



Community Planning and Development Department

Wednesday, September 04, 2024

Subject: Meridian Community Centre Adjacent Lands
Implementation Options

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2024-0192 Meridian Community Centre Adjacent Lands Implementation Options, for information;

AND THAT Council direct staff to proceed with Option 1 – retain North Parcel - with regards to the land options for the Town owned property described as Part 4, Plan 59R-16105;

AND THAT Council approves the proposed severance of lands legally described as Part 4, Plan 59R-16105 to create two (2) separate parcels, with the north parcel being approximately 0.9 acres in size and the south parcel being approximately 0.71 acres in size;

AND THAT Council directs staff to take the necessary steps to effect the said severance of the lands;

AND THAT Council direct staff to bring a by-law to surplus the proposed severed lands, being the north parcel upon a deposited reference plan being issued;

AND THAT Council directs staff, to hire a local realtor, to take the necessary steps to offer the North parcel for sale on the open real estate market.

Background:

On October 4, 2023, Council provided direction to staff to engage in a community consultation process regarding the potential use of Town-owned lands that are located east of Hope Lane, north of Summersides Boulevard, and west of Rice Road adjacent to the Meridian Community Centre (MCC). These lands were previously

referred to as the “MCC lands” or “Town-owned lands”. The strategic use of “Town-owned lands” is an action item identified in the 2023-2027 Town Strategic Plan.

Staff retained the services of a local architect to develop conceptual plans of how the lands could potentially be developed based on the options directed by Council in October 2023. These conceptual plans were used as the basis for receiving community feedback on the potential use of these lands.

At its regularly scheduled meeting on May 29th, 2024, Council was presented a report regarding the public engagement process that occurred and was provided options for moving forward with the Part 4 lands.

Three conceptual plans were prepared to illustrate various development options for the lands including:

- the Town retaining all the lands and developing them for surface parking use for the MCC;
- the Town selling all the lands for development purposes; and
- a hybrid option of the Town retaining some of the land and developing that portion for parking and a small parkette and selling the remainder for residential development purposes.

Option 1 – Retain All of the Lands for Parking

Under this option, the entire Part 4 lands would be retained (1.61 acres) for the construction of a parking lot to provide approximately 172 parking spaces. The estimated capital cost for the parking lot was \$1.5 million.

Option 2 – Sell all the Land for Development

Under this scenario, all the lands (1.61 acres) would be sold for future development purposes that could include apartment or townhouse uses or a mix of both.

Option 3 – Hybrid Option Retain Some of the Land and Sell Some of the Land

This option provides for the retention of the northern 0.90-acre portion of the property for approximately 74 parking spaces at an estimated capital cost of \$850,000.

In addition, the report included information regarding the community engagement process which provided feedback on the three proposed options. In total, 378 responses were received to the survey, 14 were collected in paper copy and added to those collected on the online platforms. Of those who answered the first question regarding their preference for the future use of the Hope Lane lands, 70.9% (268 responses) indicated their preference was to retain all the lands and develop a

parking lot, compared with 24.9% (94 responses) who preferred the hybrid option and 4.2% (16 responses) who preferred selling the lands for future development.

Council passed the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2024-0130 MCC Lands Options and Public Consultation Results, for information;

AND THAT Council direct Staff to proceed with Option 3, retaining some of the land and selling some of the land, and report back on an Implementation Strategy for this Option.

This report provides options for retaining a portion of the Part 4 lands for additional parking and divesting the remaining parcel of Part 4 on the real estate market.

Analysis:

Based on the resolution passed by Council at its regularly scheduled meeting of May 29, 2024, staff retained the services of Colliers International to complete an updated appraisal of the lands described as Part 4, Plan 59R-16105.

The valuation was predicated on the potential hybrid option shown below. Currently, the property is part of the community arena property, the intent is to create the hybrid option by the severance of PART 4 on Reference Plan 59R-16105 into two parcels. A northern parcel is to be eventually improved with a parking lot. A southern parcel of vacant lands is to be eventually sold and likely developed for residential use.

Hybrid Option:

Retain partial lands for parking and sell remaining for future development



Concept drawing of a parking lot and townhouse development separated by a parkette.



