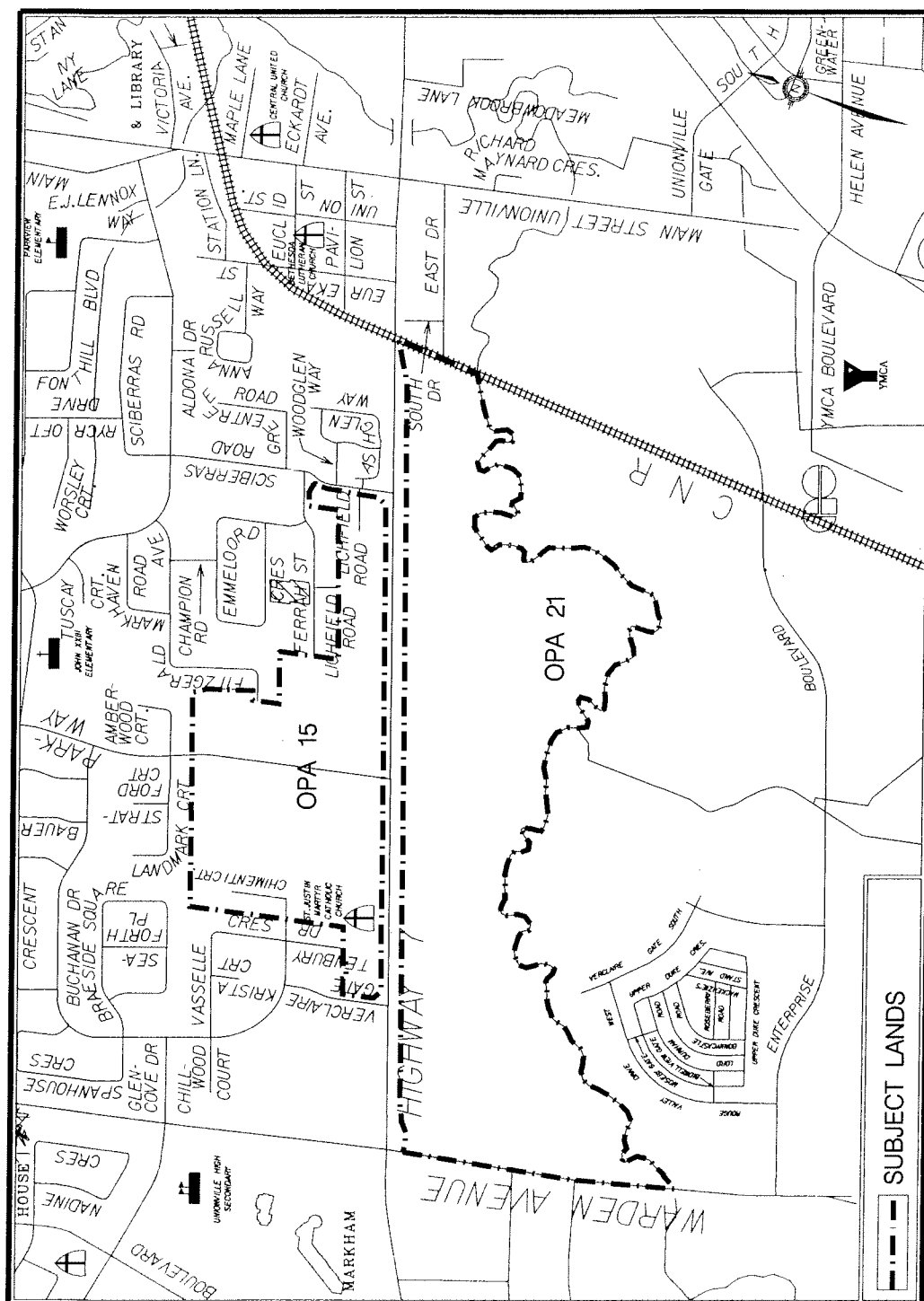


Figure 1





Report to: Development Services Committee

Date of Meeting: January 15, 2008

SUBJECT:

PRELIMINARY REPORT

Lonsmount Construction Limited
Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment
Applications
Part of Lot 10, Concession 5
Markham Centre
File Numbers: SU 07 133313 and ZA 07 133350

PREPARED BY:

Richard Kendall, Manager of Development, Central District
Extension 6588

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report dated January 15, 2008 titled "Preliminary Report, Lonsmount Construction Limited" be received;

And that staff be authorized to continue discussions with the applicant to address the issues outlined in the staff report, including required supporting studies and submission of a comprehensive Precinct Plan;

And that upon resolution of the issues outlined in the report, staff be directed to report back to Development Services Committee regarding scheduling a Public Meeting to consider the applications;

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Lonsmount Construction's lands include 35.76 ha (88.4 acres) on the south side of Highway 7, east of Warden Avenue and represent the largest remaining development parcel within Markham Centre. The Secondary Plan's policies contemplate development with a high concentration and intensity of residential, commercial, employment and supporting uses within the portion of the applicant's lands designated Community Amenity Area – Major Urban Place.

Applications have been received for draft plan of subdivision approval and rezoning to permit a comprehensive mixed-use development comprised of approximately 48,719 square metres (524,424 square feet) of retail and office floor area and 4,240 residential units. The concept plan submitted includes a continuous street wall of buildings along the south side of Highway 7, including a 14-storey, commercial building on the southeast corner of Highway 7 and Warden Avenue, flanked by 16 and 20 storey residential buildings to the south and easterly to the Verclaire Gate intersection. The buildings would then step down in height, 16 and 12 storeys, and 8 and 6 storeys, as the site progresses to the east.

The draft plan provides for the easterly extension of the east-west collector road opposite Clegg Road, which is generally proposed to form the southerly limit of development through the central portion of the site along portions of the Rouge River Valley edge. A series of parks and storm water management ponds are shown on the south side of the road along the valley edge. The extensions of Birchmount Road and Verclaire Gate have been identified in the plan to connect with Highway 7 and the Remington "Downtown Markham" lands, south of the valley.

