available at these schools. Trail access is nearby and sports fields are available at the educational facilities. The Victoria Park facilities are also within walking distance of the site. We believe this modest set of apartments will easily be accommodated by the existing facilities.

e. Required parking can be accommodated.

Comment: all required parking can be accommodated on the site.

f. The local road network can accommodate any additional traffic.

Comment: We believe that the local road network can accommodate the additional traffic.

g. Intensification of a heritage building or a building in a Heritage Conservation District shall be subject to the protection and preservation of the heritage character of the building or area in accordance with Heritage Conservation policies."

Comment: Not applicable.

.7 OP 3.3.8.11 "All development shall be consistent with the Urban Design policies of Section 8 and all relevant design guidelines".

.1 **Comment:** The Paaji Heights Development adheres to the general Urban Design policies of Section 8 through the means detailed herein.

A.3 OP Section 8, Urban Design Elements for Paaji Heights:

.1 References below are derived from OP Section 8 Urban Design.

.2 OP 8.1.1 General Policies:

.1 OP 8.1.1.1 through OP 8.1.1.5:

.1 **Comment:** The Owner believes that the design of the project as proposed, responds well to the goals and objectives set out with the OP. Refer to OP section comments above for details.

.3 OP 8.4 Pedestrian Environment:

.1 OP 8.4.1 Objectives:

OP 8.4.1.1 "The City will seek to secure a safe and accessible pedestrian environment in public and private development through the development and use of design guidelines which provide

standards for clear visibility in public places, appropriate lighting, safe movement around vehicles, barrier free sidewalks and building entrances and such other measures as may be appropriate.”

- .1 **Comment:** In addition to the objectives above, the design of Tenth Street East near the site promotes many aspects of Living Streets in OP 8.4.2. The project is fortunate to be located on a section of Tenth Street East which had been rebuilt in the recent past. Therefore, the street lighting, profile and cross section are assumed to comply with the OP. Further, traffic signals are placed near the site to permit safe crossing. Traffic is calmed by a 40 km speed limit in light of the passage by pedestrians in an area containing schools. Due to these features, the proposed development design concerning access for vehicles and pedestrians will conform to the Urban Design objectives.
 - .2 **Comment:** The topography creates a challenge to achieving complete accessibility to persons with disability. The project brings all vehicles to parking at the top of the hill because the geometry of the driveway, safety and the desire to place the building near the road make parking in front of the building impractical.
- .4 OP 8.6 Streetscape:
- .1 OP 8.6.1 Objectives:
 - .1 OP 8.6.1.3 *“The City may define, within any development area, building heights and setbacks or, in some cases, ‘build to’ lines that are consistent with the intended form of development and relevant guidelines. Within a residential area, such heights and setbacks should be consistent with the general form of existing development. Increased setbacks may be required where high buildings are proposed.”*
 - .1 **Comment:** The proposed R5 Zone has within it the City’s recommended front yard setback of 6.5m and the proposed building is constructed to this line. The intent is to support the clause above and it is generally a consistent building line on the street.
- .5 OP 8.6.6 Parking and Access:
- .1 OP 8.6.6.1 *“Where off-street parking is required, the City may develop and enforce design criteria and guidelines to provide for:*
 - .1 *a. Safe vehicular access.*
 - .1 **Comment:** we believe this access will be improved with the new project and that it has also provided safe access for many years during its former use.
 - .2 *b. Pedestrian safety, convenience and accessibility.*
 - .1 **Comment:** we have addressed this within the text concerning Living Streets, OP 8.4.2.
 - .3 *c. Adequate lighting, signage and landscaping.*
 - .1 **Comment:** The site plan approval process will allow the design of the lighting and landscaping to be completed.
 - .4 *d. Controlled visual impact by appropriate location on the site.*

