



ST. LAURENT SHOPPING CENTRE

Zoning By-Law Amendment

March 2014



INTRODUCTION AND REQUESTED AMENDMENT

FOTENN Consultants Inc. has been retained by Morguard Investments Limited on behalf of the Owners, Morguard Real Estate Investment Trust (“Morguard”) to prepare this Planning Rationale in support of a Minor Zoning By-law Amendment application to modify certain provisions of the zoning currently applying to lands located at 500, 525 and 535 Coventry Road (the “Subject Properties”).

Based on previous expansion plans for the St. Laurent Centre, the redevelopment of Morguard-owned lands required, through a holding provision, the relocation and reconstruction of Coventry Road.

Given that the expansion plans may occur in the future and/or on a more modest scale, the intent of the Zoning By-law Amendment is to revise the restrictions of the holding provision to allow free-standing retail buildings and associated parking on 500, 525 and 535 Coventry Road. In order for development to proceed, a Transportation Study and other supporting materials would be required at the time of Site Plan Approval.

The Subject Properties are better described as follows:

1. The former Coca-Cola bottling and distribution facility, known municipally as 500 Coventry Road. The building on the site was previously demolished and the lands are currently used as overflow parking for the adjacent St. Laurent Shopping Centre and adjacent employment uses. The property has an area of approximately 3.47 hectares (8.57 acres).
2. The TD Waterhouse office building, located at the L-shaped signalized intersection of the existing Coventry Road and known as 525 Coventry Road. This property has an area of approximately 1.21 hectares (3 acres) and is occupied by an existing one-storey office building containing the operations of TD Waterhouse.
3. The former EMCO distribution facility, known municipally as 535 Coventry Road. The property has an area of approximately 1.49 hectares (3.68 acres) and contains a one-storey building formerly used for a low-intensity, light-industrial use which is currently vacant.

The Subject Properties are located on the south and west side of Coventry Road, west of the existing St. Laurent Shopping Centre and north of Highway 417 (Figure 1). Morguard are the owners of the Shopping Centre in addition to the Subject Properties.

To the north and northwest of the Subject Properties is a low to medium density residential neighbourhood. Northeast is St. Laurent Boulevard, a major north-south arterial mainstreet. To the east of the Subject Properties are the St. Laurent Shopping Centre and an underutilized area zoned for transit-oriented development. South of the Subject Properties is the Highway 417 corridor with light and general industrial uses beyond. Finally, to the west is an area characterized by light industrial uses and large format retail stores towards the Vanier Parkway.



Previous applications for expansion of the existing 116,000 square metre Shopping Centre to the west which included the construction of a new, larger, two-storey Sears department store, additional retail unit space, and additional office space. As part of the proposal, a portion of the centre would have been demolished and rebuilt and would have brought the total leasable floor area to 127,994 square metres.

In order to facilitate the proposed expansion, Morguard submitted development applications to the City which included:

- A Zoning By-law Amendment application approved by Ottawa City Council on November 19, 2013, which rezoned the Subject Properties and the Shopping Centre property to a General Mixed-Use zone. This amendment also permitted expansion, either of the existing shopping centre building or through new buildings of the uses existing on the property to a maximum gross floor area of 170,000 square metres. Any development greater than this floor area would be required to include the redevelopment of the lands abutting the St. Laurent Boulevard Arterial Mainstreet.
- A street closing/opening application to re-align Coventry Road to the north and west sides of the Subject Properties. A Class Environmental Assessment for this realignment was completed by the City and Morguard as co-proponents.

Given the close proximity of the Subject Properties to the St. Laurent Transit Station, the Subject Properties were examined as part of the City's 2012 Transit Oriented



Development review which focused on the Train, St. Laurent and Cyrville stations. The TOD plans set the stage for future transit-supportive or “intensified” land development in priority areas located near future light-rail transit stations.

