



April 4, 2023

UCC File No. 2054

City of Niagara Falls
4310 Queen Street
Niagara Falls, ON.
L2E 6X5

Attn: Julie Hannah, MES, MA, MCIP, RPP – Senior Manager of Current Planning
(delivered via email only)

Re: AM-2023-007, Zoning By-law Amendment Application
26T-11-2023-002, Draft Plan of Subdivision Application
McLeod Meadows (9304 McLeod Road, Niagara Falls)

INTRODUCTION

This letter has been prepared to address the outstanding items identified in your acknowledgement of receipt letter dated March 29, 2023 for the Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications for the proposed McLeod Meadows subdivision at 9304 McLeod Road.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Headwater Drainage Assessment were approved by the Region of Niagara. The Region, in an email dated August 22, 2023, confirmed that the Report submitted with the application sufficiently addresses Regional requirements and as such a more formal EIS is not required in support of the application. The Terms of Reference for the Wetland Catchment Assessment were approved by the NPCA. The NPCA, in an email dated September 20, 2022, confirmed that they did not have any questions or concerns. The City's Transportation Services Department provided comments on the Terms of Reference for the Transportation Impact Study in an email dated September 2, 2022.

This correspondence is enclosed with this letter for your information.

Phasing

Discussion on development phasing relative to the City's Official Plan is included on page 40 of the Planning Justification Report dated March 24, 2023. For clarity:

“Per Schedule B, the eastern portion of the property is within the Phase 1 area and the western portion of the lands is within the Phase 4 area with the Phase areas following the existing property lines. The subject lands are proposed to be developed comprehensively and have access to the infrastructure that was installed within the Forestview Estates Subdivision to service the subdivision. The capital cost of servicing the proposed development will be borne by the developer, and the proposed development patterns will ensure that the infrastructure is utilized efficiently. The proposed development therefore aligns with the City's phasing strategy.”



Fees

A check for \$5,700 is enclosed to cover the additional fees noted in your March 29, 2023 letter. This amount represents the difference between the current Complex Zoning By-law Amendment Review Fee of \$13,000 and the 2022 fee, less the \$500 Preconsultation fee which we had not previously accounted for.

The Region of Niagara's Fee calculation was as follows:

Zoning By-law Amendment - \$1,395
Subdivision (\$5525 + \$1915/ha) = \$49,435.95
EIS Review - \$2400 (major)
SWM Review - \$2000

Total - \$55,230.95

Urban Design

The following is an evaluation of the proposed development against the applicable urban design guidelines related to neighbourhood structure contained in Section 3a of the Niagara Region Model Urban Design Guidelines (2005).

3a.1 – Design Principles

1. Identifiable

The proposed development includes identifiable features that contribute to a sense of community including a large consolidated open space area which anchors the development in the south as well as rear-lane townhouses with positive frontage on McLeod Road which frame the periphery of the development and create an enhanced interface with the surrounding community.

2. Interconnected

The proposed development is integrated into the existing road network and surrounding community by way of one road connection to McLeod Road and four connections to Beechwood Road.

3. Compact and Walkable

The proposed development is comprised of compact and navigable walks and includes park space in walking proximity to residential uses.



4. Diverse

A variety of residential typologies are proposed including traditional single detached and street townhouse dwellings, as well as more unique multiple-unit typologies such as rear-lane townhouses and back-to-back townhouses. The proposed development also makes provision for multiple-unit blocks which can accommodate small-scale apartments or similar typologies. The subdivision also includes park space, a stormwater management facility and an environmental corridor, which support the proposed residential uses, and create a large consolidated area of open space within the development.

5. Respect for Natural Heritage

The proposed subdivision includes a 30-meter environmental corridor for the existing watercourse which traverses the easterly property line.