Hybrid Option:

- The northern section, approximately 0.9 acres, would be retained for a parking lot with 74 spaces, estimated to cost \$852,000.
- The southern section could be sold for future development, such as townhouses, which would generate future property tax revenues in perpetuity.
- An option to provide a green space buffer as a parkette between the development and the parking lot.

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Both parcels are zoned East Fonthill – Mixed Use Three (EF-MU3). The EF-MU3 zone permits a public use which includes a municipal parking lot. The zoning of the property also permits:

- a) A Multi-Use Recreational Facility, including cultural, recreational and entertainment uses;
- b) Commercial, professional, medical and/or government offices;
- c) Retail commercial uses including retail stores, restaurants and personal services, with Gross Leasable Floor Areas greater than 150 m² (1,614.6 ft²) and less than 1,000 m² (10,763.9 ft²) per business;
- d) Hotels and tourist accommodations;
- e) Conference and convention centres;
- f) Public and private institutional uses;
- g) Townhouses and apartment buildings;
- h) Housing for seniors and/or special needs housing;
- i) Child care facilities;
- j) Parks and urban squares;
- k) Public uses and public and private utilities;
- l) Public art installations; and,
- m) Public roads, active transportation facilities and transit facilities

Based on the size of the development parcel, Planning staff believe it is most likely that the future use would be residential or mixed-use. However, Council could rezone the property to have further control over future uses.

The Recreation, Culture and Parks Master Plan completed in 2023 concluded that there is a growing shortfall of parkland in the Town. As a result, the option to provide a greenspace buffer as a parkette between the development and the parking lot should also be pursued.

Town staff notes that there are two options available that would result in the hybrid use of the land:

Option 1 – Retain the north parcel of Lot Part 4 for parking and sell the southerly portion

With this option, the northern parcel of Part 4 (approx. 0.9 acres) would be retained by the Town and be used for additional parking, and the south parcel (approx. 0.71 acres) would be severed and placed on the real estate market.

Option 1 will allow the new parking area to be added to and connected with the existing parking area at the Meridian Community Centre.

Option 1 will encourage development that conforms with the policies contained in the East Fonthill Secondary Plan. Policy 3.1.4 of the East Fonthill Urban Design Guidelines encourages buildings to locate in proximity to the property lot line adjoining the public road and states that siting and massing of buildings will provide a consistent relationship, continuity and enclosure of the public roads. In addition, the intersection of Rice Road and Summersides Boulevard is identified as a Minor Gateway on the Demonstration Plan for Active Transportation in the East Fonthill Secondary Plan Area. The East Fonthill Urban Design Guidelines indicate that a sense of arrival and entry should be created through the coordinated effort of landscaping, built form, high-quality corner development and streetscape design.

Option 2 – Retain the South parcel of Lot Part 4 for parking and sell the north portion

With Option 2, the southern parcel of Part 4 (0.71 acres) would be retained by the Town and used for additional parking, and the northern parcel (approx. 0.9 acres) would be severed and sold.

Option 2 would result in a development parcel without frontage on a road as the Town owns a strip of land on the west side of Rice Road containing the multi-use trail between the property line and the right-of-way. In addition, access and servicing to the development property would have to occur through the Meridian Centre parking area which would require an easement.

Financial Considerations:

Planning staff note that Subsection 50(3)(c) of the *Planning Act* sets out an exemption to municipalities to sever land. Financial considerations will include a land survey in order to prepare the necessary R-Plan and additional fees associated with registering the severance on title.

Alternatives Reviewed:

Alternatives were reviewed through Report 2024-130.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Community Development and Growth

The two options presented balance development and growth pressures while protecting the high quality of life presently enjoyed by residents by allowing for some future development while ensuring that parking needs are met.

Consultation:

The Manager of Community Planning and Development and the Director of Corporate Services / Town Treasurer were consulted in the preparation of this report.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

2024-0188 Meridian Community Centre Adjacent Lands Implementation Strategy Options and Land Valuation (Closed Session), September 2024.

2024-0130 MCC Lands Options and Public Consultation Results, May 29, 2024.

2023-0230 Strategic Use of Town Owned Lands, September 2023.

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