As a result of these studies, the zoning was subsequently changed in 2012 to rezone the properties to a Transit Oriented Development (TD) zone which permitted additional height on the Subject Properties. Exceptions were maintained which permitted retail uses to continue on the lands. The exception does state the when or if the properties are used for uses other than those existing on the date the by-law was passed, then the TD zone provisions (and relevant subzone provisions) would apply. The current and proposed zoning of the Subject Properties is discussed in greater detail below.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned above, the intention of the original applications was to expand the existing St. Laurent Centre. In order to do so efficiently, the Subject properties were acquired by Morguard and the realignment of Coventry Road was proposed to facilitate the efficient expansion of the Shopping Centre.

Various factors have contributed to the decision to proceed with a renovation of the existing Shopping Centre which could result in the construction of new stand-alone retail pads on the Subject Properties immediately and to reconsider an expansion of the Shopping Centre in the future. As a result, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application would permit the development of stand-alone retail pads on the Subject Properties, without the relocation and reconstruction of Coventry Road.

Despite the revised approach, in support of any Site Plan Control application, adequate transportation and servicing capacity would need to be demonstrated along Coventry Road.

CITY OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL PLAN

The Subject Properties are designated “Employment Area” on Schedule B of the City of Ottawa Official Plan. While employment related uses are permitted in nearly all land use designations, the Employment and Enterprise Area designations have been set aside to ensure that, over the long term, sufficient areas of land are reserved primarily as places of business and economic activity. Employment areas are designated to enable a variety of functions including noxious industrial uses, uses that are not noxious but are incompatible with other uses, and prestigious uses.

Policies for the Employment Area designation are contained in Section 3.6.5. Policy 2(c) of this section states that in Employment Areas, the Zoning By-law shall permit a variety of ancillary uses, such as recreational health and fitness uses, child care, and service commercial uses within buildings containing permitted uses, within groups as part of a small plaza, or on small lots. Notwithstanding this policy, subsections (i) and (j) state the following regarding two of the Subject Properties:



- i. Notwithstanding policy 2.c) above, the site at 500 Coventry Road may be developed with 100% retail use with a maximum of two stand alone retail stores to a total maximum gross floor area of 7,779 square metres. Alternatively, should the site not be developed with “stand-alone” retail as permitted by this policy, office development within buildings having a height of 5 storeys shall be permitted. Where the site is developed for office use in accordance with this policy, retail uses shall be limited in accordance with the policies of S.3.6.5;*
- j. Notwithstanding policy 2.c) above, a stand-alone retail store up to a maximum size of 4,645 square metres gross floor area is permitted at 525 Coventry Road.*

The above policies indicate that despite the Employment Area designation, the Subject Properties have been considered solely for retail uses in the past. This conclusion is further supported by staff’s interpretation of Schedule B discussed in the staff report prepared in 2010 following the original Zoning By-law Amendment request. The interpretation of City staff in this report was that Coventry Road should add as the delineation of the Employment Area and the General Urban Area designation of the Shopping Centre lands. At that time, the realignment of Coventry Road provided the reasoning to consider the Subject Properties as part of the General Urban Area.

It is our opinion that given the existing policies, and the past interpretation of Schedule B, the Subject Properties are appropriate for retail uses, as an expansion of the Shopping Centre or as stand-alone retail uses.

PROPOSED ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

As mentioned above, the Subject Properties were rezoned to a General Mixed Use Zone in 2010 to permit the expansion of either the existing Shopping Centre or through new buildings containing uses already existing on the property. At that time, holding symbols were also added to the zoning of the Subject Properties to restrict the timing and phasing of development. The provisions of these holding symbols were added as exceptions as discussed below.

The lands were subsequently rezoned for transit-oriented development in 2012 as part of the City’s Transit Oriented Development study around the St. Laurent Shopping Centre. The provisions of the holding symbols were maintained and are now detailed in urban exceptions 1988 and 1989 of the Zoning By-law.