3a.2 – Neighbourhood Structure

a) Neighbourhoods should generally be designed to include:

- **Neighbourhood Centre: The neighbourhood centre should contain a variety of uses, services and amenities such as community facilities, neighbourhood retail, small scale employment areas, residential, urban open spaces, and access to transit.**
- **Neighbourhood Edge: Neighbourhoods should have an edge that defines their extent. The edge is generally located within walking distance of the centre (approx. 400m) and may be typically defined by:**
 - i) **Urban infrastructure, such as arterial roads or railway lines;**
 - ii) **Natural features, such as public parks and open spaces, agricultural lands, watercourses, etc.;**
 - iii) **Community facilities such as schools, large parks, large format retail, etc; and/or**
 - iv) **The edge of an adjacent neighbourhood.**

The subject lands are immediately adjacent to the Forestview Estates Subdivision and are the natural progression of the Garner South Community. The development of the Garner South Community is guided by the Garner South Secondary Plan which accommodates the mix of land uses that contribute to a comprehensive Neighbourhood. The proposed mix of land uses compliments the mix of existing and planned land uses planned within the Garner South area.

- ##### **b) Areas in close proximity to the neighbourhood centre, a transit corridor, or an employment district should be of higher density to provide a 'critical mass' of population that can sustain commercial and community activities and transit systems. Density should generally decrease towards the edge. Higher density is encouraged at the edge where it is adjacent to large open spaces such as community parks.**

The proposed development includes higher-density multiple-unit blocks which are located at the northwest corner of the development where they are adjacent to the higher-capacity arterial roadways (McLeod Road and Beechwood Road). The proposed development will help to achieve a critical mass for the existing commercial development in the area.



- c) The neighbourhood movement network should be defined by a fine grain grid pattern of streets with a consistent block orientation that provides multiple connections and maximizes permeability to filter local traffic; assists in local orientation and wayfinding; and reduces traffic speeds.***

The proposed street network is a generally consistent grid pattern which provides for efficiency in construction and use and aids in wayfinding and orientation. The blocks have been organized to avoid direct through connections to minimize traffic speeds.

- d) A non-repetitive yet simple street and block layout should be provided for visual interest and to maximize views and vistas to parks, greenlands, the rural periphery and heritage and landmark buildings.***

The proposed road network includes some variation which provides visual interest and block variation in addition to discouraging the use of local roads as through-streets between arterial roads. The proposed "Street B" which connects to McLeod Road ends with a terminating vista at the proposed park and Street 'D' acts as a window street for the park and stormwater management facility.

- e) Parks and recreation areas should be distributed evenly throughout the neighbourhood and located within walking distance of most homes. Open spaces should cater to a variety of recreation activities.***

The proposed subdivision includes a large park area which is in walking proximity to the rest of the development.

3a.3 – Block Design

- a) Block lengths should generally range between 200 and 250 metres.***

A majority of blocks in the development are approximately 190 meters in length as determined by site geometry and physical constraints.

- b) In special circumstances where blocks are longer than 250 metres, a through-block pedestrian walkway or a mid-block parkette should be provided. The walkway should be a minimum width of 3.5 metres, and parkettes a minimum width of 12 metres. Downcast pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided.***

The proposed subdivision includes one block that is approximately 300 meters in length. A mid-block (north-south) pedestrian walkway is not warranted for this block as it would not provide access to the proposed park which is located to the east of the block.

- c) The width of blocks should vary to promote lot size variety and development options, without exceeding 250m.***



The proposed blocks accommodate a range of lot sizes as well as a variety of housing types.

- d) To maximize connections for vehicular and especially pedestrian traffic, streets should be based on a grid pattern that is modified in response to natural open space, built heritage or existing street conditions.**

The proposed road network is not interrupted by any natural features and maintains a consistent grid layout.

- e) The street grid should shift at key locations to create distinct neighbourhood enclaves, while allowing for significant view opportunities to natural features, parks, public buildings and landmarks.**

The development is bisected by Street 'A' and 'B' which creates a shift in the block orientation and creates a "window street" with unobstructed views to the park and SWM facility.

- f) In existing neighbourhoods, opportunities should be pursued to connect ending streets to adjacent or new development. The number of connections should be maximized for permeability.**

The proposed development has five points of connection to the existing street network.

