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Email: [Melanie.Pham@hamilton.ca](mailto:Melanie.Pham@hamilton.ca)

Dear Ms. Pham:

**RE: WATERDOWN COMMUNITY NODE SECONDARY PLAN  
COMMENTS ON DRAFT POLICIES AND SITE SPECIFIC ZONING MODIFICATIONS  
(ZONING BY-LAW 05-200)  
306-308 PARKSIDE DRIVE, WATERDOWN  
OUR FILE: 20365B**

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We are the planning consultants for United Property Resource Corporation ("UPRC"). UPRC has been actively working on a redevelopment proposal for the lands located at 306-308 Parkside Drive in the City of Hamilton (the "subject lands") for the last year. The subject lands are owned by the United Church of Canada and are currently occupied by St. James United Church.

UPRC are working with its partners on a nation-wide program to deliver affordable housing within a set of clearly defined goals and guiding principles. The subject lands in Waterdown represent an opportunity to work with Council and staff to provide inclusive, affordable and sustainable housing integrated with the existing place of worship and community supportive facilities including the day care centre. We recognize the importance of the existing community and policy context in redeveloping each site and look forward to collaborate with planning staff through the formal consultation process to finalize our submission of a zoning by-law amendment to facilitate the redevelopment of the site. The redevelopment proposal introduces a mix of 2 and 3 storey purpose built rental housing units, inclusive of 31% affordable rental units, that are integrated within the existing property. The church and community space will be maintained on the site.

While, UPRC or the congregation had not submitted formal comments during the Waterdown Secondary Plan Area Study process in 2019, we have now had an opportunity to review the proposed policies and zoning on behalf of UPRC and are providing the following comments for consideration and inclusion in the public record. We would also kindly request that we be notified of the statutory public meeting for both the Secondary Plan and the updated zoning. We would also appreciate the opportunity to meet with staff to review and discuss our comments and draft revisions to the policies and zoning which would facilitate the opportunity currently being sought for the subject lands.

The following letter provides a brief summary of the current land use policies applicable to the subject lands, our intended redevelopment, and the proposed changes to land use policies as set out in the draft Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan and zoning as they apply to and impact the subject lands.

## **SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT**

The subject lands are reflect an irregular shaped lot situated south of Parkside Drive between Main Street North and Mill Street North with an approximate area of 12,096 m<sup>2</sup>, and located within the central Waterdown area. The property is accessed via a driveway to Parkside Drive, and a secondary driveway to Kelly Street to the south. Parkside Drive is considered a Minor Arterial Road.

## **PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION**

The subject lands are currently occupied by St. James United Church and include supportive community services including a day care. As part of the proposed development, the existing place of worship and day care are to be retained, with the proposed development to occur predominantly within the existing parking area on site. The proposed redevelopment consists of 20 two-storey rental townhomes and 24 three-storey rental walk-up apartments. All of the units are rental units. The walk-ups are proposed to consist of three storeys, with each unit accessed via individual entrances at grade and with the ground floor units meeting the accessibility requirements under CMHC as well as the AODA.

The street frontage will be maintained with views to St. James United Church and careful consideration will be taken to ensure the cultural heritage attributes of the church are not impacted.

In total, the proposed plan provides for 44 residential rental dwelling units. Of those 44 units, 31% (14 units) are proposed to be affordable rental units at 79% of Median Market Rent (MMR) per CMHC National Housing Co-Investment Fund criteria. Consideration for environmental and community sustainability is an integral part of all design and development by UPRC. Beyond affordability, the proposed development will incorporate family friendly amenities, timer construction and high quality materials. Passive House Certification and Zero On-Site Carbon are also being pursued which further address the City's sustainability and development objectives.

## **EXISTING LAND USE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### **Urban Hamilton Official Plan**

The subject lands are identified in the City of Hamilton's Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP), Schedule E – Urban Structure Elements as being within the 'Neighbourhoods' designation. Schedule E1 – Urban Land Use Designations confirms this designation.

As part of the Settlement Area of the City of Hamilton, the proposed development will provide for intensification of a currently underutilized site within a Settlement Area as per Provincial policies.

### Neighbourhoods Designation

Lands designated 'Neighbourhoods' shall primarily consist of residential uses and complementary facilities and services intended to serve the residents. The 'Neighbourhoods' element of the urban structure shall permit and provide the opportunity for a full range of housing forms, types and tenure, including affordable housing and housing with supports. 'Neighbourhoods' shall generally be regarded as physically stable areas with each neighbourhood having a unique scale and character. Changes compatible with the existing character of function of the neighbourhood shall be permitted.

