

PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT

in support of a
Zoning By-law Amendment &
Site Plan Approval

for
428 Little Inc.

located at
428 Little Avenue
in the
City of Barrie

December 7, 2019



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1. Introduction

Celeste Phillips Planning Inc. has been retained by 428 Little Inc. to seek approvals for a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) and Site Plan Approval for a mid-rise medium density residential building to be located at 428 Little Avenue in the City of Barrie.

This report presents my professional planning opinion and includes a synopsis of applicable Provincial and Municipal planning policies as they relate to the subject lands. Further, this report provides the background and rationale relative to the planning applications.

2. Land Use Considerations

The property owned by 428 Little Inc. consists of approximately 2.04 hectares, and is located between the eastern terminus of Foster Drive, on the north side of Little Avenue, extending parallel to the Metrolinx Rail Line. The property is legally described as Part of Lot 12, Concession 14 and Part of Lot 46, Registered Plan 1355, City of Barrie. This linear property is adjacent to 7 single detached dwellings and a City of Barrie park, all fronting onto Maclaren Avenue. The property is currently vacant. The location of the property is illustrated on **Figure 1: Location Map**.

Figure 1: Location Map

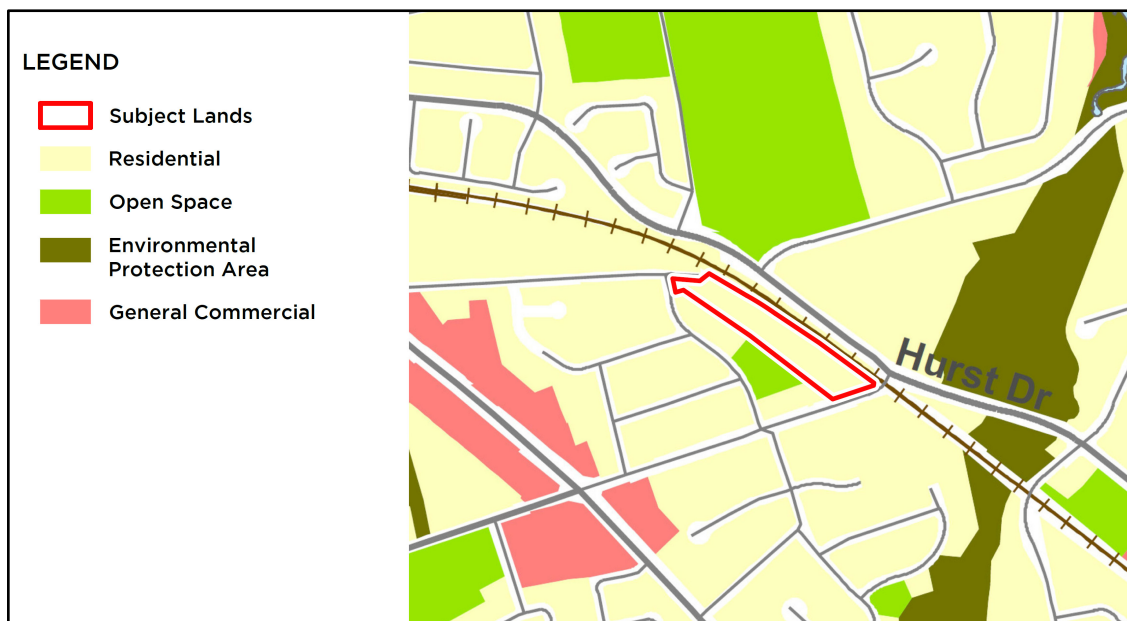


The subject lands are surrounded by the following land uses (**Figure 2**):

North: Foster Drive road allowance

- West: Single detached dwellings 7 of which back onto a portion of the property.
Highland Park, consisting of 1.8 hectares, also backing onto the subject property
- East: The Metrolinx rail line and beyond that, Hurst Drive.
To the east of Hurst Drive, the lands are zoned Multi Family Residential RM2 (SP-336) and are developed as the Tollendale Village Retirement Facility. The Retirement Facility consists of several buildings including multi-storey retirement and nursing care buildings as well as single storey bungalows.
- South: Little Avenue and vacant lands on the south side of Little Avenue, such lands zoned as Residential Hold.

