
February 4, 2020

Mrs. Nancy J. Bozzato, Secretary Treasurer
Committee of Adjustment
Town of Pelham
Fonthill, ON L0S 1E0

Re: Minor Variance Application A1/2020P
815 Foss Road, Pelham
Part of Lot 19, Plan 703
Roll No. 2732 010 016 14300

The subject parcel, shown as Part 1 on the attached sketch, has 13.72 m of frontage on the north side of Foss Road, lying west of Church Street, legally described above, in the Town of Pelham.

The subject land is zoned 'Residential Village 1' (RV1) in accordance with Pelham Zoning By-law 1136 (1987), as amended. The minor variance application requests relief from:

- **Section 9.2 (a) "Minimum Lot Area"** to permit a lot area of 689 m², whereas 836 m² is required.
- **Section 9.2 (b) "Minimum Lot Frontage"** to permit a lot frontage of 13.72 m, whereas 18 m is required.

Both variances are required to legalize the proposed lot and facilitate the severance approval under file B2/2020P.

Note: File B2/2020P & A2/2020P are being considered concurrently.

Applicable Planning Policies

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) (2014)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. The PPS provides for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural and built environment.

Section 3 of the *Planning Act* requires that decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" policy statements issued under the *Act*. The PPS recognizes the diversity of Ontario and that local context is important. Policies are outcome-oriented, and some policies provide flexibility provided that provincial interests are upheld. PPS policies represent minimum standards.

The subject land is located in a 'Settlement Area' according to the PPS. Policy 1.1.3.1 states that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.

Policy 1.1.3.3 states municipalities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for intensifications where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock and the availability of suitable existing infrastructure and public service facilities.

The Niagara Region Official Plan prescribes an annual residential intensification rate of 15% for all lands within Pelham's *Urban Settlement Areas*, this policy target is also reflected in the Pelham Official Plan.

Policy 1.1.3.4 states appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate *intensification*, *redevelopment* and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.

The proposed minor variance application has been submitted to seek relief from two (2) zoning provisions in order to legalize the proposed lot within the RV1 zone regulations for a future dwelling.

Policy 2.6.2 states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or archaeological potential unless the resources have been conserved. The Town's Heritage Master Plan identifies this area as having high archaeological resource potential, therefore an Assessment and Ministry Clearance is required as a condition of severance approval.

The proposal will facilitate the construction of one new single detached dwelling in a more compact form that helps reduce the amount of under-utilized *urban land* within the Village of Fenwick.

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019)

This Plan informs decision-making regarding growth management and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). All decisions made after May 16, 2019 that affect a planning matter will conform with this Growth Plan, subject to any legislative or regulatory provisions providing otherwise. The policies of this Plan take precedence over the PPS to the extent of any conflict.

The subject parcel is located within a 'Settlement Area' according to the Growth Plan. Guiding principles regarding how land is developed:

- Support the achievement of *complete communities* to meet people's needs through an entire lifetime.
- Prioritize *intensification* and higher densities to make efficient use of land and *infrastructure*.
- Support a range and mix of housing options, including second units and *affordable* housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.
- Provide for different approaches to manage growth that recognize the diversity of communities in the GGH.
- Integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth.

Policy 2.2.1 Managing Growth – 2. Forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan will be allocated based on the following:

- a) the vast majority of growth will be directed to *settlement areas* that:
 - i. have a *delineated built boundary*;
 - ii. have existing municipal water / wastewater systems; and
 - iii. can support the achievement of complete communities.

Complete Communities are defined as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within a Town that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores, and services, a full range of housing, transportation options and *public service facilities*. *Complete communities* may take different shapes and forms appropriate for their contexts.

Policy 2.2.2 Delineated built-up areas – states that when the next *municipal comprehensive review* is approved

and in effect, the applicable minimum intensification for Niagara is 50% of all residential development annually. Until that time, the Region's current annual minimum intensification target is 15% for the Town of Pelham.

Policy 2.2.6.2 Housing – states that notwithstanding policy 1.4.1 of the PPS (2014), in implementing policy 2.2.6.1, municipalities will support the achievement of *complete communities* by:

- a) planning to accommodate forecasted growth to this Plan's horizon;
- b) planning to achieve the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
- c) considering the range and mix of housing options and densities of the existing housing stock; and
- d) planning to diversify their overall housing stock across the municipality.