Areas designated 'Neighbourhoods' shall function as complete communities, including the full range of residential dwelling types and densities as well as supporting uses intended to serve the local residents. In addition, the existing character of established 'Neighbourhoods' designated areas shall be maintained. Residential intensification within these areas shall enhance and be compatible with the scale and character of the existing residential neighbourhood. The City of Hamilton supports residential intensification on lands within the 'Neighbourhoods' designation in accordance with Section B.2.4 – Residential Intensification Policies.

Low Density Residential is preferred to be located within the interior of neighbourhoods. Low Density Residential policies permit single-detached, semi-detached, duplex, triplex, and street townhouse dwellings to a maximum height of three storeys and 60 units per hectare. Medium Density Residential is to be located on the periphery of neighbourhoods in proximity to major or minor arterial roads, or within the interior of neighbourhoods fronting on collector roads. Parkside Drive is a Minor Arterial Road. The Medium Density Residential policies permit multiple dwellings except street townhouses. The Institutional designation under the current Urban Hamilton Official Plan does not apply to the subject lands.

The existing church is also identified as an inventoried heritage property. While not listed or designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, the church is intended to be retained in situ.

Under the current UHOP policies the proposed redevelopment conforms to the policies of the 'Neighbourhoods' designation and can proceed with an implementing Zoning By-law Amendment.

### **Supporting Policies**

As we continue to work with staff and Council to achieve the objectives and goals of the City of Hamilton, we also note the following policies in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) that are supportive of the proposed redevelopment of the subject lands as proposed:

1. The City-wide growth management policies are found in Section 2.3 of Chapter A in Volume 1 of the UHOP. These policies state that the City of Hamilton is required to plan to achieve a minimum of 40% of all residential development occurring annually within its built-up area by 2015. A total of 26,500 units are to be accommodated within the built-up area between 2001 and 2031. The proposed development will assist the City of Hamilton in achieving the minimum intensification target and housing unit targets by contributing an additional 44 residential dwelling units within the existing Built-Up Area.
2. Policy B.2.4.1.3 states that lands designated 'Neighbourhoods' are to accommodate 40% of the intensification target. Therefore, intensification is permitted on lands designated 'Neighbourhoods'. In addition, the 'Neighbourhoods' element of the urban structure shall permit and provide the opportunity for a full range of housing forms, types and tenure, including affordable housing and housing with supports. The proposed redevelopment provides two different housing forms with 30% of the proposed residential units to be affordable at 80% of Median Market Rent (MMR) per CMHC National Housing Co-Investment Fund criteria.
3. Section 3.0 of Chapter B provides policies on the quality of life and complete communities. The proposed redevelopment will assist the City of Hamilton in achieving the housing goals and policies by ensuring that the Subject Lands are redeveloped with a range of housing types, forms, and densities. The proposed rental tenure is supportive of the City's Affordable Housing Strategy, and the proposed redevelopment will therefore meet the changing needs of households throughout their lifecycle, promote diversity of housing within the City, and assist the City in

achieving its complete community goal. We will continue to work with staff and Council to aim to prioritize local residents when delivering affordable housing.

## **ZONING**

### **Zoning By-law 05-200**

Under the City of Hamilton Zoning By-law 05-200, the site is zoned 'Community Institutional' (I2). Permitted uses under this zoning designation include the following:

- Community Garden
- Duplex Dwelling
- Emergency Shelter
- Recreation
- Residential Care Facility
- Semi-Detached Dwelling
- Social Services Establishment
- Urban Farm
- Day Nursery
- Educational Establishment
- Museum
- Place of Worship
- Retirement Home
- Single Detached Dwelling
- Street Townhouse Dwelling
- Urban Farmers Market

We note that in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the Subject Lands and implement the 'Neighbourhoods' designation and policies of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, a Zoning By-law Amendment is required.

## **PROPOSED POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### **Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan Study**

The draft Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan was released in June 2021, including land use schedules and draft policies. The subject lands are proposed to be designated as 'Institutional'. Map B.4.4-2 – Transportation and Connections designates Parkside Drive as 'Minor Arterial'. Institutional designation policies of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan would apply to the lands, restricting residential uses and only permitting residential uses where institutional uses cease on the lands, and restricting uses to low density residential uses.