Figure 2: Land Use



The proposed multi-residential development consists of 50 three storey condominium townhouses in 5 blocks (Blocks A to E) plus 6 affordable stacked townhouse units in Block F. The proposed density is 27.45 units per hectare. Access to the development is proposed by way of a private condominium roadway, connected to both Foster Drive to the north and Little Avenue to the south. Closed board fencing is proposed along the rear yards of the 7 existing and abutting single detached dwellings. A new 1.5 metre wide walkway is proposed, providing access to existing Highland Park.

In accordance with requirements of Metrolinx, the buildings are set back 30 metres from the rail line. Additionally, a retaining wall and 1.83 high chain link fence will be provided next to the rail line.

The development concept is illustrated in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: Development Concept



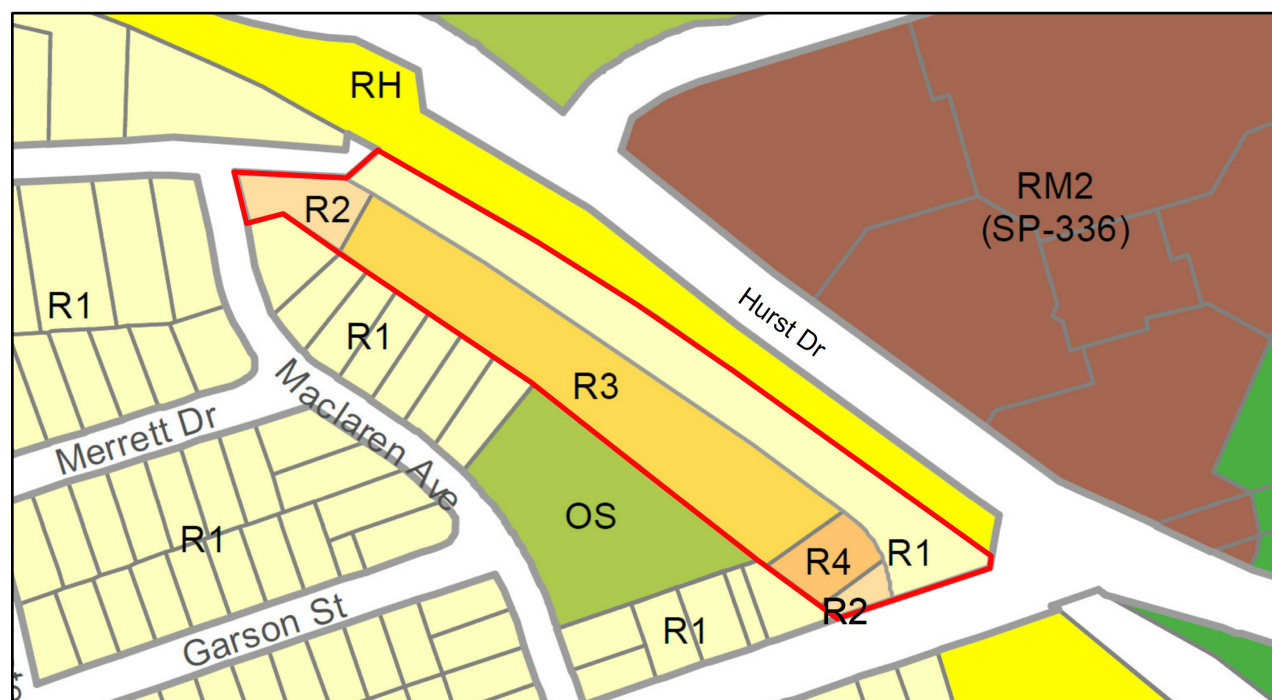
The requested zone category is Multi Family Residential, 2nd density, RM2. No variations to the RM2 standards are contemplated.