Given the history detailed above, the lands north and west of Coventry Road (EMCO and TD Bank lands) are presently zoned “Transit Oriented Development Zone, Subzone 2, Exception 1989, Schedule 263, Holding 2 (TD2[1989] S263-h2)” and the lands south of Coventry Road (Coke lands) are zoned “Transit Oriented Development Zone, Subzone 3, Exception 1988, Schedule 263, Holding 1 (TD3[1988] S263-h1)” (Figure 2).

With regards to the provisions of the holding symbol, exception 1988 states the following:

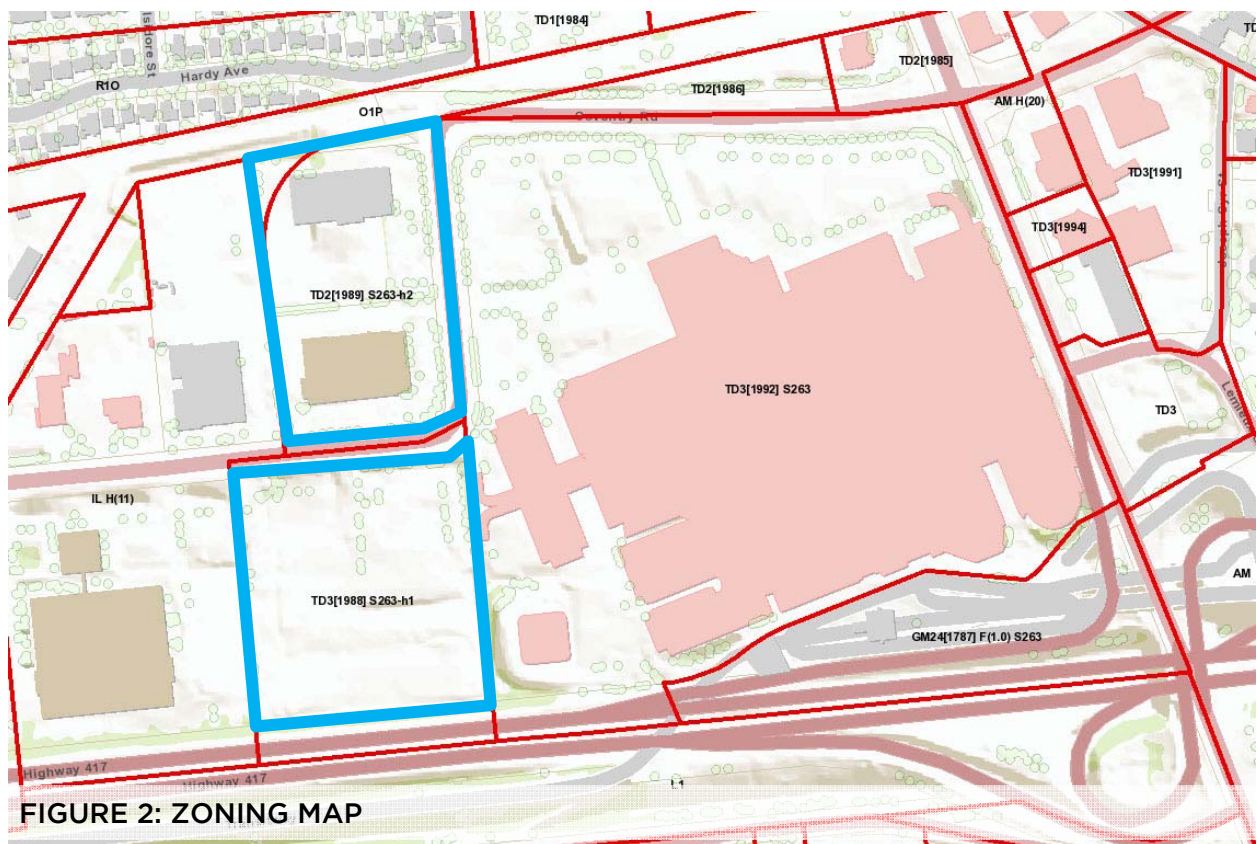


“The “h1” holding symbol will not be lifted until all agreements required outlining the details of the relocation of Coventry Road to the north and west sides of 525 and 535 Coventry Road have been executed;”

Similarly, exception 1989 states the following:

“The “h2” holding symbol will not be lifted until Coventry Road has been relocated and constructed to City standards to the north and west sides of 525 and 535 Coventry Road.”

