



Report to: General Committee

Report Date: March 8, 2007

SUBJECT: 9 Station Lane (Stiver Mill)
Unionville Heritage Conservation District
Request for Expressions of Interest

PREPARED BY: Catherine Conrad, Town Solicitor

RECOMMENDATION:

That staff be authorized to prepare and issue a Request for Expressions of Interest package to solicit proposals for the adaptive re-use of the Stiver Mill property at 9 Station Lane;

That staff report back on the results of the Request for Expressions of Interest, including the preferred submission;

And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

PURPOSE:

To recommend that the Town issue a Request for Expressions of Interest to solicit proposals for the adaptive re-use of the Stiver Mill property, through either sale or lease.

BACKGROUND:

The former Dominion Coal/Stiver Mill property at 9 Station Lane (the "Stiver Mill" - see Attachment No.1) was formally declared surplus by the Town on October 14, 1997 and approved for sale by tender. Pursuant to a recommendation by the Unionville Subcommittee on February 23, 1998, Council authorized the disposition by way of a Request for Proposals process ("RFP"). Council further authorized that a list of proposed permitted uses for the Stiver Mill be developed through community input (Unionville BIA, Heritage Markham, and businesses on Main Street), and once finalized, included in the RFP.

The list included the following uses:

- Display, storage and sale of objects of art and craft work such as in an antique shop
- Custom workshops for the production, repair and storage of works of art and craft work as accessory to the commercial sale of such objects in the same building
- Photographer's studios
- Historical museums, libraries and art galleries

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- Boutique fashion stores, tobacco and pipe stores, florists, greeting card stores, book stores, gift stores, specialty food stores and pharmacy
 - Personal service shops
 - Business and professional offices
 - Medical clinic

The RFP was issued June 29, 1999, resulting in 4 submissions from three proponents. The proposals included:

- Pharmacy/Medical Offices
- Inn
- High Technology Offices
- Theatre Rehearsal and Set Construction

The bids were scored based on price, compliance with preferred uses as outlined in the list, previous development experience, respect for heritage resource, proposed land use and neighbourhood desirability, and tax revenue. Council awarded the RFP to Blue Jay Developments Ltd. Ltd., subject to a rezoning to permit the pharmacy and medical clinic and Site Plan approval. The transaction was not completed due to delays in satisfying certain conditions, resulting in litigation by the Purchaser. On January 23, 2006 the Town obtained a Full and Final Release from the proponent and this matter is now concluded.

As Council has previously deemed the property surplus to present and future needs, the Town is in a position to consider remarketing and disposing of the Stiver Mill. Staff regularly receives inquiries as to its potential disposition or lease.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The Stiver Mill is a prominent site within the Unionville Community and has been identified as a significant heritage resource within the Unionville Heritage Conservation District. The structure, built c. 1916, is identified as Class A (buildings of major importance to the District). Class A buildings have historical and/or architectural value and are the buildings that maintain the heritage character of the District. Section 6.0 of the District Plan (Policies for Special Sites and Projects) identifies the old mill as one of the last remnants of the village's industrial heritage and recommends that the Town should invite redevelopment initiatives from the private sector for retaining and restoring the complex through some form of adaptive re-use.

As with the previous RFP, staff recognizes the sensitivity of the relationship between the site and its future use and intensification and its impact on neighbouring properties. A successful proposal must demonstrate how the redevelopment will complement and be compatible with the existing development in the area, and address the heritage attributes of the mill. Issues of concern with local residents include noise, traffic, outside storage and noxious products, as well as introducing Main Street retail uses. Consultation with

the public during the last application also revealed that medical offices were not supported due to the high volume of traffic they attract.

Current Zoning

The Stiver Mill is currently zoned Office (O), a designation established through extensive consultation with the community and continues to be an appropriate zoning in the opinion of staff. It permits business and professional offices (save for veterinarian and medical office). The zoning by-law permit the easternmost unit (the former store component of the mill) to be used for the following uses to a maximum gross floor area of 225 square metres: a pharmacy, art studio, flower shop, personal service shop (excluding dry-cleaning), custom workshop for arts and crafts, gallery, photo studio, and antique shop.

The current zoning requires a minimum of 40 parking spaces.

Current Condition

In its current condition, the Stiver Mill is stable and structurally sound. In order to be usable, it requires a new mechanical system, fire code compliance, and extensive interior and exterior upgrades.