The Markham Centre Secondary Plan (OPA 21) requires landowners within each precinct to jointly prepare a comprehensive plan for the precinct, which should speak to land use, height and density in the context of the Official Plan's policy framework. A proposed Precinct Plan has not yet been submitted.

The applicant is also required to complete the Performance Measures Checklist for review and presentation to the Markham Centre Advisory, and to provide an outline of specific environmental initiatives that would be incorporated into the design of their project. A number of technical studies required to properly evaluate the applications remain outstanding as well.

This report provides preliminary details of the applications which have been submitted. Staff will report further once the required supporting documentation has been provided and a draft Precinct Plan has been prepared, prior to the scheduling of a public meeting.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable at this time

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide preliminary information on applications for draft plan of subdivision approval and rezoning to permit a comprehensive mixed-use development consisting of 4,240 residential units (4,044 apartment and 196 townhomes) and approximately 48,719 square metres (524,424 square feet) of retail and office floor area on 35.76 ha (88.4 acres) of land within Markham Centre's Centre North Precinct, on the south side of Highway 7, east of Warden Avenue (Figure 1).

BACKGROUND:

The proposed draft plan of subdivision provides for the easterly extension of the east-west collector road opposite Clegg Road, along with the extensions of Birchmount Road and Verclaire Gate to connect with Highway 7 and developable lands south of the Rouge River. The plan also provides for a local north/south connector road between the Lonsmount lands and the Sheridan Nurseries site to the east. The lands include a portion of the Rouge River and associated valley, to be dedicated to the Town. A number of local parks are proposed as is an elementary school site and stormwater management facilities (Figure 4).

The owner presented the preliminary design concept to Development Services Committee in February, 2007 and to the April 12, 2007 meeting of the Markham Centre Advisory. Issues identified by the Advisory included the treatment and extent of retail uses along the Highway 7 frontage; relationship to lower density developments on the north side of Highway 7; connections to the Rouge River and the potential for smaller local parks, rather than a large consolidated park space; issues with the appropriateness of the proposed height programme; and, the need for a greater variety of materials to provide texture and more visual interest to the project. The suggestion was raised at the Advisory meeting to hold a design charette to help evaluate this proposal in the context of the Secondary Plan.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Proposal

The concept plan as submitted (Figure 5) shows a continuous street wall of buildings along the south side of Highway 7, including a 14-storey commercial building on the southeast corner of Highway 7 and Warden Avenue, flanked by 16 and 20 storey residential buildings to the south and easterly to the Verclaire Gate intersection. The buildings would step down in height, 16 and 12 storeys, and 6 and 8 storeys, as the site progresses to the east. The buildings are also proposed to terrace down to 6 storeys next to the park.

Retail uses are proposed within a multi-level podium in base of the buildings in the large, mixed-use blocks along much of the Highway 7 frontage. Lower level townhouse units would be located within the base of the taller buildings, behind Highway 7, forming the primary street edge relationship with the internal roads, including the east-west street, and the northerly edge of the primary public park and open space component of the site. Access to the large blocks would be via the internal road network or courtyards proposed internal to the larger development blocks. A 2.01 ha (5 acre) school block has been identified at the southeast corner of the site while stormwater management facilities and park blocks would generally form the interface with the valley system.

Lands owned by Aryeh Construction occupy approximately 1.86 ha (4.6 acre) of the balance of the Centre North Precinct on the westerly edge of the applicant's lands adjacent to Warden Avenue. These lands are also subject to applications for rezoning and draft plan approval to permit a 20-storey, 313 unit apartment building on the parcel to the north of the east/west collector road, and a 20-storey, 507 unit and an 8 storey, 125 unit apartment buildings on the parcel south of the proposed road (Figure 7). A Preliminary Staff Report on this application was presented to Development Services Committee on November 20, 2007, and a public meeting will be scheduled upon submission of required technical studies and the preparation of a comprehensive Precinct Plan in conjunction with the Lonsmount lands. Lonsmount has expressed interest in a possible land exchange with Aryeh to consolidate their respective development parcels.

Official Plan and Zoning

The subject lands are designated "Commercial", with the Rouge Valley portion of the site designated Hazard Lands, in the Official Plan.

The lands adjacent to Highway 7 are further designated "Community Amenity Area – Major Urban Place" and Open Space, with an identified elementary school site, in the Markham Centre Secondary Plan (OPA 21). The remainder of the site including the valleylands and lands to the south are designated "Hazard Land" and "Community Amenity General" in the Secondary Plan. The policy direction for lands in the "Major Urban Place" designation is for development with a high concentration and intensity of residential, commercial, employment and supporting uses. Densities for medium and high density residential uses are to be established through Precinct Plans.

Building heights are also intended to be established through the comprehensive Precinct Plan process. The intended maximum building height in the "Community Amenity Area - Major Urban Place" designation is generally 8 storeys, with permission for up to the equivalent of 13 office storeys (approximately 16 residential storeys) where buildings are designed to achieve landmark design objectives and provide focal points for the community, and proper graduation of height is provided. Retail and service commercial uses are encouraged on the ground floor of buildings facing major streets.

The lands are zoned "Agricultural One (A1) and Open Space One (O1) by By-law No. 304-87 (Figure 2).

Precinct Plan Required

The Markham Centre Secondary Plan (OPA 21) requires landowners within each precinct to jointly prepare a comprehensive plan for the precinct. Precincts are smaller geographic areas within Markham Centre which are an appropriate scale for detailed planning studies addressing such matters as street, block and lot pattern; type, height and location of buildings; views and focal points; and street and landscape components. Precinct Plans are reviewed by staff and vetted by the Markham Centre Advisory before being presented to Council for endorsement.

The Precinct Plan will need to pay particular attention to the creation of appropriate scale development blocks, bisected by an internal public road network. This will allow for greater accessibility and movement through the site and facilitate opportunities for the creation of a hierarchy of parks to serve the community. Detailed massing, wind and shadow studies will be required to properly assess the proposed built form within the Precinct Plan.

