



memorandum

DATE: JUNE 22, 2015
TO: HONOURABLE MAYOR & MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
FROM: JOHN MACKENZIE, COMMISSIONER OF PLANNING
RE: COMMUNICATION #2 - COUNCIL MEETING, JUNE 23, 2015
ITEM #10 - COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - JUNE 2, 2015

C	29
Item #	10
Report No.	24(cw)
Council -	June 23/15

**SITE DEVELOPMENT FILE DA.14.049
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VAUGHAN
WARD 2 - VICINITY OF MAJOR MACKENZIE DRIVE AND ISLINGTON AVENUE**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

1. THAT Recommendation #1 in its entirety as contained in Item #10 of the Committee of the Whole Agenda dated June 2, 2015, be deleted and replaced with the following:
 - a) THAT Site Development File DA.14.049 (The Corporation of the City of Vaughan) BE HELD IN ABEYANCE, pending the investigation of an alternate site for the proposed telecommunications tower at the William T. Foster Woods Park, on lands owned by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

Background

On June 2, 2015, four residents from the area surrounding Sonoma Heights Park gave deputations to the Committee of the Whole regarding a proposed telecommunications tower to be placed in the park. Three residents were in opposition and one was in support of the proposal. The Committee of the Whole also received Communications from three area residents in opposition to the proposed telecommunications tower. The Committee of the Whole adopted the following recommendation (in part) regarding Site Development File DA.14.049:

"That consideration of this matter be deferred to the Council meeting of June 23, 2015, to allow further consultation between the applicant and area residents, and for the applicant to report to staff on the results of the consultation prior to the matter returning to Council."

On June 16, 2015, the Commissioner of Planning forwarded a Communication to Council indicating the details of the upcoming community meeting, and that the actual discussions that transpired at the meeting would be discussed in a future Communication, which is the subject of this Communication as discussed below in the following sections:

Community Meeting

Bell Mobility Inc. (the Proponent) held a meeting for area residents on June 18, 2015, at the Al Palladini Community Centre (9201 Islington Avenue) from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Approximately 38 residents heard

a brief presentation by the Proponent regarding the need for enhanced service in the area and the siting process that the Proponent conducted prior to submitting the subject application. The residents then had an opportunity to ask questions of the Proponent. The majority of the discussion focused on health concerns and the possibility of finding an alternative site for the facility. Some discussion on the aesthetics of the tower and community consultation also occurred as summarized in this Communication.

Ultimately, the Proponent agreed to request a meeting with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to renew efforts to secure a lease agreement to site the telecommunications tower at the William T. Foster Woods (Foster Woods) located at the northeast corner of Islington Avenue and Major MacKenzie Drive, as shown on Attachment #1. The meeting(s), between the Proponent, the TRCA, Kleinburg Area Ratepayers' Association (KARA), and the City, will take place over the summer.

If this location is not feasible, the Proponent has also agreed to review the possibility of adding additional antennas to the existing antennas on the Hydro One towers in Sonoma Heights Park.

Alternative Locations

The Proponent advised that prior to submitting the application, Bell Mobility approached the TRCA to propose siting the tower in Foster Woods, as this was their preferred location for the tower. At that time, the TRCA was not willing to enter into a lease agreement for the lands.

The residents also had many questions about the site selection process prior to the submission of the application and made suggestions for alternative sites.

The Proponent advised that they also approached Padre Pio Church north of the Sonoma Heights Park and were refused. The Proponent is already co-locating antennas at the existing Rogers tower at the City of Vaughan Fire Station 7-9 at 9601 Islington Avenue, and needs another tower in the vicinity of the Park to address a service deficiency in this area. The placement of antennas on the Hydro One tower in the Sonoma Heights Park is not a preferred solution for either party.

The Proponent previously suggested replacing a light standard in the interior of the Park with a new light standard including an antenna. City Staff were not supportive of the proposal.

Most private landowners in the area own small lots in residential areas. The challenging topography in the area, also rules out several locations as suitable for a tower.

The Proponent advised that the new tower proposed at the Polish Army Veterans' Association Park, on Regional Road 27, just south of Major MacKenzie Drive is too far away to provide the appropriate coverage for this area.

Health

The Proponent advised that the current proposed tower would emit 0.5% of the maximum Radio Frequency (RF) emissions prescribed by Safety Code 6: Health Canada's Radio Frequency Exposure Guidelines, which represents an approximately 0.4% reduction from the emissions of the current existing telecommunications antennas located in the park on the hydro tower, which the proposed telecommunication tower is meant to replace. The maximum exposure in this case was calculated at the nearest home to the proposed tower. Residents asked about park users located directly at the base of the tower. The Proponent could not confirm the exact exposure at this location, but advised that it would be well below the Safety Code 6 requirements, and that any park users at the base of the tower would actually be below the directional beam of the antennas at the top of the tower.

The residents also asked about how antennas that are meant to keep up with growing demand could have lower emissions than the antennas they are intended to replace? The Proponent could not provide a technical answer, but assured the residents that the output of each tower is certified by Bell Mobility engineers and published by Industry Canada.

The Proponent advised that the actual RF emissions are almost always lower than the engineered maximum of the tower antennas, and that the RF numbers presented to the residents represent the engineered maximum. Some of the residents remained unconvinced that the RF levels permitted by Safety Code 6 represent safe levels of emissions.

The Proponent also advised that emissions from the tower are weaker than those from a home Wi-Fi or a cell phone. Some residents responded that having a home Wi-Fi or a cell phone is a personal choice, unlike having a tower erected in their neighbourhood.

Public Consultation

The President of the Carrying Place Ratepayers' Association stated that he received a notification of the proposal from Bell Mobility in August 2014, but when he emailed the contact information listed on the brochure, he never received a response. He also said that Bell Mobility does not consult with his Ratepayer Association like they consult with KARA.