The proposed 'Institutional' designation would additionally permit block townhouses and multiple dwellings within an adaptively reused building where an institutional use ceases to exist.

We note that on May 20, 2020, City Council passed two Interim Control By-laws (ICBL) (By-laws Nos. 20-101 and 20-102) for lands which are under review as part of the Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan Study. We understand the purpose of the ICBLs was to place a temporary freeze on most development in this area until the Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan Study was completed. As Council did not extend the in-effect time period, the ICBLs expired on May 20, 2021.

Information Report PED21085 dated May 4, 2021 indicated that the Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan is expected to be completed in late Q3, 2021 or early Q4, 2021. At the time of the preparation of this letter, we understand the final reports are still pending.

## **Draft Zoning By-law**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, the City of Hamilton released draft Commercial, Institutional, and Industrial Zoning to implement the new Secondary Plan. In the Draft Zoning By-law, the proposed zoning of the subject lands will remain as 'Community Institutional' (I2). This proposed zoning designation permits multiple dwellings within an existing designated building under the Ontario Heritage Act, provided no additions are made. The maximum building height for single detached, duplex, semi-detached, and street townhouse dwellings is 9.0 metres. In addition, flat roofs are not permitted for single-detached, duplex, semi-detached and street townhouse dwellings. Rooftop amenity areas are also not permitted. Balconies and terraces above the first floor shall only be permitted in a front yard or exterior side yard.

## **IMPACTS OF PROPOSED POLICIES AND ZONING TO UPRC's PROPOSAL**

The proposed changes to the land use designation and implementing zoning developed through the Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan will impact the feasibility of delivering affordable housing on the site. The proposed change towards low density residential uses only would significantly reduce the current planned density and intensification opportunities on the site, severely impacting any ability to deliver affordable housing as directed by Provincial policies. We also note that the direction to only provide for multiple units through re-use of the existing church is also contrary to policies that recommend it be conserved and protected in situ. Although the new policies aim to protect and preserve the existing church and permitted uses, this change in policy significantly reduces opportunities for intensification and affordable housing on the site, which is inconsistent with Provincial policies, and would not conform to the Growth Plan or achieve the affordable housing goals of the City of Hamilton.

The City of Hamilton has committed to providing affordable rental housing to residents and UPRC is committed to working with the City to ensure this need is met in Waterdown. If the current Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan policies and draft Zoning By-law are approved and apply to the subject lands as currently proposed, the redevelopment will not be achievable and will not contribute to the City of Hamilton's 40% minimum intensification target or affordable housing unit targets.

We are committed to working with staff to achieve as many policy objectives and goals as possible with this redevelopment and appreciate the feedback already shared on this proposal. Staff and Council have expressed general support for this project and the ability for it to deliver affordable housing to the City of Hamilton and the residents of Waterdown in need. We also recognize there are a number of planning, design and technical matters that do need to be addressed without the proposed development and that these must be considered in the context of the intent of the proposed Waterdown Community Node Secondary Plan policies. We hope to be able to work with staff to ensure that the new general policies are retained and addressed while providing for the continuation of the intensification opportunities for the subject lands. We believe we can work with staff to draft a revised policy to achieve both.

We note that the current redevelopment proposal is in conformity with the land use policies of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan for this site as noted. The existing place of worship will not be altered by the proposed redevelopment. Removing the current land use permissions and policies that accommodate the addition of much needed housing for the City is not consistent with the goals and objectives of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. The proposed redevelopment conforms to the City of Hamilton's urban design goals and objectives while also being compatible with the surrounding community. As noted we recommend the current proposed new policies be amended or a site-specific provision be included to retain the current Neighbourhoods policies for the subject lands to allow for the intensification of the site and that the current zoning be retained as we are providing for a zoning by-law amendment to implement the proposed redevelopment.

This site and this development proposal presents a unique and significantly important opportunity to deliver affordable housing, intensification, urban design, and sustainability to the Waterdown community through partnership with staff and Council.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and also welcome continued collaboration with planning staff on this matter.

Yours Truly,  
**MHBC**

Dana Anderson, FCIP, RPP  
Partner

cc. Councilor Judi Partridge, City of Hamilton  
Charlie Toman, City of Hamilton  
Tim Blair, CEO, UPRC