The majority of lands within the Centre North Precinct are owned by Lonsmount Construction Limited (Murphy Hull). As previously noted, Aryeh Construction owns approximately 1.86 ha (4.6 acre), which constitute the balance of the lands in the Centre North Precinct. Staff have requested the two landowners to work together to prepare a comprehensive Precinct Plan for review and approval by the Town. As part of this submission the applicants should complete the Markham Centre Performance Measures checklist for review by the Markham Centre Advisory.

Height and Density

The applicant is proposing a 14 storey commercial building flanked by 16 and 20 storey residential buildings at the Warden/Highway 7 intersection along with a series of taller buildings which transition in height to the east (Figure 6). The intended maximum building height in the "Major Urban Place" designation is generally 8 storeys, however, where buildings are intended to achieve landmark design objectives and provide focal points, such as at the intersection of Highway 7 and Warden Avenue, the Secondary Plan allows Council to increase building height to the equivalent of 13 office storeys (approximately 16 residential storeys). This additional height is predicated on a proper graduation in height and density.

The Secondary Plan also allows Council to deem it appropriate for a building or buildings to exceed the general height limits set out in the Plan, without amendment, provided the purpose and intent of the Plan are met.

There are two specific requirements in the Secondary Plan relating to height for the subject lands:

- Buildings within the lands designated Community Amenity Area – Major Urban Place at the southeast corner of the Warden Avenue and Highway 7 intersection, may be permitted to a maximum height equivalent to the top of the clock tower of the Embassy Suites Hotel (Hilton Suites). This is also the benchmark for height that staff have been employing for other sites in Markham Centre.
- Building heights are not intended to exceed 8 storeys east of Verclaire Gate. The applicants' plan provides for building heights ranging from 16 and 12 stories at the intersection of Verclaire Gate and Highway 7 to 8 and 6 storeys adjacent to the Sheridan Nurseries site, on the eastern boundary.

The applicant will need to confirm compliance with the height and density provisions of the Secondary Plan (including proper gradation) through the preparation of detailed Precinct Plan, to the satisfaction of Council.

The proposal to introduce 4,240 units results in a combined residential density of 352 units per hectare (142 upa) on a net site basis. This unit count would consist of 4044 apartment and 196 townhomes. Appendix I to the Markham Centre Secondary Plan – Central Area Statistics, contemplates a total of 700 medium density and 2,200 high density units (2,900 total) within the Centre North Precinct. When the applicant's proposal is combined with the proposed development on the Aryeh lands, the overall density (5,185 units) of the Precinct would be significantly higher than originally projected. The comprehensive Precinct Plan and Transportation Study need to address the Secondary Plan's targets, and associated infrastructure requirements.

The approved Markham Centre Secondary Plan (1997) is flexible on land use and density, provided Council is satisfied with Precinct Plan submissions and development applications, including height and urban design considerations. In September, 2007, Development Services Committee authorized staff to review and update the Markham Centre Secondary Plan's density targets and height policies, including specific design

criteria relating to taller buildings at "landmark" locations. Staff will be reviewing the two proposals (Lonsmount and Aryeh) in the context of this larger height and density study.

Technical Reports Required

The Town and commenting agencies require submission of a number of technical reports in support of the subject applications, including:

- Phasing Plan (including a parcel by parcel unit breakdown),
- Environmental Drainage Management/Stormwater Management Plan
- Master Environmental Servicing Plan
- Noise Study
- Highway 7 Streetscape Study/Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Comprehensive Precinct Plan
- Archaeological Assessment
- Tree Preservation plan
- Massing, wind and shadow studies

Given the close proximity of the subject lands to the Rouge River, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority needs to confirm the top-of-bank and the applicant will be required to address the potential impact of the proposed development on the adjoining valleylands. To date, none of the required technical reports identified above have been submitted to the Town or TRCA.

Markham Centre Performance Measures

The owner presented the design concept to the Markham Centre Advisory in April, 2007. Given the preliminary nature of the proposal, the Advisory did not prepare a formal report card on the concept. The applicant's submission does not speak to specific environmental initiatives that they are looking to incorporate into the design of their project.

In addition, the applicant has not completed the Performance Measures Checklist for review and presentation to the Markham Centre Advisory. These matters will be addressed in further detail at the time of the preparation of a staff report and the applicant should be prepared to discuss this item at the time of a public meeting. At the presentation to Development Service Committee, the owner did indicate that the project would use District Energy.

Conclusion

These lands represent the largest remaining development parcel within Markham Centre. The site has further significance given its prominent location along Highway 7, the interface with the established Unionville community to the north and its location adjacent to the Rouge River. The application needs to incorporate a high degree of quality urban design and a building programme with appropriate land uses, heights, densities and transitions to lower density uses. A comprehensive and detailed Precinct Plan is required

to properly assess the proposed development before the subject development applications can proceed.

As noted in the staff report on the Aryeh applications, Staff has offered to assist the landowners within the precinct to develop a draft Precinct Plan, including the possibility of arranging to bring in outside design consultants. Staff will also coordinate a presentation to the Markham Centre Advisory Group to provide input into the Precinct Plan process. In addition, the review of the Secondary Plan's height and density policies will assist in setting the overall height and density parameters for these and the adjacent lands, which should be reflected in the Precinct Plan.

Staff will report back to Development Services Committee to recommend that a public meeting be scheduled to consider the subject applications once the supporting documentation has been provided and a draft Precinct Plan has been prepared, in a form generally acceptable to staff.

FINANCIAL TEMPLATE:

Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

As noted above, the applicant will be required to submit reports to address the environmental impact of the proposed development.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

None at this time.