Ground-oriented residential dwellings are the predominant housing type in this Fenwick neighbourhood, with single detached dwellings making up the majority of that mix. Single detached dwellings are also the only permitted use under the RV1 zone of the current Zoning By-law (1987).

The subject lands are located around 1 km from Downtown Fenwick, various other commercial uses along Canboro Road two public elementary schools. The local public high school is nearby just west of the Village of Fonthill.

The proposal will facilitate the construction of one new single detached dwelling on a fairly large (1533 m²) residential lot in a more compact form that helps reduce the amount of under-utilized *urban land* within the Village of Fenwick. The proposed dwelling will also help contribute towards the municipal property tax base which helps towards maintaining linear infrastructure and *public service facilities*. The existing water and sanitary sewer mains already extend along the frontage of the subject lands but would be better utilized with additional building connections.

Regional Official Plan (Consolidated August 2014)

The Regional Official Plan designates the subject land as 'Built-Up Area' within the Urban Area Boundary.

Policy 4.G.6.2 indicates 'Urban Areas' will be the focus for accommodating the Region's growth and development.

Policy 4.G.8.1 states *Built-Up Areas* will be the focus of residential intensification and redevelopment.

Regional staff did not request to be circulated the proposed applications as the development aligns with Provincial and Regional policies.

The proposed minor variance conforms to the Regional Official Plan because the lands are located within the *built-up* area which is the planned focus of residential intensification and redevelopment over the long term. The proposed dwelling, together with the required zoning by-law provisions is compatible with the existing surrounding neighbourhood from a land use and housing perspective.

Pelham Official Plan (2014)

The Town of Pelham Official Plan is the primary planning document that will direct the actions of the Town and shape growth that will support and emphasize Pelham's unique character, diversity, cultural heritage and protect our natural heritage features.

The local Official Plan designates the subject land as 'Urban Living Area / Built Boundary'.

Policy A2.1.2 Natural Environment – states the natural environment objectives of this Plan are to make planning decisions that consider the health and integrity of the broader landscape as well as the long term and cumulative impacts on the ecosystem.

No key natural heritage features such as *Significant Woodlands*, *Provincially Significant Wetlands* or *valleylands* etc. are located near the subject lands.

Policy A2.2.2 Growth & Settlement – states that it is a goal of this Plan to encourage intensification and redevelopment within the *Urban Area* specifically in proximity to the Downtown.

The subject lands are around 1 km to Downtown Fenwick.

Policy A2.3.2 Urban Character – stated objectives of this Plan include:

- To respect the character of existing development and ensure that all applications for development are physically compatible with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- To encourage the intensification and use of the lands within the Fonthill Downtown core and to make every effort to improve its economic health by encouraging redevelopment and broadest mix of compatible uses.
- To maintain and enhance the character and stability of existing and well-established residential neighbourhoods by ensuring that redevelopment is compatible with the scale and density of existing development.
- To encourage the development of neighbourhoods which are compact, pedestrian-friendly and provide a mix of housing types.

The proposed minor variance would facilitate the construction of one new single detached dwelling in proximity to Downtown Fenwick. The neighbourhood character is one of predominantly ground-oriented residences (i.e. single detached) on large lots.

Policy A2.5.2 Infrastructure – stated objectives of this Plan include maintaining existing infrastructure in a manner that is cost effective and contributes to the quality of life of citizens.

Policy A2.7.2 Cultural Heritage – states it is the Plan's objective to ensure that the nature and location of cultural heritage and archaeological resources are known and considered before land use decisions are made.

No Part IV designated heritage properties flank the subject lands and an archaeological clearance from the Ministry is required as a condition of severance approval.

Policy B1.1.1 recognizes the existing urban area of Fonthill and the role the Town will need to accommodate various forms of residential intensifications, where appropriate.

Policy B1.1.3 provides policy guidance and direction with respect to intensification proposals within the *Urban Living Area / Built Boundary*. While intensification opportunities are encouraged, proponents will be expected to demonstrate, that such proposals will be respectful of, compatible with, and designed to be integrated with the neighbourhood where they're proposed.

