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PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND COMMISSIONER DELEGATED APPROVALS INFORMATION REPORT 2007 YEAR END SUMMARY

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated February 7, 2008, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report is submitted to provide Regional Council a summary and update of major development applications and significant planning matters that are reviewed by Regional Planning Staff and approved by Regional Council including Regional Official Plan Amendments and Regionally significant local Official Plan Amendments. Official Plan Amendment applications impact Regional interests and are the subject of a separate report to Council.

This report also provides planning activities submitted under the Commissioner's delegated authority from July 1 to December 31, 2007.

3. BACKGROUND

Summary of significant development applications and planning matters

This report provides an overview of staff involvement on major planning activities such as Official Plan reviews, Statutory Public Meetings, Ontario Municipal Board Hearings and Provincial planning matters.

Regional Council has delegated authority to the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services to issue recommendations or approvals related to development applications that are routine in nature, subject to a requirement that such approvals be reported to Council through the Planning and Economic Development Committee on a regular basis. This report provides a list of the following delegated approvals including:

1. Local “routine” official plan amendments.

These are minor applications with no outstanding Regional or local issues that the Regional Planning Commissioner has been authorized by Council to approve.

2. Local “exempt” official plan amendments.

These are minor applications with no Regional issues, which the Regional Planning Commissioner exempts from the Regional approval process, thereby allowing the local municipality to make a decision on the application.

3. Conditions of draft approval for plans of subdivision and condominium.

As a commenting agency, the Region provides a letter to the local municipality outlining Regional requirements of draft plan approval including transit, water and wastewater, roads, financial and planning conditions.

4. Final approval or “clearance” for plans of subdivision and condominium.

As a commenting agency, the Region provides a letter to the local municipality outlining how each Regional condition of draft plan approval has been satisfied.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENTS (OPA)

Reported on/approved or exempted 30 OPA applications

In 2007, Regional staff reported on 2 Regional Official Plan Amendments and 4 regionally significant local Official Plan Amendments. In addition, Regional staff approved 14 local Official Plan Amendments by way of the “Routine” process and exempted 10 local Official Plan Amendments from the Regional approval process, as indicated in Table 1 (see *Attachment 1*). Regional staff issued decisions/reported on a total of 30 Official Plan Amendment applications compared to 40 in 2006.

Five local municipalities are currently undergoing Official Plan reviews

Currently, the municipalities of Vaughan, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, East Gwillimbury and Markham are undergoing reviews to their Official Plans. The Official Plan reviews will, among other things, assess urban expansion opportunities. During this review period the Region will likely continue to experience a decrease in Official Plan Amendment applications, as major local Official Plan Amendment applications and related Regional Official Plan Amendments that deal with expansion to the urban areas (greenfield developments) are put on hold awaiting completion of the OP reviews.

4.2 STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETINGS

In 2007, Regional staff held 6 statutory public meetings

In 2007, Regional staff held the following statutory public meetings:

1. January 10, 2007, Public meeting to amend the Region's urban boundary in the Town of Aurora – 2C Lands.
2. June 13, 2007, Public meeting on ROPA 54, a technical amendment to provide a number of minor updates to ROP policies and maps to reflect new information, changed circumstances and correct minor errors.
3. June 13, 2007, Public meeting on ROPA 57, to extend lake-base water supply to the Community of Kleinburg.
4. September 5, 2007, Public meeting on ROPA 58, the designation and alignment update for Highway 404 and the Bradford By-pass.
5. October 31, 2007, Public meeting on ROPA 56, a technical amendment to ensure that the transit related policies in the ROP remain current and are effective in the implementation of planned transit services and infrastructure.
6. November 28, 2007, Public meeting on ROPA 60, introduction of Community Improvement Plan policies as a result of the amendment to the *Planning Act*, which permits "prescribed" upper tier municipalities to use Community Improvement Plans to achieve infrastructure, land and buildings adjacent to transit as well as affordable housing.

4.3 PLANS OF SUBDIVISION AND CONDOMINIUM

A continued shift towards a more diverse housing stock

In 2007, the Region forwarded conditions of approval on 53 plans of subdivision and 36 plans of condominium representing 12,362.5 residential units and 149.72 hectares of industrial/commercial lands, as indicated in Table 2 (see *Attachment 1*). Comparatively, the Region provided comments/conditions on 73 plans of subdivision and 21 plans of condominium in 2006, representing 12,811.5 residential units and 414.23 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.