Aesthetic Concerns

There was a brief discussion about the aesthetic considerations of placing a tower in a park that is predominantly a natural area and predominantly used for recreation. The Proponent advised that Bell Mobility engineers typically prefer 100 metre tall towers with a pinwheel design. The proposal for a 40 metre tall flagpole tower is a concession to aesthetics for the community.

Conclusion

On June 2, 2015, the Committee of the Whole directed that consideration of Site Development File DA.14.049 be deferred to permit further community consultation regarding a proposed telecommunication tower in Sonoma Heights Park. A meeting was held on June 18, 2015, at which discussions regarding the proposal resulted in the Proponent agreeing to meet with the Toronto Region and Conservation Authority to assess the opportunity to relocate the proposed telecommunication tower from Sonoma Heights Park to William T. Foster Woods lands at the northeast corner of Islington Avenue and Major Mackenzie Drive or to provide additional antennas on the existing Hydro One Towers in Sonoma Heights Park. Although the applicant has requested that Vaughan Council make a decision for either concurrence or non-concurrence for the proposed tower in Sonoma Heights Park at its meeting on June 23, 2015, the Planning Department recommends that this application be held in abeyance pending the outcome of these discussions with the TRCA.

Respectfully submitted,

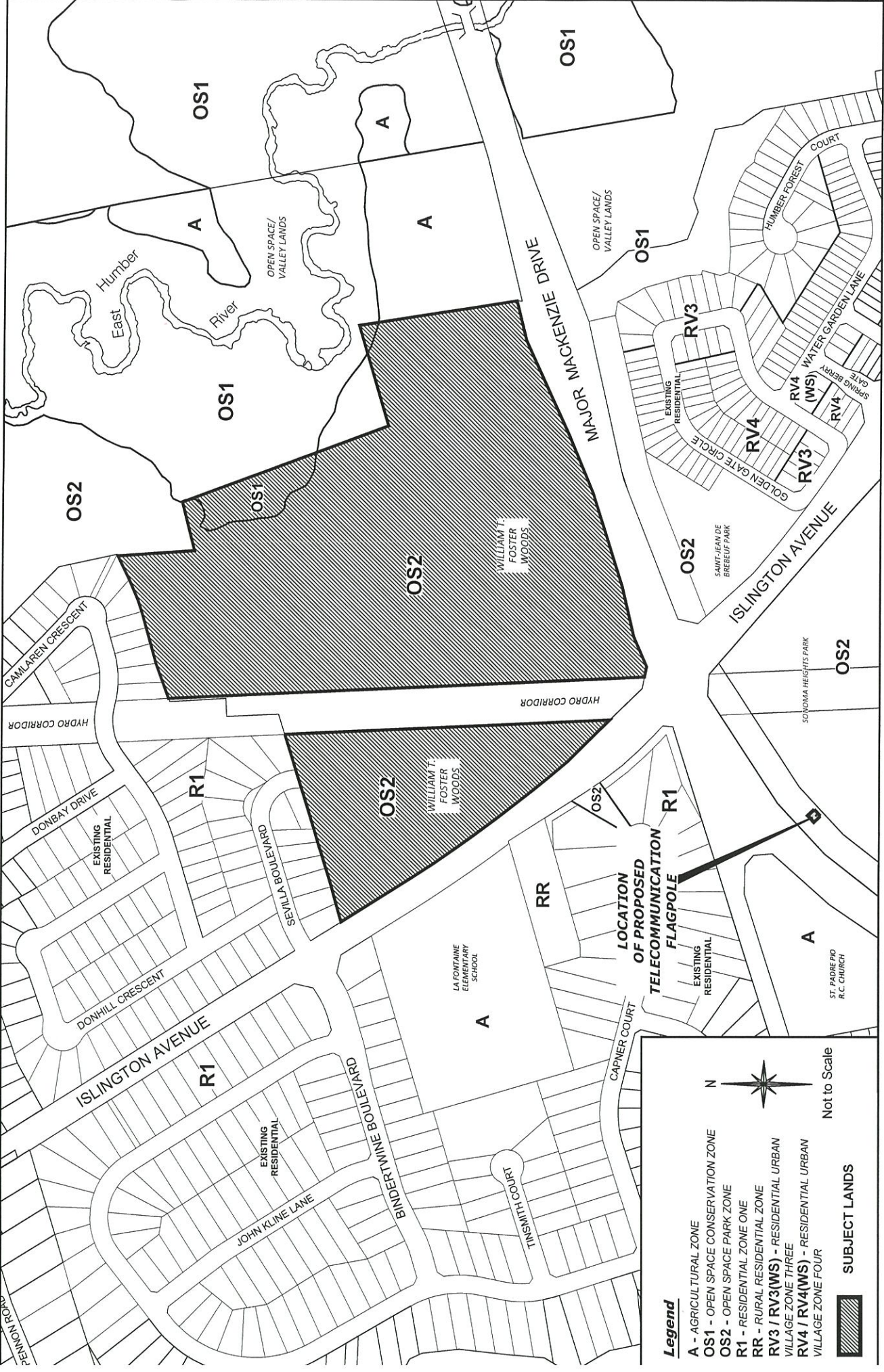


JOHN MACKENZIE
Commissioner of Planning
GM/cm

Attachments

1. Location Map

Copy to: Steve Kanellakos, City Manager
Jeffrey A. Abrams, City Clerk
Grant Uyeyama, Director of Development Planning



Location Map

LOCATION:
Part of Lot 20, Concession 8

APPLICANT:
City of Vaughan



Attachment

FILE:
DA.14.049

DATE:
June 23, 2015

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