

Clause 20 in Report No. 13 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on September 24, 2015.

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Unionville Home Society Redevelopment

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated August 14, 2015 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council confirm, subject to remaining approvals, a commitment to proceed with construction of an affordable seniors housing building in Unionville, with a minimum of 200 units, upon planning approvals having been secured from the City of Markham.
2. Staff report back to Council with an update and next steps, when approval for key components of the project have been secured.
3. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the City of Markham Council for information.

2. Purpose

This report provides information on the Unionville Home Society (UHS) Redevelopment. In addition, it seeks Council's commitment to proceed with development and construction of the Region's affordable housing building upon receipt of all required approvals being obtained for the site from the City of Markham.

### 3. Background

The UHS redevelopment can help to provide sustainable operations for their campus

The new Unionville Home Society, a non-denominational, non-profit charitable corporation, operates long-term care facilities and social housing on an approximately 18 acre campus on Highway 7, just west of Main Street Unionville.

Currently located on the UHS lands are the following facilities:

1. Unionville – long term care facility for 160 residents providing individualized complex care
2. Heritage Village - 92 federally-funded, one-bedroom, self-contained, rental bungalows for independent seniors, with subsidized units
3. Wyndham Gardens Apartments - 122 life-lease unit apartment complex
4. Unionville Community Centre for Seniors - recreational/cultural centre

Heritage Village was constructed in 1978, under a federal non-profit housing program, and is in need of capital investment to maintain the building in a state of good repair. A building condition assessment completed in 2005 indicated that significant capital investment would be necessary over the next few years to maintain the buildings in a state of good repair.

In addition to the upcoming financial investment needed at Heritage Village, UHS has mortgages on Heritage Village and their Long Term Care Facility. In order to raise funds to sustain the Long Term Care operation, and in an effort to ensure affordable housing remains as part of the Unionville fabric, UHS decided to sell land to the private sector and secure a partnership with York Region.

Unionville Home Society issued a formal call for proposals to residential developers for the Heritage Village site. Minto responded to UHS' call for proposals and were selected to develop the site based on a full review of their capabilities, and 60 years of experience building healthy and vibrant communities.

Unionville Home Society approached the Region about the possibility of the Region developing a senior's affordable housing building on the vacant parcel of the current UHS site. In June 2015, Council approved the Region's purchase of land from Minto for the purpose of a future senior's affordable housing building.

The initial development sequencing included a UHS plan to rehouse the Heritage Village tenants

On June 29, 2015, UHS informed Heritage Village tenants of the future development plans for the UHS campus. Tenants were advised that the lands where Heritage Village is located will be developed by Minto for private residential sale and that the Region intended to develop a senior's affordable housing building on the campus by approximately 2020. UHS indicated that maximum support would be provided to help them relocate by December 2016 so that development could then proceed. Residents were unhappy about their prospective relocation and advocated strongly that despite the difficulties of living amid a construction zone they would prefer to stay put, see the Region's development go first, and move directly into the Region's new building as soon as it was completed. They did not want to move twice and did not want to wait until 2020 to move back into a neighbourhood they are familiar with. It was too long a wait to be re-united with existing friends and supports.

A follow-up meeting with the tenants affected by the proposed redevelopment of Heritage Village was held by UHS on July 16<sup>th</sup> 2015. Region staff attended and participated in the meeting along with representatives from the UHS Board of Directors.

Attendees again advocated strongly to have all parties reconsider the order of development to have the Region's building completed first.

#### 4. Analysis and Options

Unionville Home Society, Minto and the Region have all agreed to pursue a revised plan that would see the Regional building constructed first

Following the July 16<sup>th</sup> tenant meeting, UHS, Minto and the Region held several meetings to explore what would be required for the Region's building to be constructed first. UHS has reviewed their financial needs and are able to manage their position to allow the Region building to be completed first assuming it is done in a timely and reasonable manner. Minto has reviewed their development plans and are willing to defer the development of the Heritage Village site in order to enable the Region building to be completed first.

There are still many approvals required for the Region's building for the project to proceed

In order for the project to be viable, the Region will need to construct a minimum of 200 units, up to a maximum of 250 units, on this site to make the project

economically and operationally feasible. The following will be required to move forward:

- Multi-storey building to accommodate required densities
- Securing required zoning
- Site plan approval
- Legal and enforceable access to a public road
- Connections to site servicing
- Potentially an Official Plan Amendment

Based on previous developments, eight storeys will likely be required depending on unit size, mix and final massing. The City of Markham's support is required to obtain the necessary planning approvals and to assist with community engagement.

There will be considerable construction activity on the site for many years

The Region's new building will be located very close to the Heritage Village site. Like any multi-storey residential construction there may be considerable traffic, noise, and dust associated with the construction activities. Residents who choose to stay at Heritage Village will experience a significant impact. First during the construction of the Region's building and then, after they have moved to the Region's building, during the construction of Minto's private development. Construction activity on the entire site may span a five year period.

Residents who would like to move prior to, or during, construction may request a transfer. However, it will become more difficult to transfer residents on short notice as opposed to strategically rehousing them before construction commences. Best efforts will be made to accommodate.

When the Region constructs new buildings to replace older buildings, existing tenants at the location have the first opportunity to move into the new building. Heritage Village tenants will have the first opportunity to move into the Region's new senior's affordable rental building on this site.

Link to key Council-approved plans

The Region's future redevelopment plans at the UHS site directly supports the strategic initiatives articulated in the Region's *Official Plan*, the Community and Health Services Department's *Multi Year Plan* and in the Region's Human Services Planning Board Campaign, *Make Rental Happen*. These guiding

strategies encourage the development and continued growth of healthy communities through goals and policies that encourage the provision of a variety of housing choices for the diverse residents of York Region. This initiative also fits into the goal of the Region's 10 year Housing Plan to increase the supply of rental housing in York Region.

## 5. Financial Implications

The Region's 2015 10-year capital plan includes the total funding for this development

The Region's approved 2015 10-year capital plan includes funding for a seniors affordable housing building on this site, up to 250 units, including the Capital Spending Authority to support the purchase of necessary land.

Capital Spending Authority for the expedited development and construction of the building will be sought through the 2016 budget process, pending approval of this report.

## 6. Local Municipal Impact

By completing the Region's building before the private development begins, the tenants at Heritage Village will have the opportunity to remain in their current homes and remain in the community.

There is a growing need for new affordable housing across York Region. The development of a new senior's affordable rental building by the Region presents a tremendous opportunity to address this growing need, specifically in the City of Markham, a southern municipality which has one of the highest demands for affordable housing with approximately 8,000 households waiting for units.

## 7. Conclusion

Unionville Home Society, Minto and the Region have worked together to pursue a plan that would see the Region's building constructed first. Council's commitment to proceed with the construction of the Region's affordable housing building is required so that tenants may choose to remain at Heritage Village and move directly into the Region's new building,

## Unionville Home Society Redevelopment Update

For more information on this report, please contact Rick Farrell, General Manager, Housing Services at extension 72091.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

August 14, 2015

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request