As indicated in Table 3 (see *Attachment 1*), the majority of residential units proposed within the subdivision/condominium applications for which the Region provided comments/conditions were multi-family residential units. This represents a continued shift towards a more diverse housing stock, in line with Provincial and Regional housing initiatives.

Increase in the amount of industrial/commercial lands which staff provided clearance/final plan approval

From January to December 2007, staff provided clearance of Regional conditions of approval on final plans to the local municipalities and issued final approval on 75 plans

of subdivision and condominium involving a total 6,731.5 residential units and 155.02 hectares of commercial/industrial lands, as indicated in Table 4, (see *Attachment 1*). In comparison, in 2006, staff provided clearance/final approval on 68 plans of subdivision and condominium involving 8,158.5 residential units and 103.8 hectares of industrial/commercial lands. This represents an increase in the number of applications and amount of industrial/commercial lands on which staff provided clearance/final plan approval.

4.4 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)

In 2007, the DRC reviewed 117 new planning applications

The Development Review Committee (DRC) meets bi-weekly to discuss all recently-submitted development applications and other related matters including trends, changes in legislation and/or process, and emerging issues. In 2007, the DRC reviewed a total of 117 new planning applications, including 42 official plan amendments, 39 plans of subdivision, 24 plans of condominium, 9 site plans and 3 applications from adjoining regions.

4.5 UPDATE OF VARIOUS PLANNING MATTERS

In 2007, the Community Planning Branch was involved in 24 OMB hearings

During 2007, the Community Planning Branch was involved in 24 OMB hearings, 11 of which are ongoing hearings that staff will continue to be involved in 2008. The remaining 13 hearings were settled or had no further involvement by staff. The following two OMB hearings are of special note:

Approval of amendment is expected to facilitate development that supports the extension of the Spadina Subway

City of Vaughan OPA 620 – Steeles Corridor between Jane and Keele Street:
OPA 620 was adopted by Vaughan in June 2006 and approved by York Region in the fall of 2006. The purpose of the amendment is to permit a high density mixed-use development within the subject lands. With the assistance of an Ontario Municipal Board appointed Mediator, the three appellants have settled their issues with the City of Vaughan and York Region. The general nature of the settlements include: grandfathering existing uses, density bonuses for additional underground parking for non-residential uses, and increased heights in a particular block. Approval of the amendment is expected to facilitate development that supports the extension of the Spadina Subway.

Rehearing granted for the North Leslie Planning Area in the Town of Richmond Hill

North Leslie Secondary Plan, Town of Richmond Hill:

Four parties of the Bayview East Landowners' Group (BELG) were granted a rehearing before the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) with respect to the land use designations for their lands within the North Leslie Planning Area. The Town filed a Motion for Leave to Appeal before the Divisional Court on this decision and the Region supports this action by the Town. BELG also filed, but were not granted, a Motion for Leave to Appeal with respect to the decision of the OMB concerning permitted uses within the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt Plan. Subsequently, BELG filed a Section 43 Review request to the OMB for this matter.

Employment land conversions now require a Municipal Comprehensive Review

Protection of Employment Lands:

The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, the 2006 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Bill 51 amendments to the Planning Act has given municipalities greater powers to protect employment lands. York Regional Council adopted a policy position to protect employment lands. The Region now requires conversions to be considered only through a Municipal Comprehensive Review.

New Planning Application Fee schedule endorsed by Council on December 13, 2007

On December 13, 2007, Regional Council endorsed an amendment to the planning application fee schedule. A by-law to prescribe fees for processing planning applications took effect on February 1, 2008, through By-law No. A-0393-2007-091.

5. PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND COMMISSIONER DELEGATED APPROVALS, JULY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2007

This section deals specifically with development activities from July 1 to December 31, 2007, and is being provided in accordance with Council's requirements to provide details, on planning activities, on a quarterly or semi annual basis. A semi annual timeframe was chosen because during the summer months of June, July and August, there was minimal Official Plan approval activity and the majority of subdivision development activity took place from September to December 2007.

Staff reported on 2 Regional Official Plan Amendments and issued decision of approval on 1 Regionally Significant local Official Plan Amendment from July 1 to December 31, 2007, as indicated in Table 5 (see *Attachment 2*).

