

Comments Related to Site Plan Control Provisions
1110 Ridge Road, Harrow, Ontario

I've had the opportunity to review the site plan provided for the construction of a large greenhouse and residential buildings located at 1110 Ridge Road. Currently the site is involved in the grafting of fruit trees to root stock and nurturing of same to marketable size, and it's assumed that construction of the greenhouse is to permit the expansion of the business. As the business predates the passage of the current zoning bylaw requirements, the existing business' parking was grand fathered and doesn't meet the standard required of new construction.

Based on my review of the site plan proposal, I would make the following recommendations:

1. That the parking requirements of the zoning bylaw under section 11.5a) be met for the commercial greenhouse portion of the development. As the zoning bylaw doesn't provide for greenhouses per se and consideration of the development as either an industrial site or workshop would impose an unreasonable parking requirement, I would suggest the development be treated as a warehouse. Treatment as such would call for the provision of 17 parking spots which the applicants could apply to have reduced through a minor variance. A recommended reduction to no less than 6 parking spots would require the provision of 1 handicapped accessible spot;
2. That the parking requirements of the zoning bylaw under section 11.e) be met for the residential portion of the development. The number of parking spots required is dependent on how the applicant categorizes the housing provided for employees of the business. In the event 6 or more parking spots are called for, provision should be made for 1 handicapped accessible parking spot;
3. The proposal notes that an existing residence will also be utilized for the housing of employees, but is unclear whether it refers to the residence near the southern perimeter of the subject property or the residence nearest the proposed site of the new greenhouse. Assuming the latter, it must be noted that the former is currently used as an office by the business and doesn't provide for handicapped accessible parking for either employees working therein or for members of the public attending the business. Although not a part of the proposed construction, as part of the property subject to site plan control the municipality can require provision of an accessible parking spot as part of the site plan control agreement. I would recommend the Town do so.

As a general comment, I can foresee the applicant objecting to the provision of handicapped accessible parking spots being provided in conjunction with the proposed development since it's highly unlikely that the business currently employs anyone suffering from mobility issues. It should be pointed out, however, that the zoning bylaw doesn't make the provision of handicapped accessible parking spots being conditional on such employment, nor on the probability of such a person being employed in future. The expectation of such parking spots being provided is in keeping with the intent of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, its stated objective to be Section 1a ' developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods,

services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025'. It's commonly held wisdom that providing such access to those dealing with mobility challenges is best done at the planning level of new development as opposed to retrofitting after a facility is constructed.

Richard Kokovai
Accessibility Advisory Committee
Town of Essex

References:

11.4a) All required parking spaces, not including loading spaces, shall be provided at the time of the erection of a building or addition thereto, expansion of a use or when there is a change of use of a lot or building;

11.4c) When a lawfully existing use has an insufficient number of existing parking spaces to conform to the provisions of subsection 11.5 or 11.6, it is not required that the deficiency be made up prior to the construction of any addition or a change of use. However, any additional parking spaces required by this Section for such addition or change of use shall be provided and maintained in accordance with all applicable provisions of this by-law;

11.5a) Industrial Uses not specifically listed - 1 for each 45m² (484f²) GFA for the first 2,700m² (29063f²) GFA and 1 for each additional 180 m² (1937f²) GFA;

Warehouse - 1 for each 200m² (2152f²) GFA

Workshop - 1 for each 45m² (484f²) GFA for the first 2,700m² (29063f²) GFA and 1 for each additional 180 m² (1937f²) GFA

11.7a) TOTAL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES IN PARKING AREA 6 to 12 - REQUIRED NUMBER OF ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES 1;

11.5a) Duplex Dwelling - 1 per dwelling unit

Group Home - 1 per dwelling unit

Lodging House - 1 for each 6 beds

Multiple dwelling - containing a maximum of 4 dwelling units 1 for each dwelling unit