Recommended Method of Disposal

The Request for Expressions of Interest ("RFEOI") process is considered to be the preferred method for "tapping into" the market for creative ideas without formally binding the Town or requiring extensive funding. It is recommended that staff be directed to prepare an RFEOI that would be advertised to solicit feedback from the marketplace, the terms of which would include:

- Preference for sale or long-term lease
- Adaptive re-use of the existing heritage building
- Preference to uses permitted by the zoning by-law
- Preference for non-traffic generating uses
- Recommendation that the proponent, prior to submission, consult with the local BIA and Unionville Villagers Association
- Minimal Town investment in the sale, lease or redevelopment of the lands

The RFEOI submissions will be evaluated by a staff team on the basis of the submissions' price, completeness, heritage preservation and adaptation, compliance with the existing zoning, experience of the proponent, and financial capacity. Staff will report back on the results of the RFEOI with its recommendations.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

None

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

None

ENGAGE 21ST CONSIDERATIONS:

The preservation of heritage buildings helps to achieve a quality community by maintaining local historical landmarks, thereby contributing and strengthening the sense of community identity.

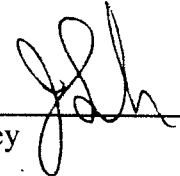
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Heritage, Asset Management, Finance, and Purchasing staff have been consulted.

RECOMMENDED

BY:


Catherine Conrad

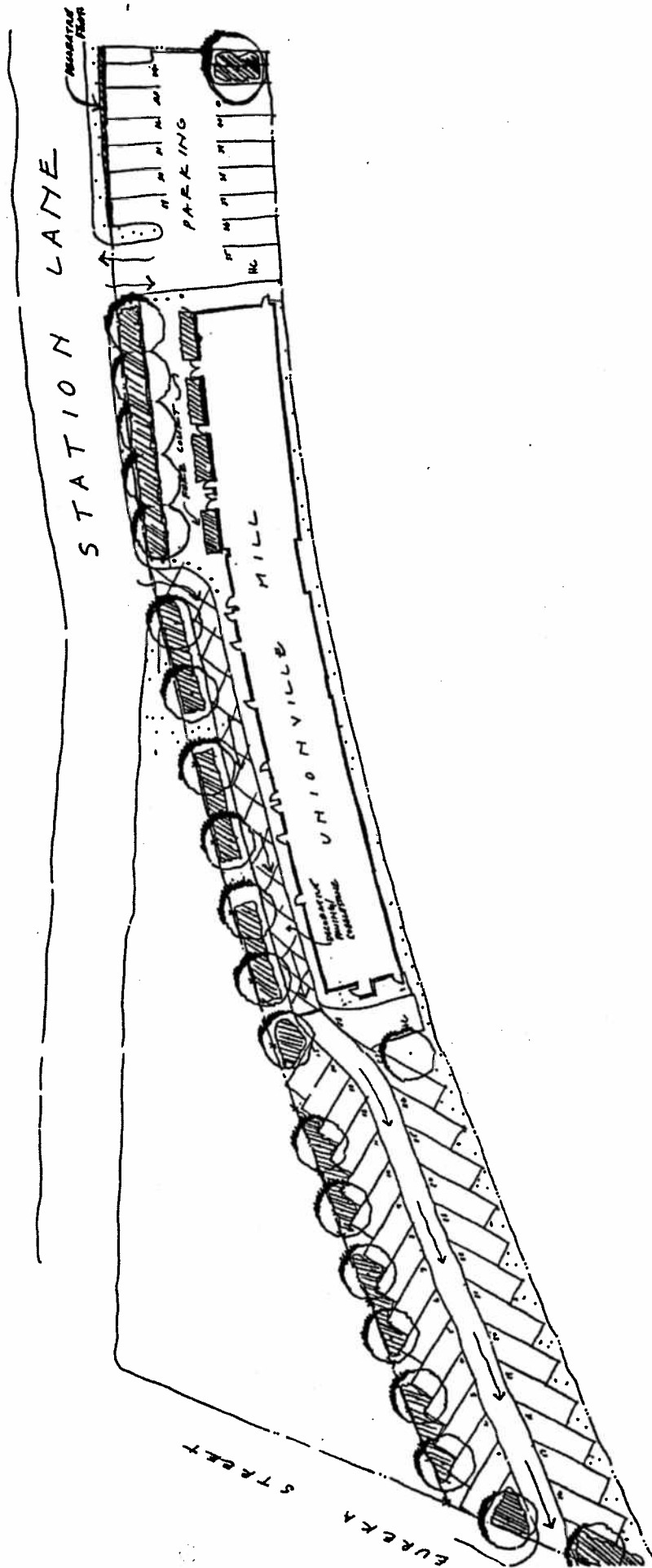

per John Livey

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment No.1 - Location of Stiver Mill Property