- g) Laneways are recommended where possible to eliminate the need for driveways and street facing garages.**

The townhouse dwellings flanking McLeod Road have been designed as rear lane townhouses with driveway access provided by way of the proposed local road (Streets 'C' and 'D'). This provides positive interface along McLeod Road while also minimizing traffic disruption.

3a.4 – Lot Size And Variety

- a) Generally, lot shapes should be simple and rectilinear so as not to limit design and siting options. However, variations to the traditional lot may be considered to manage slope, property boundary, or density issues. Potential alternatives include the 'Z Lot', 'Zipper Lot', 'Wide Shallow', etc. (see 'Further Reading' at the end of this section for more information).**

A majority of the lots are typical rectilinear parcels, except where pie lots are created by curvature in the roadway. All of the proposed lots can adequately accommodate the intended types of development.



- b) Corner lots should have adequate width to permit appropriate building setbacks from both streets.***

The corner lots have additional width when compared to the interior lots to accommodate the additional exterior side yard setback requirement.

- c) Irregular lots, corner lots, and some mid-block lots may be developed as small neighbourhood parks, providing comfortable areas for passive recreation, attractive landscaping, or public art.***

A large neighbourhood park is proposed which will serve the recreational needs of the community.

- d) Lots adjacent to neighbourhood centres, public transport facilities, or adjacent to higher amenity areas such as parks and environmental features should be designed to support higher density development.***

The proposed multi-unit blocks are located adjacent to the higher-capacity arterial roadways.

3a.5 – Neighbourhood Edge Interface

- a) Wherever possible, the perimeter of parks and other public open spaces and natural should be faced with single-loaded streets. Generally, a minimum of 50% of the total open space/natural feature perimeter should be bounded by the public road right-of-way.***

The proposed park and stormwater management facility are faced with a single loaded street and only one side of the perimeter abuts a street.

- b) Where the open space/natural feature perimeter is bounded by private properties, a balance between flanking lots on open crescents and rear lotting is encouraged. Lots flanking or backing onto park areas should be subject to architectural and landscaping controls to provide a high quality interface between these uses.***

A rear-lotting condition is provided for the parcels that directly abut the park. The lots across the street have a side-flanking condition.

- c) Pedestrian connections from the public road right-of-way to adjacent public open spaces/natural features should be provided where possible.***

Access to the park will be provided by way of municipal sidewalks within the development.

3.a.6 – Transit Supportive Design

- a) Neighbourhoods should provide a mix of land uses and higher residential densities at key locations to generate pedestrian traffic and activity throughout the day, making transit a viable option.***



The development contains an integrated mix of land uses including single detached dwellings, several forms of townhouse dwellings, and multi-unit blocks intended for higher-forms of development such as apartments. The multi-unit blocks are located along Beechwood Road and McLeod Road which are higher-capacity arterial roadways. The proposed townhouses are also located towards the periphery of the proposed development in proximity to the existing arterial roads.

The City's public transit service currently ends on McLeod Road at Garner Road and does not serve the subject lands; however, the proposed development patterns and density supports the viability of extending transit service westward to serve the proposed development.

c) Compact development forms support transit. Higher density development should be located in close proximity to major transit facilities (such as a train station or bus interchange).

As noted, the higher-density forms are located in proximity to the existing arterial roadways and the proposed development patterns and density supports viability of expanded transit service.

Urban Design Conclusion

Based on the above-analysis, the proposed development aligns the neighbourhood design principles contained within the Niagara Region Model Urban Design Guidelines. The development contains an integrated mix of housing types and densities and accommodates higher-density forms in the appropriate location to support the viability of transit service. The proposed block layout is efficient and navigable with variation and articulation to provide design interest and diversity within the development. The proposed layout also enhances the open space areas of the development through the provision of a terminating vista at the park as well as a window street adjacent the park and stormwater management block. The proposed rear-lane townhouses provide positive frontage and enhance the streetscape along McLeod Road. The proposed subdivision will provide a well-designed and livable urban environment in accordance with good urban design principles.

In Summary

I trust this will provide the City with the necessary information and fees to process our applications. If you have any questions regarding this submission, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

Matt Kernahan, MCIP, RPP
Planning Manager
Upper Canada Consultants