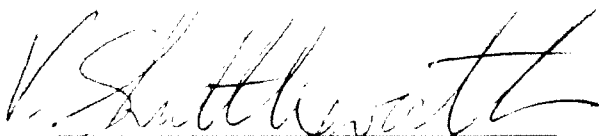
ENGAGE 21ST CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed development promotes a number of key goals set out in "Engage 21st Century Markham" including Managed Growth, Quality Community and Infrastructure Management

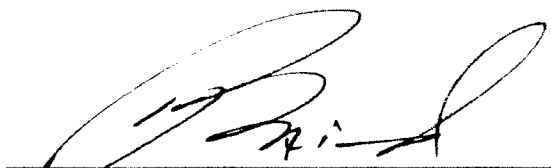
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The proposal has been circulated to other Town departments and public agencies for review and comment.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Valerie Shuttleworth, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Director of Planning & Urban Design



Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner of Development Services

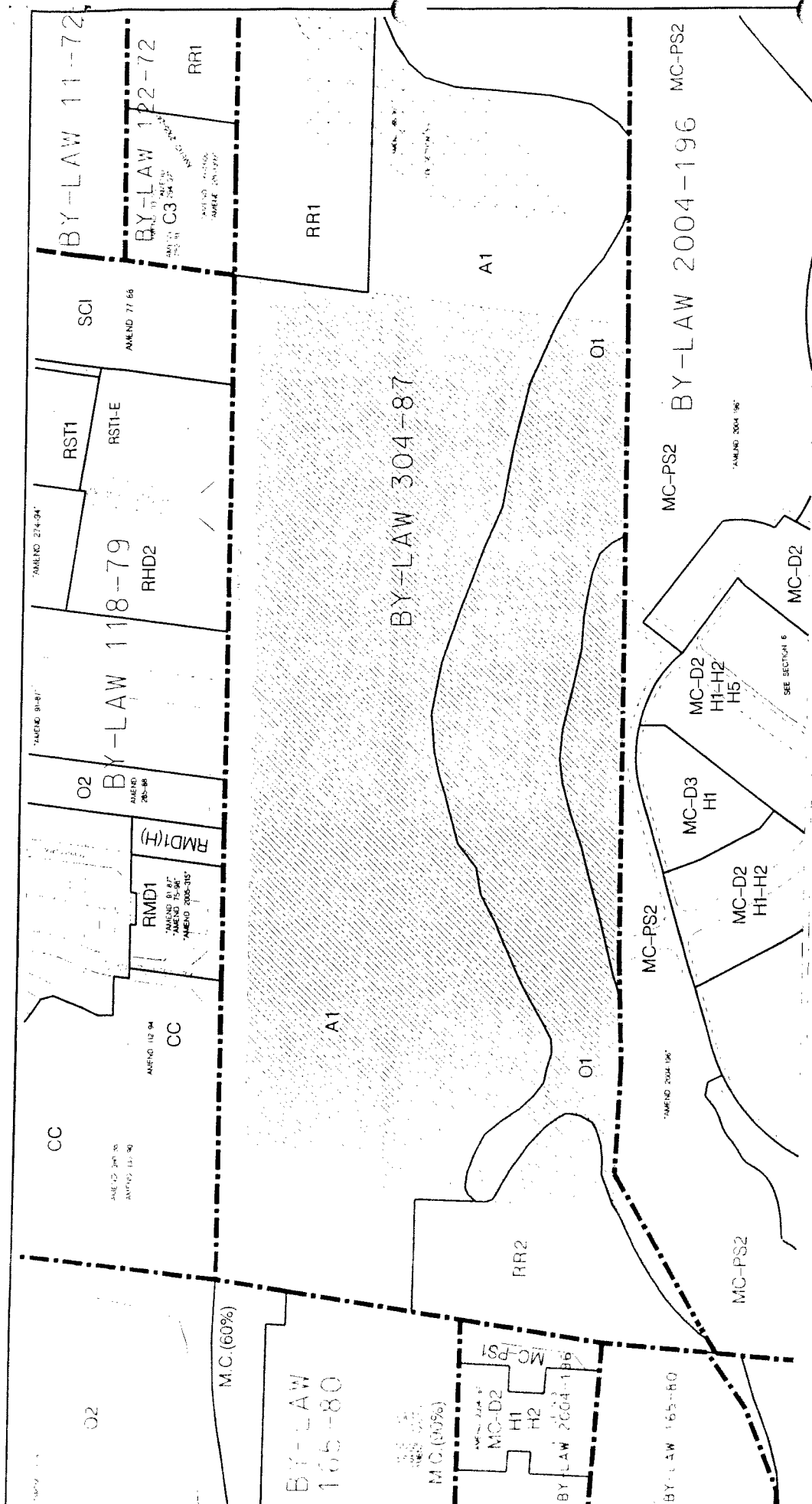
ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1 – Location Map
Figure 2 – Area Context/Zoning
Figure 3 – Air Photo
Figure 4 – Draft Plan
Figure 5 – Concept Plan
Figure 6 – Height Programme
Figure 7 – Aryeh Concept Plan

APPLICANT/AGENT:

Mr. Nick Pileggi
Planner/Project Manager
Malone Given Parsons Ltd.
140 Renfrew Drive, Suite 201
Markham, ON L3R 6B3

Tel: (905) 513-0170 ext. 131
Fax: (905) 513-0177
Email: npileggi@mgp.ca



AREA CONTEXT/ZONING

APPLICANT: LONSMOUNT CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
SE QUADRANT OF WARDEN & HWY 7

FILE No: SU07133313.ZA07133350(RK)