In considering residential intensification proposals, the following criteria are applicable:

- a) Schedules A1 and A2 identify a number of areas that may be good candidates for residential intensification. This does not preclude consideration elsewhere in the *Urban Living Area* provided these sites abut arterial or collector roads or are located on a local road on a site that is no further than 100 metres from an intersection with a collector or arterial road;
 - ✓ The subject lands are not identified symbolically as a 'Potential Intensification Area' according to Schedule 'A1'. They are located just over 50 metres from Church Street, being the closest collector road.
- b) Intensification and redevelopment proposals are encouraged to achieve a unit density and housing type that is in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood density;

- ✓ The neighbourhood is predominantly single detached dwellings and the severance would yield one new single detached dwelling on a deep lot.
- c) Residential intensification and redevelopment proposals located on lands which abut local roads shall maintain the unit density and unit type of the surrounding neighbourhood, but may through a Zoning By-law Amendment, increase the unit density by up to 25% of the existing gross density of lands located within 300 metres of the site, provided the resultant development will be characterized by quality design and landscaping, suitable building setbacks, and further that parking areas and traffic movements will not negatively impact the surrounding neighbourhood from the perspectives of safety or neighbourhood character;
 - ✓ The proposed zoning (minor variances A1-A2/2020P) both seek to legalize the RV1 zone lot frontage and/or lot area deficiencies.
 - ✓ There are no traffic and parking issues anticipated with this lot creation.
- d) Notwithstanding items (b) and (c), the creation of new freehold infill lots through the consent process, for ground-oriented detached dwellings, may be permitted provided the proposed lot and unit type is similar to and compatible with the established character of the street or neighbourhood where it is proposed. The Zoning By-law shall establish minimum lot area and frontages and minimum and/or maximum densities which are considered appropriate within the Urban Living Area designation;
 - ✓ The proposed use is very similar to the surround neighbourhood, which consists of single detached, semi-detached and apartment dwellings. The minor variance application does not propose any change of use beyond what is already permitted.
 - ✓ The RV1 zone does not stipulate a maximum density but does have default minimum lot frontage and minimum lot area requirements. Concurrent minor variance applications have been filed seeking relief from both of these performance standards of the RV1 zone.
 - ✓ Low density residential development within an existing low density residential neighbourhood is a compatible level of density.
- e) The creation of accessory apartments and in-law suites within residential neighbourhoods is considered to be an appropriate form of residential intensification.
 - ✓ The current RV1 zoning does not permit second dwelling units nor has the applicant submitted a rezoning application requesting the additional permitted use.

In accordance with Provincial and Regional policy, the Town will accommodate at least 15% of projected housing growth, or about 300 residential dwelling units, within the existing built boundaries of Fonthill and Fenwick.

It is noted that the minor variance application seeks to legalize the minimum lot frontage and minimum lot area requirements of the default RV1 zoning provisions to facilitate the concurrently proposed severance (B2/2020P). The proposed minor variance conforms with the Pelham Official Plan as it supports additional housing, appropriate lot geometry, good land use planning and is a compatible form of residential intensification.

Pelham Zoning By-law No. 1136 (1987), as amended

The subject land is currently zoned 'Residential Village 1' (RV1) according to the Zoning By-law. Only one single detached dwelling, related accessory buildings and home occupations are permitted.

Section 9. – Regulations for dwellings permitted in the RV1 zone:

a) Minimum Lot Area	836 m ²	Request-	689 m ²
b) Minimum Lot Frontage	18 m	Request-	13.72 m

The Committee of Adjustment, in Section 45 (1) of the *Planning Act*, may authorize a minor variance from the provisions of the by-law, subject to the following considerations:

Minor Variance Test	Explanation
1. The variance is minor in nature.	<p>The proposed reduced lot area and lot frontage are minor in nature given the surrounding area; smaller lot sizes are increasingly becoming common throughout the Town, Region and Province. The reduced lot area can still comfortably accommodate the proposed dwelling while accommodating the existing dwelling on the remnant parcel.</p> <p>Both proposed variances will facilitate the additional residential building lot to be created on a relatively smaller parcel of land (432 m²). The variances are considered minor in nature as no adverse impacts are anticipated from the requested variances. This is because the resulting built form is generally consistent with the existing neighbourhood from a land use, orientation and massing perspective and is considered an appropriately sensitive form of infill redevelopment.</p>
2. The variance is desirable for the development or use of the land.	<p>The variances to reduce the minimum lot area and lot frontage are desirable for the lands because it will allow for the creation of an additional residential building lot on a fairly large, underutilized open space within the Village of Fenwick <i>urban settlement area</i>.</p> <p>Plenty of open space amenity area remains on this deep lot for recreation and stormwater drainage purposes. The proposed lot dimensions are also consistent with contemporary development standards and should not adversely impact the leisure and privacy of others.</p>
3. The variance maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan.	<p>The variances to reduce the minimum lot area and lot frontage maintain the policy intent of the Official Plan because they will allow for intensification of an existing neighbourhood within the <i>built-up area</i>, add to the housing supply, support existing infrastructure maintenance and make more efficient use of a fairly large existing residential lot. The minor reduction in lot area and lot frontage will not negatively impact the character of the neighbourhood but instead help strengthen and diversify the housing stock. The variance will aid in the gentle intensification of existing <i>Urban Settlement Areas</i> (Policy A2.2.2).</p> <p>Planning staff are of the opinion that the amended zoning provisions will not compromise any policy objectives of the Official Plan. A modest adjustment in select performance standards on the subject lands are not foreseen to negatively impact the neighbourhood character with respect to urban design, drainage, privacy, and land use compatible built form. Instead, proper execution of these amended zoning provisions should help enhance the neighbourhood over the long term.</p>
4. The variance maintains the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law.	<p>The variances seeking reductions of the minimum lot area and lot frontage provisions maintain the general intent of the Zoning By-law Plan because they will continue allowing for single detached residential dwellings in the low density R1 zone, albeit on a slightly smaller parcel. The proposed lot area and lot frontage are still in keeping with the surrounding neighbourhood, not just those dwellings immediately adjacent.</p>

	Together, the proposed variances maintain the intent of the Zoning By-law because adequate room is still available for open space / amenity area intentions, privacy buffers and storm water drainage without unduly affecting any neighbours.
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Agency & Public Comments

In accordance with the *Planning* Act, on January 9, 2020 a notice of public hearing was circulated by the Secretary Treasurer of the Committee of Adjustment to applicable agencies, Town departments, and to all assessed property owners within 60 metres of the property's boundaries.

To date, the following comments have been received:

- Building Department (Jan 21, 2020)
 - No comments.
- Public Works Department (Jan 23, 2019)
 - No comments.

No comments were received from the public at the time of this writing.

Planning Staff Comments

The proposed minor variance application seeks zoning relief from two (2) RV1 zoning regulations. The relief is required to facilitate the approval of the concurrent severance approval (B2/2020P).

A pre-consult was held with the applicant(s) of the property and staff from the Town and Niagara Region Planning & Development Services on September 6, 2018 to discuss the subject applications.

The subject lands are located on the north side of Foss Road, lying west of Church Street and is surrounded by single and semi-detached residential dwellings from all directions.

At present, the immediate neighbourhood is not in the midst of any development projects. This area of south Fenwick is characterized by many large lot ground-oriented residences and some apartment dwellings to the west.

It is a well-accepted planning principle that all communities have a role to play in helping to manage population growth. *Built-up* neighbourhoods (properties with existing development) are anticipated, and expected, to also contribute towards Pelham's overall background household growth. The Town's current Official Plan recognizes the Region's previous 25-year growth allocation originally planned to 2031. Niagara Region is currently undergoing their legislated *Municipal Comprehensive Review* as part of the Regional Official Plan update. The updated household growth to 2041 which were recently updated to incorporate the 2016 Census data and to reflect policy targets of the 2017 Growth Plan now yields a residential intensification share of at least 25% for the Town of Pelham.

The Official Plan recognizes that additional housing growth via residential intensification is an opportunity, and a way to achieve other important goals such as helping support the local business community, providing a diverse housing / demographic mix and maintaining existing infrastructure and neighbourhood vitality.

The applicant did supply a letter of rationale prepared by their solicitor speaking to planning policy. The agent

has indicated that the existing detached garage on Part 1 will be relocated to Part 2.

The proposed minor variance helps facilitate the creation of a new residential building lot and is considered to be a *gentler* form of residential intensification, because of minimal neighbourhood disruption, no significant demolition is warranted and the impacts are rather minor overall.

Planning staff is of the opinion that the proposal applies current planning and development goals dealing with appropriate infill development, making more efficient use of the existing urban lands, where suitable to do so. The proposed minor variance should not negatively impact the surrounding neighbourhood with regards to traffic, privacy and storm water runoff. The remnant lands will continue as a single detached residential use for the foreseeable future.

In Planning staff's opinion, the application is consistent with the PPS and conforms to Provincial, Regional, and local plans.

Planning staff recommend that the consent known as file A1/2020P **be granted**.

Prepared by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Curtis Thompson".

Curtis Thompson, B.URPI
Planner

Approved by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barb Wiens".

Barb Wiens, MCIP, RPP
Director of Community Planning & Development