Both exceptions continue on to provide specific provisions regarding the redevelopment of the lands, all subject to the lifting of the holding symbols, and applicable to the Subject Properties and the Shopping Centre lands. Specifically, the expansion of the existing Shopping Centre and/or the development of stand-alone retail units is permitted for uses which existed as of November 14, 2012, or which does not exceed a floor space index of 1.0. The exception further limits the gross leasable floor area of retail uses to 170,000 square metres unless the frontage along St. Laurent Boulevard is part of the development to bring street-fronting retail along the street. Finally, the exceptions state that in all other cases where the holding symbol is removed, the full provisions of the TD zone and appropriate subzone will apply and the provisions of the exception will not apply.





Schedule 263 to the Zoning By-law is applicable to the Subject Properties and the Shopping Centre lands and sets maximum building heights for the areas of the lands. The greatest heights are permitted on the Shopping Centre lands, adjacent to the transit station, while the Subject Properties have height limits of 40 metres (Coke lands) and 25 metres (EMCO and TD lands).

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to permit the redevelopment of the Subject Properties (500, 525 and 535 Coventry Road) without the relocation of Coventry Road. Any development on these properties would be subject to the approval of a Site Plan Control Application demonstrating sufficient roadway and servicing capacity.

It is our opinion that the proposed form of development conforms to the Official Plan and maintains the intent of the Zoning By-law and that the holding symbols should therefore be removed. The intent of the provisions was to promote orderly and coordinated redevelopment of the lands, with the expansion contemplated in a more broad and large scale. Given that the redevelopment will occur on a smaller, incremental scale, the revising of provisions of the holding is appropriate. Additional provisions of the exceptions would continue to apply to the Subject Properties and the Shopping Centre lands and the lands would still revert to the provisions of the TD zone, should new uses be introduced on the site in the future.

It should be noted that the expansion of the Shopping Centre, and subsequently the realignment of Coventry Road, are still considered as the desired development plan for the lands. However, these plans are for the long-term and the construction of retail units on the Subject Properties now would not preclude future development plans on the parcel. Any major expansion of the Shopping Centre would also continue to necessitate the relocation of Coventry Road to provide sufficient land for parking and building area.

CONCLUSION

The development of the edges of the St. Laurent Centre can proceed without the relocation of Coventry Road. In fact, prior to the previous expansion plans, the Subject Properties could have developed independently from the Centre.

The lands benefit from arterial road frontage, have access to signals and existing services. All issues, however, related to access, landscaping, servicing, and parking would occur at the time of Site Plan Control. The intent is to revise the provisions of the Holding to allow these applications to proceed without the previous restrictions.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment conforms to the applicable policies of the Official Plan and proposes a form of development that is appropriate for the subject properties. Retail uses on the Subject Properties are contemplated in the existing Official Plan policies and the use of the lands for retail was deemed appropriate during the 2010 Zoning Amendment process.

It is our opinion that the proposed realignment of Coventry Road was not the determining factor in the appropriateness of these lands for retail uses and that as a



result the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is appropriate. The amendment will not preclude the future relocation of the road when the Shopping Centre expansion occurs.

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APPENDIX A: LAND MAP

av. Hardy Ave.

ch. Coventry Rd.

**535 COVENTRY
(EMCO Lands)**

**535 COVENTRY
(TD Lands)**

**1200 ST.LAURENT
(St.laurent Shopping Centre)**

**535 COVENTRY
(COKE Lands)**

rue Lemie

aut./Hwy. 417