- .1 **Comment:** The proposed parking will be screened from neighbouring properties by wood fencing and plantings. The parking will not be very visible from the street due to the topography.
- .2 *OP 8.6.6.2 Parking should be located in a manner appropriate to the size of the site, the optimum relationship of the building to the street and convenient access for users as described in Section 8.6.*
 - .1 **Comment:** The proposed parking arrangement places the accessible parking stalls near the main entrance and arranged along concrete walks leading to the main entrance. Users of these spaces will not be required to walk across driving aisles. The balance of the parking is placed along the eastern interior lot line. A circular central island enables a drop off for deliveries, taxis and short-term stopping.
- .3 *OP 8.6.6.3 Access points should be clearly visible and distinguishable, limited in number and designed in a manner that will minimize hazards to pedestrian and motor traffic in the immediate area. The City may require consolidation of adjacent parking areas to provide appropriate spacing of access points on arterial roads.*
 - .1 **Comment:** There is a single access point that has operated on the property since the former long-term care home had been constructed. Currently, there is no proposal to change this.
- .4 *OP 8.6.6.4 "Pedestrians should have a safe, well-lit, clear route from vehicle to building at all times of the year. Safe, comfortable, accessible and barrier-free pedestrian points of access should be frequent and easily identified with clear directional signage. Larger developments should provide sitting areas for pedestrians awaiting pick-up".*
 - .1 **Comment:** The site plan will include new lighting fixtures that will be selected for their dark skies properties. The lighting of walks and of doors will be an important feature of the new design. Signage will identify accessible access routes and accessible parking stalls. The moderate speed limit in this area supports safe access to the site. Cross walks and traffic lights provide safe access for pedestrians arriving at the site.
- .5 *OP 8.6.6.5 Parking areas are to be adequately landscaped in accordance with urban design guidelines. Parking areas should maintain distinct street edges through appropriate landscaping or structures.*
 - .1 **Comment:** The site plan approval process will facilitate the managing of these details; however, the parking areas are paved with asphalt and enclosed by curbing. This is illustrated on the attached GEI civil engineering site plan and on the architect's site plan, attached.
- .6 *OP 8.6.7 Adjacent Uses:*
 - .1 *OP 8.6.7.3 "Where the height or mass of a proposed building may significantly shadow or cause increased wind conditions on an adjacent open space or solar collector, the City may require a study be undertaken to assess the impact and may develop and enforce setback requirements, site plan requirements and design guidelines to ameliorate the problem".*

- .1 **Comment:** A shadow study created for Paaji Heights is provided.
- .1 The architect affirms the following:
 - .1 As a principle, as least 50% of more of any property is not shaded for more than two (2) interval times (a four-hour equivalency); or,
 - .2 As a principle, as least 50% of any property should be in full sun for at least two interval times (a four-hour equivalency).
- .7 OP 8.6.10 Landscape Design:
 - .1 OP 8.6.10.1 *"Landscaping shall be designed to enhance the presence of each building and used as a major visual element to unify the proposed building, streetscape and surrounding environment"*.
 - .1 **Comment:** the preliminary landscape design is illustrated on the attached architectural site plan. Landscaping is used to support and enhance the Tenth Street façade of the development. Landscaping also provides some semi-private outdoor space associated with the rear of the property. When possible, landscaping in traffic islands will divide parking areas and direct traffic clear of the building and parked cars. The proposed pedestrian walk surfaces are concrete in order to avoid heaving and maintenance associated with paving units. Concrete curbing is used to direct storm water and contain the parking. Parking areas area surfaced with asphalt. The landscape design will be advance as the project continues with the Site Plan Approval process.
 - .2 OP 8.6.10.2 *"Landscaping design shall utilize a diversity of plant material that are appropriate for the site conditions in all seasons, including a focus on native plant material where appropriate, and avoid the use of invasive species in accordance with City policies and guidelines"*.
 - .1 **Comment:** The development will feature plant materials appropriate to location and local environment and invasive species will be avoided.

End of Urban Design Study.



Grant M. Diemert, OAA