The lands are designated Residential on Schedule A – Land Use, City of Barrie Official Plan and are located within the Painswick North Planning Area (Schedule B). The lands are not identified as being within a Defined Policy Area on Schedule C. Schedule F– Conservation Authority Regulation Limits identifies the property as being within the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Boundary but not within the Authority's Regulation Limit. Official Plan Schedule H – Natural Heritage Resources shows the property as being within the Level 3 Resource Classification and Schedule I shows the property as being within the Built-Up Area.

Figure 4 below shows the existing zoning of the property. The zoning consists of the following categories: Residential R1, Residential R2, Residential R3 and Residential R4. Each of these zone categories permits single detached residential dwellings.

A Pre-Consultation meeting was held with City of Barrie staff in June 2017. An Official Plan Amendment is not required for the proposed 56 units but an amendment to the Zoning By-law is required as well as Site Plan Approval. A determination was made at that time as to the types of technical reports that would be required as part of a complete application submission.

Figure 4: Existing Zoning



3. Technical Reports

In consultation with the City of Barrie, and in addition to the Planning Justification Report, technical reports and drawings are required and include:

- Architectural Drawings including Site Plans and elevations, Peter Higgins Architect Inc.
- Servicing and Stormwater Management Implementation Report, Crozier Consulting Engineers.
- Abandoned Well Reconnaissance Report, SLR Consulting (Canada) Ltd.
- Geotechnical Investigation, WSP.
- Environmental Railway Vibration Study, Valcoustics Canada Ltd.
- Environmental Impact Study, SLR Consulting (Canada) Ltd.
- Landscape Drawings, Into the Woods Landscape Architecture and Arboriculture
- Archaeology – Stage 1-2, Bluestone Research Inc.
- Urban Design Brief, Peter Higgins Architect Inc.
- Environmental Site Assessment, Pinchin Ltd.
- Boundary Survey and Topographic information, Rudy Mak Surveying Ltd.

The reports/studies have concluded that the proposed medium density development at 428 Little Avenue will meet all applicable requirements of the Province and the City of Barrie.

4. Consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 (PPS) provides planning policy direction on matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land in Ontario. It is noted that all planning decisions made in the Province of Ontario are required to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

The proposed development of the subject lands conforms to policies in the Provincial Policy Statement, particularly in Section 1, as follows:

- Promoting efficient development and land use patterns (1.1.1 a).

- Accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential uses (including affordable housing) (1.1.1 b).
- Promoting cost effective development patterns and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs (1.1.1 e).
- Allowing for intensification and redevelopment (1.1.2).
- Promoting growth and development within settlement areas (1.1.3.1).
- Demonstrating a density that efficiently uses land and is appropriate for the planned infrastructure (1.1.3.2.a 1 and 1.1.3.2 a 2).
- Responding to the Province's interest in compact form, a mix of densities and efficient use of land and infrastructure (1.1.3.6).
- Providing a range and mix of housing types and densities required to meet projected requirements and promoting all forms of residential intensification (1.4.1 and 1.4.3).
- The provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households (1.4.3 a).

In more specific terms, approval of the rezoning for the subject lands will:

- accommodate new population growth on vacant land in an area that can be serviced, within a defined Settlement Area;
- incorporate an appropriate range and mix of residential uses (including affordable housing units) in a compact form to meet the long-term needs of the community;
- assist the City of Barrie in achieving its intensification and density targets set by the Province of Ontario;
- permit housing on lands designated for development, on full municipal services;
- promote green spaces by connecting the existing parkland to the proposed development

The proposed development will contribute to Barrie's long term prosperity by providing an efficient use of land within a settlement area. No significant or sensitive resources will be impacted by the proposal, nor will the proposal present a hazard to future uses of the site. The proposal is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

5. Consistency with A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was prepared and approved under the Places to Growth Act, 2005 and has been updated in 2017 and most recently in May 2019. This document contains policies to manage growth to the year 2041 and is to be read in conjunction with the Provincial Policy Statement.

This document guides decisions on a wide range of issues, including transportation, infrastructure, land use planning, urban form, housing, natural heritage and resource protection. All Regional and Municipal documents in the Greater Golden Horseshoe are required to conform to the policies of this Plan.