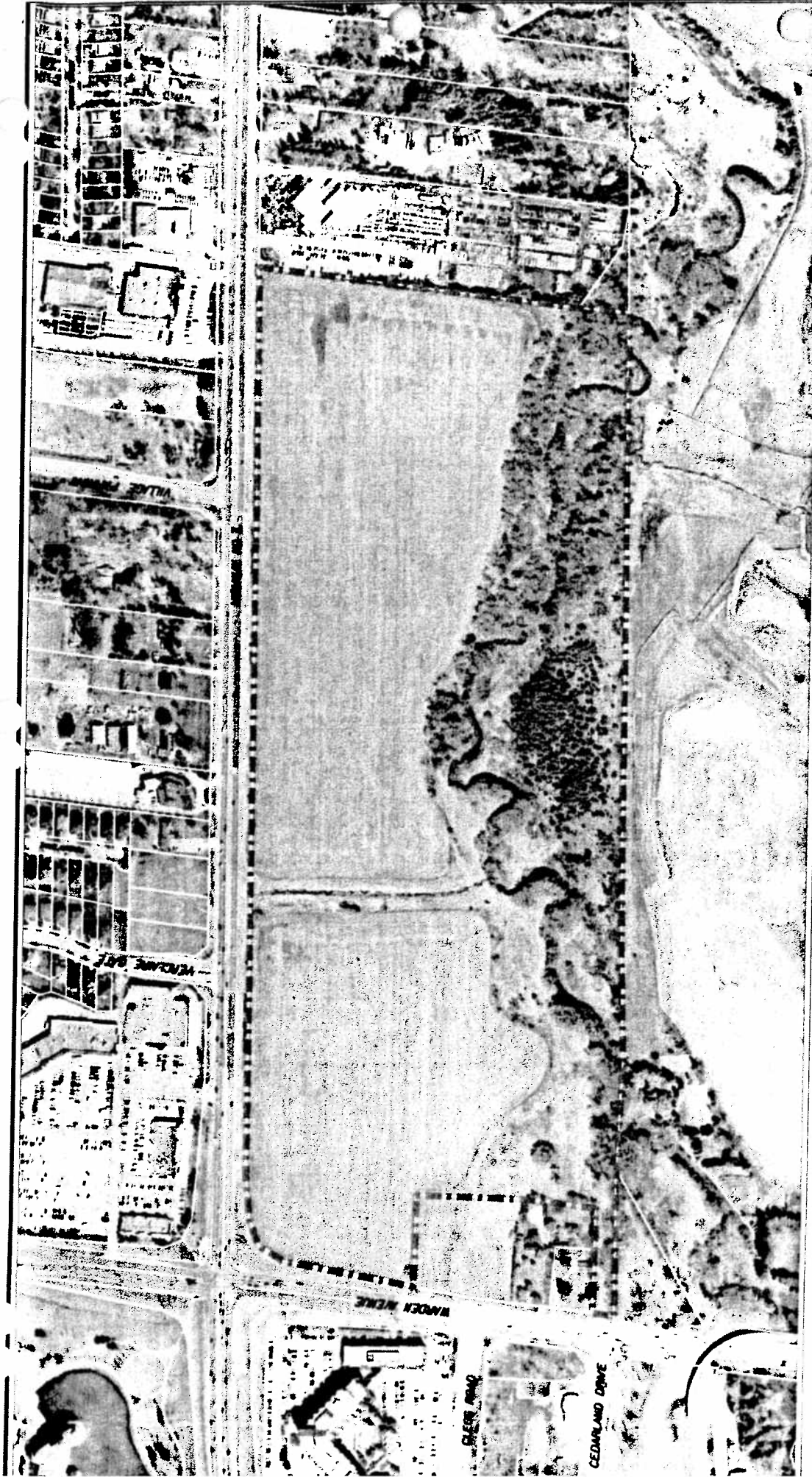
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DATE: 12/11/07

FIGURE No.2

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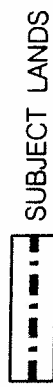
AIR PHOTO 2005

APPLICANT: LONSMOUNT CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
SE QUADRANT OF WARDEN & HWY 7

FILE No: SU07133313, ZA07133350(RK)



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION

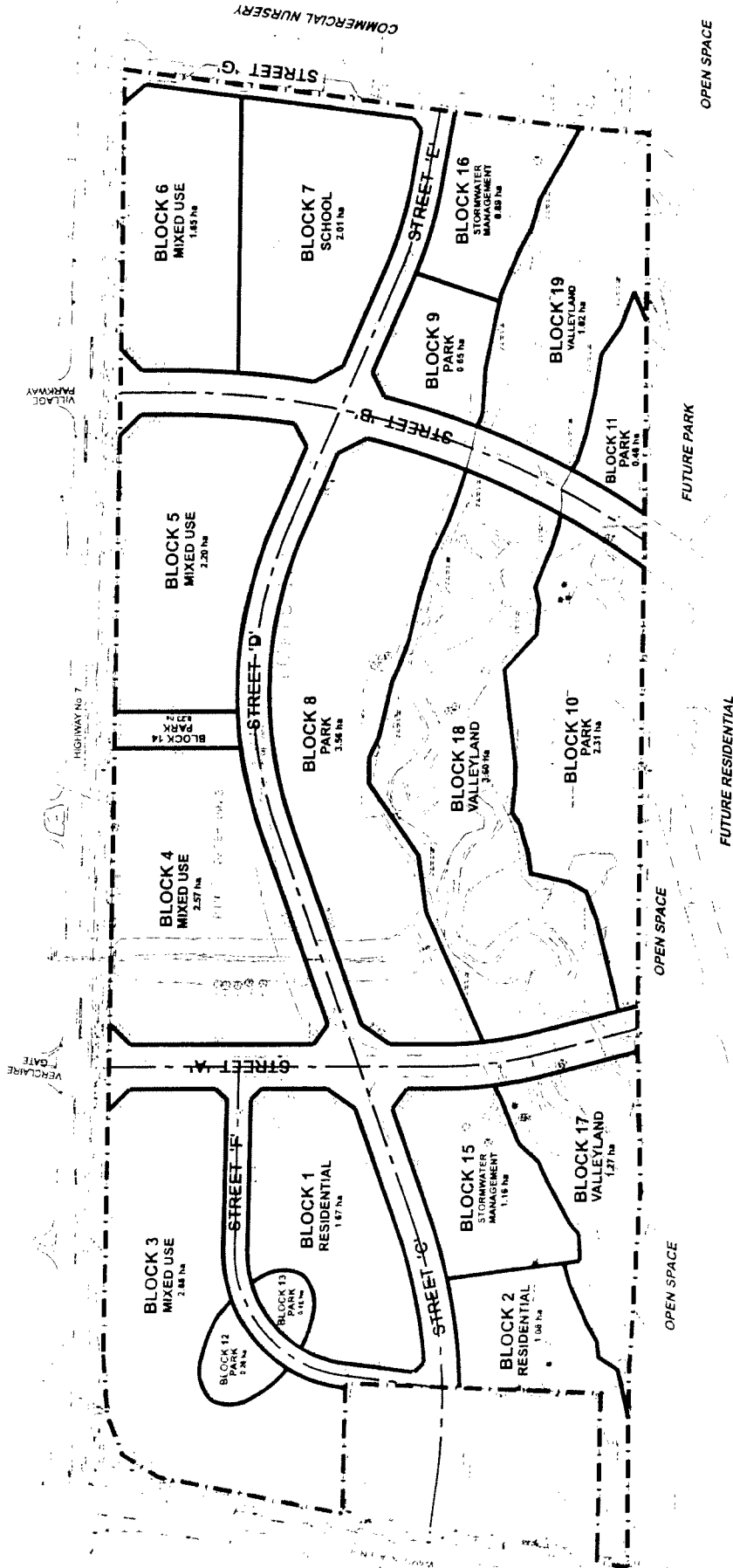


DATE: 12/1/07

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FIGURE No.3

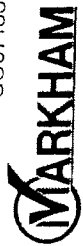
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DRAFT PLAN