Staff commented on 8 local Official Plan Amendments by way of the “Routine” process from July 1 to December 31, 2007, as indicated in Table 6 (see *Attachment 3*).

Staff exempted 3 local Official Plan Amendments from the Regional approval process, from July 1 to December 31, 2007, as described in Table 7 (see *Attachment 4*).

From July 1 to December 31, 2007, staff provided Regional comments and recommended conditions of approval to the local municipalities or Ontario Municipal Board on 27 proposed plans of subdivision, the details of which are provided in Table 8 (see *Attachment 5*). The 27 plans of subdivision comprise a total of 3,863 residential units and 60.6 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.

During the second half of 2007, staff provided Regional comments and recommended conditions of approval to the local municipalities or Ontario Municipal Board on 25 proposed plans of condominium, the details of which are provided in Table 9 (see *Attachment 6*). The 25 plans of condominium comprise a total of 1,850 residential units and 14.11 hectares of industrial/commercial land.

In the same time period, staff provided clearance of Regional conditions of approval on final plans to the local municipalities and issued final plan approval on a total 24 plans of subdivision, as indicated in Table 10 (see *Attachment 7*). The 24 plans comprise a total of 2,374 residential units and 23.0 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.

No clearances for final plan of condominium were issued in the second half of 2007.

5.1 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)

The DRC reviewed 56 planning applications from July to December 2007 including 21 official plan amendments, 14 plans of subdivision, 15 plans of condominium, 5 site plans and a Peel Region Regional Official Plan for the Bolton Expansion Area.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In 2007, fee revenues for approvals and plan review totalled \$224,353

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. Development from the applications listed in Section 5 of this report will provide tax assessment to both the Region and the local municipalities.

For 2007, fee revenues for approvals and plan review totalled \$224,353, which represents a 15% decrease from 2006 when fees totalled \$264,757, as seen below, in Table 11.

Table 11
Fee Revenue for Approvals and Plan Review
Year 2007

Quarter	1	2	3	4
Fee Revenue (\$)	92,215	43,173	53,260	35,705
2007 Total Revenue (\$) 224,353				

For 2008 staff expects a continuation of the decline in OPA applications. However, due to the increasing complexity of these applications, resulting from Provincial legislation, and the necessity to increase fees associated with these major OPA applications revenues for 2008 are expected to match that of 2007.

7. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Official Plan amendments approved, or exempted, by the Region establish the principle of development that leads to further development approvals at the local level. Conditions of approval provided by the Region on plans of subdivision and condominium facilitate approvals issued by the local municipalities.

8. CONCLUSION

In the year 2007, the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

- Reported on/approved or exempted 30 Official Plan amendment applications.
- Provided comments/conditions of draft approval to the local municipalities or Ontario Municipal Board on 89 plans of subdivision and condominium representing 12,362 residential units and 149.72 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.
- Provided clearance of Regional conditions to local municipalities and issued final plan approval on a total of 71 plans of subdivision and condominium comprising a total of 6,731.5 residential units and 155.02 hectares of industrial/commercial land.
- Reviewed 117 new planning applications at DRC including 42 Official Plan Amendments, 39 plans of subdivision, 24 plans of condominium and 9 site plans and 3 applications from adjoining regions.

During 2007, York Region's population grew by approximately 32,382 people in 10,502 newly completed homes, reaching a total estimated population of 983,056.

In York Region, total housing completions for 2007 increased by 3.3% over last years total of 10,162. During this same period, total GTA completions dropped by 19%, from 41,664 in 2006 to 33,735 in 2007.

Report No. 3 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee
Regional Council Meeting of March 27, 2008

2007 Completions		
Unit Type	# Units	% Share
Singles	5,458	52%
Semis	1,152	11%
Rows	1,807	17%
Apartments	2,085	20%
Total	10,502	100%

2006 Completions		
Unit Type	# Units	% Share
Singles	5,981	59%
Semis	1,108	11%
Rows	1,660	16%
Apartments	1,413	14%
Total	10,162	100%

2005 Completions		
Unit Type	# Units	% Share
Singles	5,089	57%
Semis	1,280	14%
Rows	1,749	19%
Apartments	874	10%
Total	8,992	100%

For more information on this report, please contact Maria Leonis, Planner, Community Planning, at Ext. 1568, or Heather Konefat, Director, Community Planning, Ext. 1502.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The seven attachments referred to in this clause are included with this report.)