

November 14, 2019

Mr. Charles McConnell, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Current Planning, West District
Town of Oakville, Town Hall
1225 Trafalgar Road
Oakville, Ontario
L6H 0H3

**Re: Empress Capital Group, 170 North Service Road West
OPA 1517.18, ZBA 1517.18 By-law 2018-133 and By-law 2018-134**

Introduction

Empress Capital Group proposes a 114-room hotel by AVID, which is part of the same group as Holiday Inn under the IHG (InterContinental Hotels) Group brand at this North Service Road location near Dorval Drive. Empress is excited to bring this new hotel to Oakville to create new jobs and assessment and to serve the Town's residents, nearby businesses and commercial establishments as well as business and recreational traveler markets coming to or passing through Oakville.

We have prepared this letter to outline the status of certain elements of ongoing work as our client would like to have this matter brought back to Council for a decision in the near future as well as so your department can conduct a pre-consultation meeting to advance the more detailed aspects of the project design and approvals.

This application went before a special meeting of Planning and Development Council on October 1, 2018. The recommendation of your staff report considered at the meeting was that Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted on behalf of Empress Capital Group be approved as modified, on the basis that the proposal is consistent with applicable Provincial and local policy frameworks and that it represented good planning.

In considering the recommendation of Planning Staff to Council to approve the proposed development at the October 1, 2018 meeting, some members of Council expressed further concerns related to access and parking arrangements and deferred their decision. The deferral was requested so that the applicant could demonstrate or secure appropriate arrangements to address Council's concerns. The purpose of this letter is to outline the status the status or results of that additional work related to such access and parking arrangements.



Access (Proposed Connection Between Hotel Site and Adjacent Shopping Centre)

The creation and securing of a second point of access was raised notwithstanding that the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) prepared by the initial transportation consultant on this file (LMM) was satisfied that the proposed development and surrounding streets and circulation patterns would function appropriately with just the one access point from North Service Road. In pursuit of that suggested or desired secondary access, the following actions or activities have taken place since October 1, 2018.

1. Around the same time as the meeting, informal discussions began with the Bentall Kennedy (now Bentall GreenOak), owners of the Dorval Crossing Shopping Centre, with the intent on securing rights to a physical connection between the two sites.
2. Senior Management for Bentall Kennedy were in support of the connection being provided they were satisfied from a traffic operation standpoint, but it would also require consent and sign-off from affected tenants based upon terms in their leases.
3. The process of demonstrating operational proficiency as well as securing tenant sign-off was involved, time-consuming and costly, particularly for the Applicant. Ultimately, there were a few tenants who made unreasonable financial and operational demands.
4. Bentall Kennedy was understandably unable to concede on those matters creating an impasse with the tenants and their legal Counsel in proceeding further. Lawyers for the Applicant intervened and were similarly challenged in get the remaining tenants to back down from their unreasonable demands and to sign-off.
5. The applicant wishes to proceed with development on the basis of one point of access from North Service Road as was originally intended and recommended by Planning Staff. The initial TIS demonstrated this one access point will function appropriately.
6. However, in order to respond to Council's concerns over both access and parking, the Applicant retained another transportation consultant (Trans-Plan) to undertake a peer review and perform further analysis of the access and parking arrangements.
7. Trans-Plan has completed significant additional work and is supportive of both the access and parking arrangements and has provided further rationale and survey data. The updated parking analysis will be addressed in the following section.
8. The opinion of Trans-Plan is that the single access point is appropriate and will operate well and that the access and parking layout is acceptable for movements of all guest, loading/delivery, bus and garbage vehicles.
9. In addition, Trans-Plans recommends a "U-turns Permitted" sign at the intersection of the Dorval Crossing commercial plaza be erected to assist drivers approaching from the eastern QEW off-ramp or from Kerr Street. The Applicant concurs with this.