Attachment No.2 – Conceptual Site Plan

Attachment No.3 – Stiver Mill Inventory Sheet from the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan



CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN (STAFF)

9 Station Lane, Unionville
Stiver Mill

Unionville Heritage Building Inventory

PIN: 65

Street: 9-11 Station Lane

Year Built: 1916

Style: Unionville Vernacular

Original Owner: Stiver Brothers

Original Use: Industrial

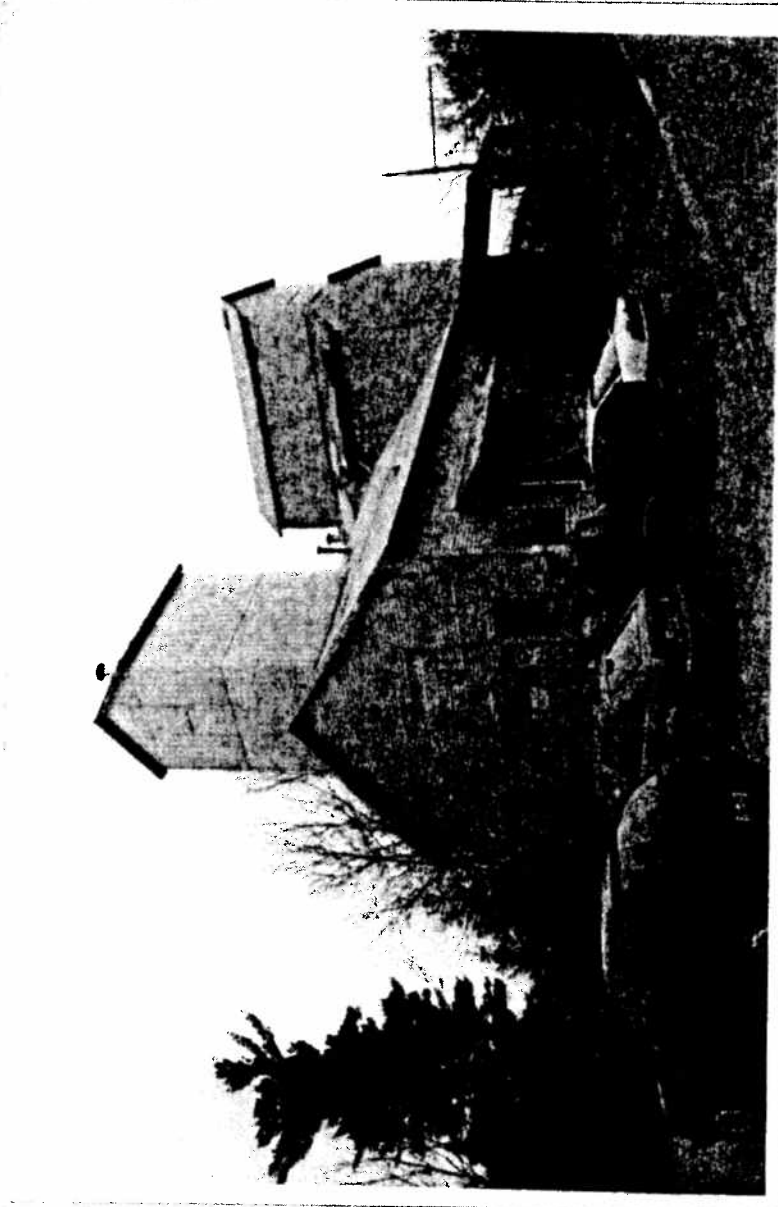
Present Use: Vacant

Classification: Group A

Other Info:

History:

In 1916, two grain elevators were built by the Mathew Grain Co. of Toronto. Charles and Francis Stiver acquired the property c. 1916 which had been damaged by fire and rebuilt their own complex further west. This complex was partially destroyed by fire in 1935. In 1954, the Stiver Brothers moved their office from Main Street, where they had been since 1925, to Station Lane. Eventually the Stivers Brothers opened offices with a store on the north side of Station Street. There is a Stiver chain of feed mills in Unionville (Head Office managed by Charles), Stouffville (managed by Francis) and Aurora (managed by brother-in-law, Joseph (Tom) Watts). Stivers Brothers Coal and Seed Company formed in c.1913. Charles' sons, Ewart and Howard took over and ran it during the 1950's. It recently housed the operations of Dominion Coal and Building Supplies.



Architectural Features:

Storeys: **Roof:** Gable Medium Pitch **Cladding:** Aluminum

Foundation: Concrete Poured

Windows: Rectangular

Features: A conglomeration of various sized rectangular structures. Excellent example of a grain elevator. A landmark of Unionville.