APPLICANT: LONSMOUNT CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
SE QUADRANT OF WARDEN & HWY 7

FILE No: SU07133313, ZA07133350(RK)



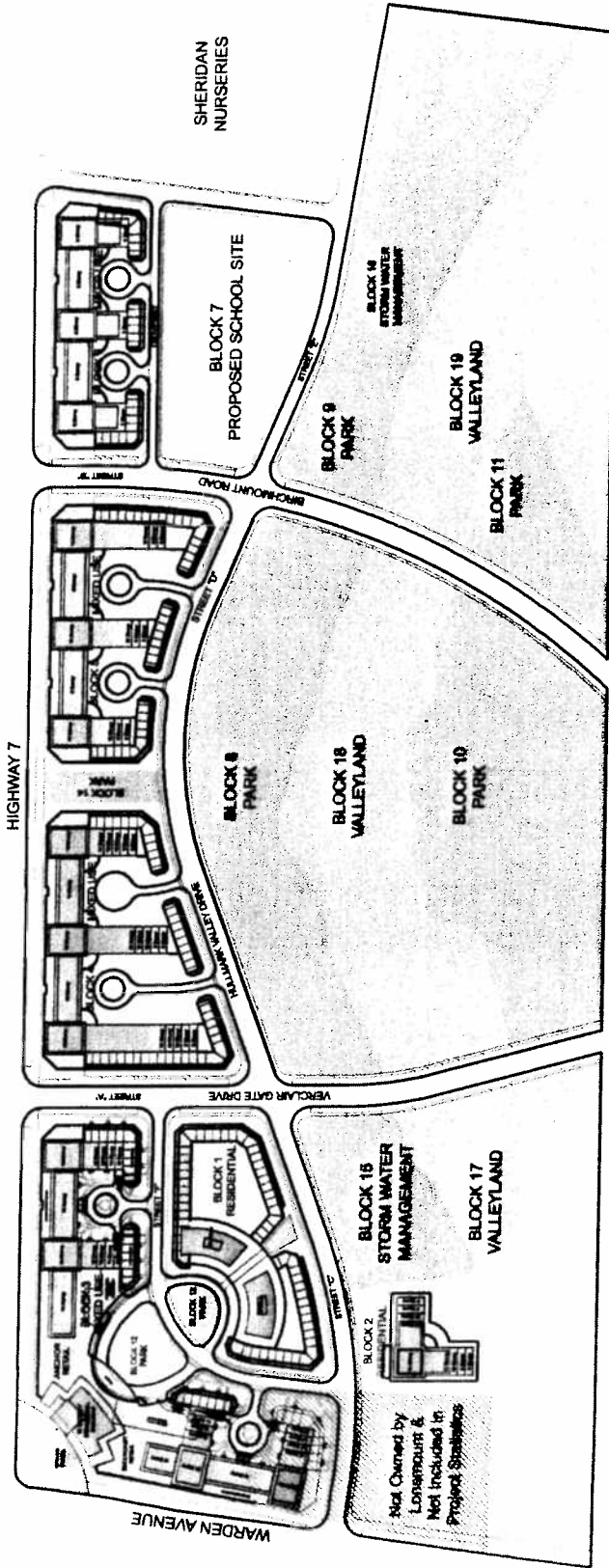
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION

SUBJECT LANDS

DATE: 12/1/07

FIGURE No. 4

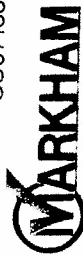
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CONCEPT PLAN

APPLICANT: LONSMOUNT CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
SE QUADRANT OF WARDEN & HWY 7

FILE No: SU07133313, ZA07133350(RK)