Parking Study Peer Review and Further Analysis

The application for the proposed hotel includes the provision of 114 guest rooms with a total of 96 vehicular parking spaces, including one bus/shuttle parking space. Similar to the proposed access, the application was supported by a TIS by the initial transportation consultant which was satisfied that the proposed parking rate was suitable based on their experience and supported by parking surveys of similar hotel properties in Oakville.

Further, the September 10, 2018 recommendation report prepared by Planning Services that was before Council on October 1, 2018 acknowledged the initial survey work and that the Town's Engineering Department reviewed the TIS and was satisfied that the proposed parking supply was well founded and adequate to support the size of the hotel.

On that basis, Planning Services had recommended approval of the related planning applications. Notwithstanding, at the October 1, 2018 Planning and Development Council meeting where staff were recommending approval of the application, some members of Council remained concerned over the proposed parking supply and deferred making a decision so the applicant could demonstrate and provide appropriate arrangements to address Council's concerns. In response to Council's identified concern related to the parking supply, the following actions or activities have taken place since October 1, 2018.

1. Since the initial TIS and parking study had been prepared in support of the application, Trans-Plan Transportation Consultants were retained by the Applicant to peer review the work LMM. This has taken a number of months.
2. Trans-Plan acknowledges the overall methods and results of the analysis of the LMM Traffic TIS report and subsequent memos were found to be reasonable and the original recommendations remain valid.
3. However, Trans-Plan did express some concerns over the applicability of one of the hotel properties surveyed due to some dissimilarities of the characteristics of that property as well as the chosen month of December to conduct the parking counts.
4. In response, Trans-Plan undertook additional parking survey work of another more suitable and applicable hotel property and did undertake more extensive survey work several times during a month more representative of peak travel and usage.
5. Based on the analysis and survey work performed by Trans-Plan of two other similar hotel developments in the Town of Oakville, they arrived at an average peak parking demand of 0.80 spaces per room, which is below the current By-law standard.
6. Based on the peak parking demand of 0.80 spaces per room, this results in a peak demand of 92 spaces for the size of the proposed hotel. The proposed parking supply is 96 spaces (95 vehicular spaces plus one bus/shuttle parking space) and exceeds demand. This figure was also adjusted to account for 100% occupancy in the hotel.



7. To further support the proposed parking supply of 95 parking spaces, it is noted that subject site is situated nearby two transit routes, with the nearest transit stops located at the north end of the subject site, which will serve to bring hotel employees to the site.
8. Additionally, the report notes that a bus parking space is also provided that will accommodate large groups, tours or teams travelling together (and use only 1 parking space) and that the space could also be utilized for shuttle parking, should shuttle services be added in the future.
9. The Trans-Plan report also notes that the trend in the industry is towards guests now arriving via alternative modes of transportation and that more and more guests are anticipated to utilize these modes in the future, which will have the effect of the lowering the amount of parking utilized and the effective rate.
10. Trans-Plan concludes that the proposed AVID Hotel Development can be supported through the proposed parking supply of 95 parking spaces based on our review of peak parking demands at similar hotels and existing service of alternative modes of travel within the study area.
11. It is also noted that notwithstanding the aforementioned limits they identified with the LMM study, the peak parking demand is similar to that which had been identified in their study and which was supported by Oakville Engineering and Planning staff.

We trust that this letter provides you with an overview that reinforces the additional work, time and expense that has been undertaken to respond to Council's concerns about access and parking which will allow this matter to be brought back to Council in the near future. We also trust that this is sufficient to continue with the schedule pre-consultation meeting on November 27, 2019 to allow the project to advance with more detailed aspects of site design and site plan approvals. Please confirm that this meeting will proceed.

Lastly, we thank you for your assistance and collaboration on moving this project through the approvals process, including your prior support and recommendations to Council last fall. We hope that the additional work that has been performed since October 1, 2018 will only serve to reinforce that earlier support and recommendation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me immediately if you need anything further.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bruce Hall'.

Bruce Hall, BES, MCIP, RPP, Partner