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Mr. Nathan Hercanuck
Waterloo Region District School Board
51 Ardelt Ave.,
Kitchener, ON N2C 2R5

Dear Mr. Hercanuck:

RE: Grand River South/Sunnyside Elementary Schools Accommodation Review

Please accept the following comments with respect to the Grand River South/Sunnyside Elementary Schools Accommodation Review prepared by the City of Kitchener, Planning Division. These comments are in addition to those submitted July 19th, 2010, and are provided in response to the final two school scenarios being considered. As a result of the ARC's review two scenario's continue to be considered. Scenario 4 proposes a new JK – 8 school near Fairway Road North and Lackner Boulevard, and Scenario 5 proposes a new JK – 8 school on Morrison Road.


City staff are of the opinion that Scenario Five (Morrison Road) represents an appropriate location for an elementary school. The lands are currently designated Low Rise Residential and are zoned Neighbourhood Institutional Zone (I-1) which permits an elementary school and were originally contemplated for a school site as part of previous planning processes.

Planning staff comment that the location contemplated by Scenario Four (Fairway Road North and Lackner Boulevard) is a designated Mixed Use Node. These lands are needed to provide for higher density residential, commercial and other uses in the Grand River South community. Mixed Use Nodes are intended to provide intensive, transit supportive uses and are counted on to achieve municipal, regional and provincial density targets. Elementary schools, while serving an important neighbourhood-wide function, are not generally intensive, compact or transit supportive and are better suited to being located within neighbourhoods. The City's Official Plan discourages elementary schools from being located along Arterial Roads (both Lackner Blvd and Fairway Road are designated as major arterial roads) to help minimize potential conflicts between children walking to and from school and high levels vehicular traffic on arterial roads. Furthermore, through the City's Comprehensive Review of Intensification Areas, staff anticipate that new policies will be incorporated into the new Official Plan that will strongly discourage low rise uses (including elementary schools) from location in designated intensification areas such as Mixed Use Nodes. This said, staff are willing to give further consideration to a zone change and site plan for a school on the subject lands, if it can be demonstrated that an elementary school can be incorporated into a high density mixed use site, without compromising the functionality, or future density of the Mixed Use Node.



Ultimately, City of Kitchener Planning staff are of the opinion that the Morrison Road site described in Scenario 5 is a more appropriate location for an elementary school.

Yours truly,


Katie Anderl, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner

cc.

Alain Pinard, Interim Director of Planning

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Brandon Sloan, Interim Manager of Long Range Planning