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION

DATE: 12/1/07

FIGURE No.5

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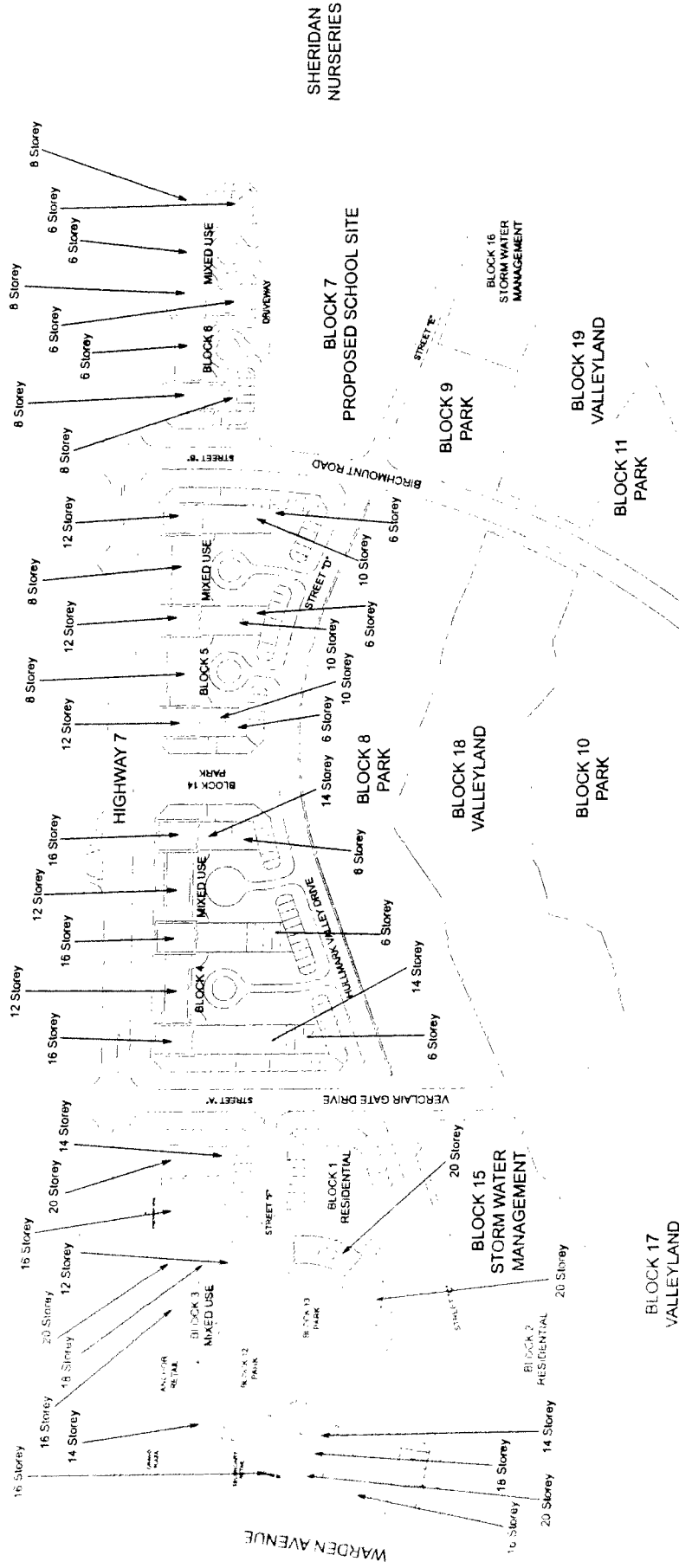
APPLICANT: LONSMOUNT CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
SE QUADRANT OF WARDEN & HWY 7

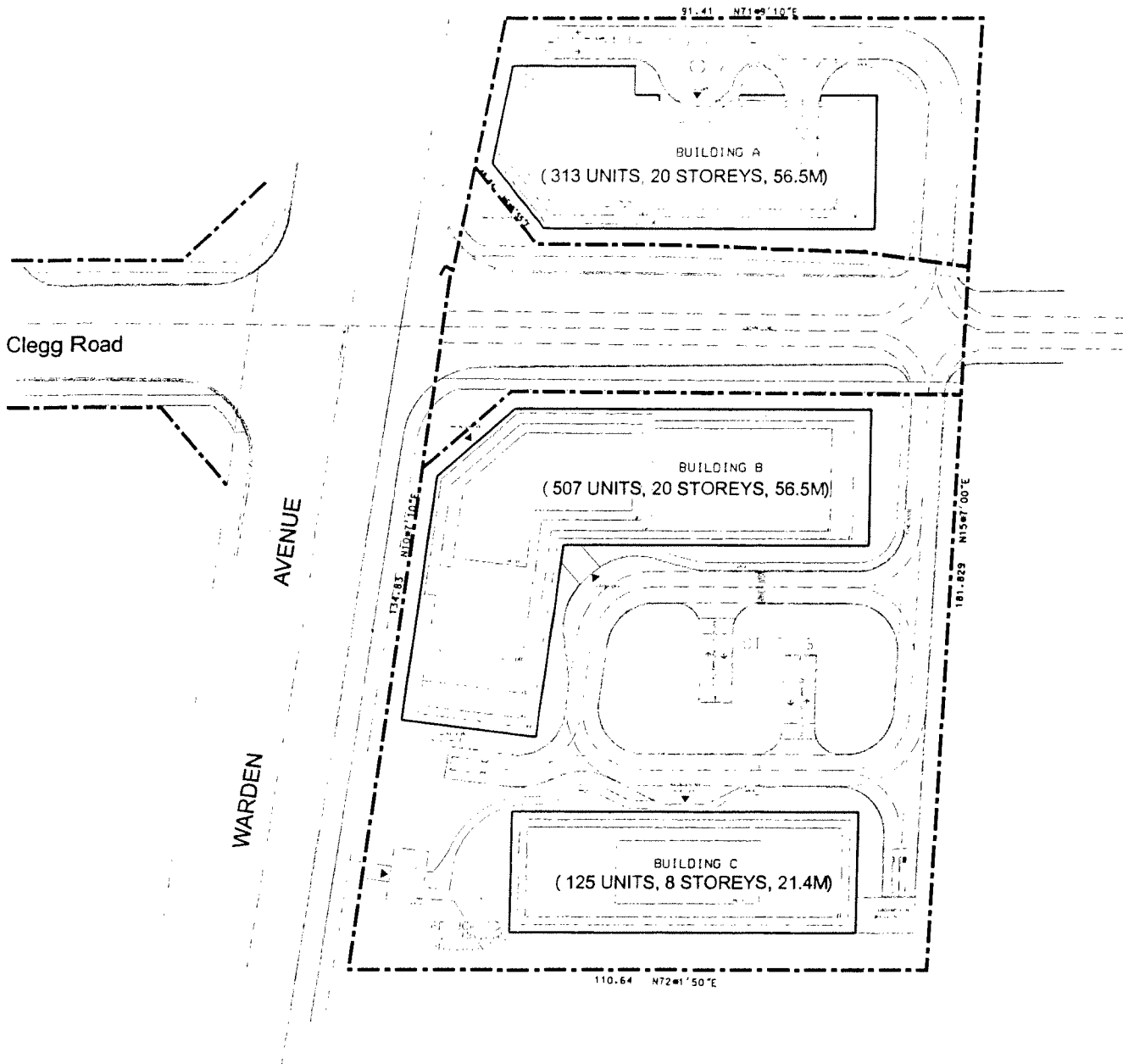


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FIGURE No. 6





ARYEH CONCEPT PLAN

APPLICANT: ARYEH CONSTRUCTION LTD.
8293 & 8303 WARDEN AVENUE

FILE No: ZA 0718026 (SH)



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION

DWN BY: CPW

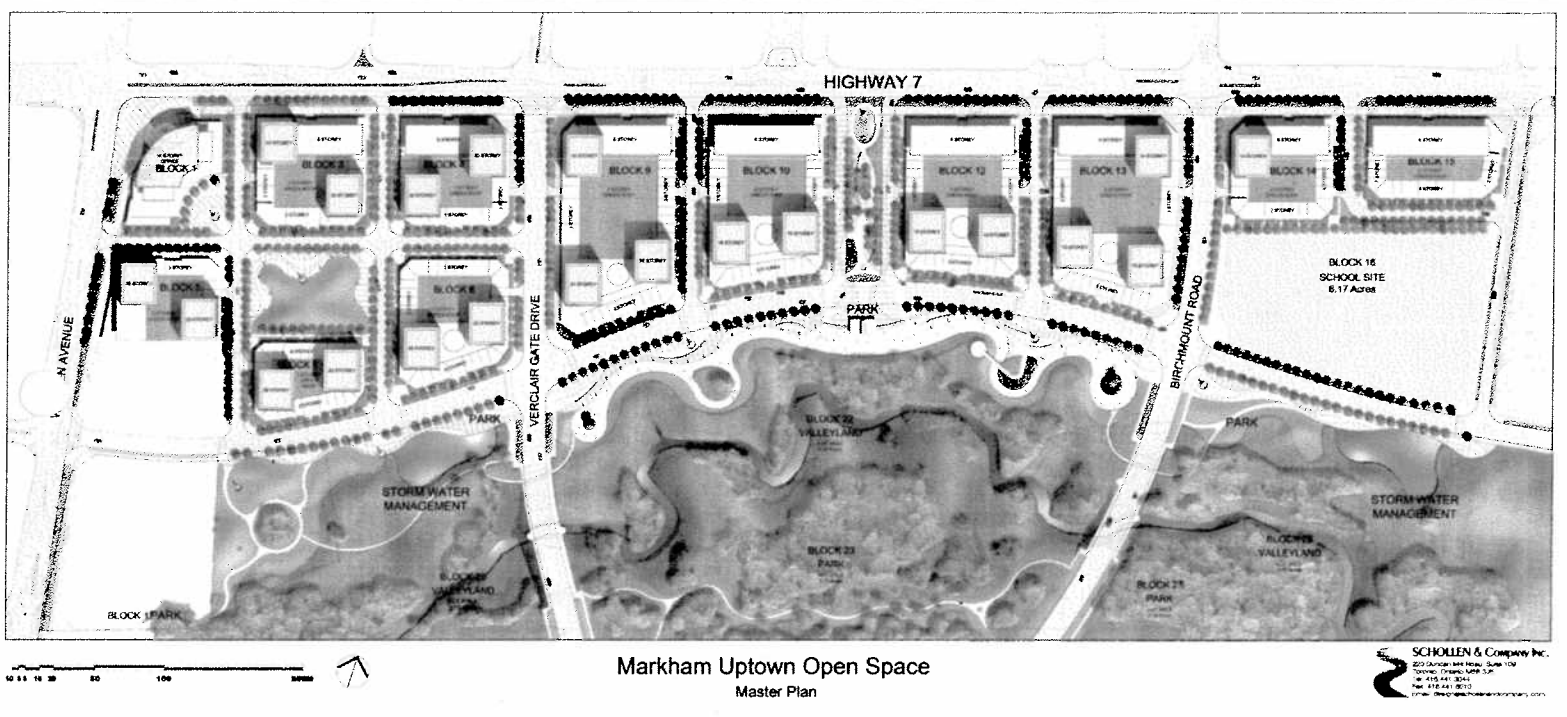
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SCALE 1: 4000

DATE: 07/10/11

FIGURE No.7

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Highway 7 Precinct Plan

Study Framework & Work Programme

Study Framework

Project Goal

- to prepare a comprehensive Precinct Plan to guide future development of the Highway 7 corridor between Warden Avenue and the GO Rail line to the east. The subject lands comprise all of the OPA 15 lands (north side of Highway 7), and the portion of the OPA 21 (Markham Centre Secondary Plan) lands between Highway 7 and the Rouge River opposite the OPA 15 lands.

Objectives

The Precinct Plan will:

- establish a comprehensive long term vision for the Highway 7 corridor which will, among other things, implement the Markham Centre guiding principle to transform Highway 7 into an Urban Boulevard.
- ensure an appropriate interface with the established low density residential community to the north.
- inform the upcoming update to OPA 21.
- respond to the submitted development applications within the study area.

The recommended Precinct Plan will address:

- street, block and lot patterns
- land use and mix
- built form, height and density
- transportation and transit
- parkland and open space elements and linkages
- pedestrian and biking connections
- streetscape components
- potential community services and facilities

Work Programme

By the end of January:

- The landowners in the study area will be introduced to the project.
- A qualified consultant will be retained to assist with the preparation of the plan.
- The Unionville Sub-committee will confirm the work programme.

By the end of February:

- Staff and the consultant will meet with the effected landowners to confirm their interests and objectives.
- A Community Information Meeting will be held (tentatively February 25 or 26) to introduce the study to the Unionville Community. Times Developments will also present their proposed development to the community at this meeting.

By the end of March:

- A design workshop will be held to generate options for the Precinct Plan. This workshop will engage effected landowners, representatives of the Unionville community, and representatives of public agencies and Town departments. The expected outcome is a preferred plan for the Precinct.
- The results of the design workshop will be presented to Development Services Committee.

By the end of April:

- A second design workshop will be held, if necessary, to refine the preferred plan.
- The results of the second design workshop will be presented to Development Services Committee.

Note: The next steps and the completion date of the study may be able to be advanced if a second workshop is not required.

By the end of May:

- A draft precinct plan and accompanying graphics and text will be presented to Development Services Committee.

By the end of June:

- A Community Information Meeting (Open House) will be held to present the draft to the community.
- Staff will report to Development Services Committee on the final Precinct Plan document.

Notes: The Unionville Subcommittee will be kept informed of progress at all stages of the study. The Markham Centre Advisory Committee will also be updated at its monthly meetings.

Products

- Summary Report - Principles of development.
- Precinct Plan – large and small prints.