Section 2.1 of the Growth Plan states: *This Plan is about accommodating forecasted growth in complete communities. These are communities that are well designed to meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, public service facilities, and a full range of housing to accommodate a range of incomes and household sizes.*

The Growth Plan also directs new development to settlement areas such as the City of Barrie where there are full municipal services. *To support the achievement of complete communities that are healthier, safer, and more equitable, choices about where and how growth occurs in the GGH [Greater Golden Horseshoe] need to be made carefully. Better use of land and infrastructure can be made by directing growth to settlement areas and prioritizing intensification... ..* As noted previously, the lands proposed for RM2 development are located within the Barrie Settlement Area.

Supporting policies from the new Growth Plan include the following:

- Supporting a range and mix of housing options including second units and affordable housing to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households (Guiding Principles 1.2.1).
- Achieving a complete community that provides a diverse range and mix of housing options, including second units and affordable housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes (2.2.1.4 c)).
- Directing development to settlement areas and away from hazardous lands (2.2.2.1 d, e).
- Encouraging the construction of affordable housing to meet projected needs of current and future residents of the municipality (2.2.6. 1 i)).
- Permitting an urban form that optimizes infrastructure, particularly along transit and transportation corridors, to support the achievement of complete communities through a more compact built form (3.c).

- Encouraging a diverse mix of land uses including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services and public service facilities (4.a).
- Providing a diverse range and mix of housing options (4.c).
- Ensuring the development of high quality compact built form (4. e).

Given this policy framework, the proposed development concept for the subject site represents the type of development that the Growth Plan encourages. This residential development will direct growth to the settlement area and provide for a medium density residential development in the City of Barrie along with 6 units of affordable housing. Based on my review of the proposed development plan as well as the reports and studies submitted, it is my opinion that the proposal conforms with the new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019.

6. Conformity with the City of Barrie Official Plan

The City of Barrie Official Plan was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in April 2010 with amendments consolidated in the January 2018 version. The Official Plan sets the vision for development in the City of Barrie with a 2031 planning horizon. Barrie is identified by the Province of Ontario as the principal primary settlement area within the Simcoe Sub-area. The forecasted population is 210,000 persons by 2031. The City of Barrie's municipal boundaries were expanded to include an additional 2,300 hectares of land on its southern borders. The Official Plan states:

2.3. d). There will be a growing need to provide residential densities which are higher, more cost effective, energy efficient and more environmentally sustainable than previous development in the City. It is expected that throughout the planning period, V\Barrie's new housing stock will continue to include a large percentage of single detached units and a growing percentage of multiple family development and medium and high densities in order to provide a complete range of housing options for the City's residents. Intensification represents an essential component of the City's growth management strategy to minimize the infrastructure requirements of new development and to utilize existing services including transit, schools, and open space.

Despite the expanded land area in south Barrie, the City of Barrie's Official Plan encourages intensification within the existing built boundaries. There is an expectation that the population, household and employment growth forecasts for Barrie will continue to be substantially above that of the provincial average. (2.3 b).

Section 3.1 of the City of Barrie Official Plan sets out goals and policies related to Growth Management. Reference is made to the need to guide, direct and monitor the rate of growth to match the supply of land, municipal services and facilities with the needs of residents and employers, in accordance with the City's population employment, intensification and density targets. (3.1.1.d).

The Plan goes on to say that the approval of specific development applications will be governed by various principles including the encouragement of a mix and form of housing that supports affordable housing and specialty needs housing (3.1.2.2.d i). Additionally, priority is to be given to lands adjacent to existing development, such as in the case for 428 Little Avenue.

Housing goals and policies are described in Section 3.3 of the City of Barrie Official Plan. One of the key goals is the provision of a range of housing types, unit sizes, affordability and tenure arrangements at various densities and scales that meet the needs and income levels of current and future residents (3.3.1 a).

New housing is to be directed towards locations where there are appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities to support the future population (3.3.1 f).

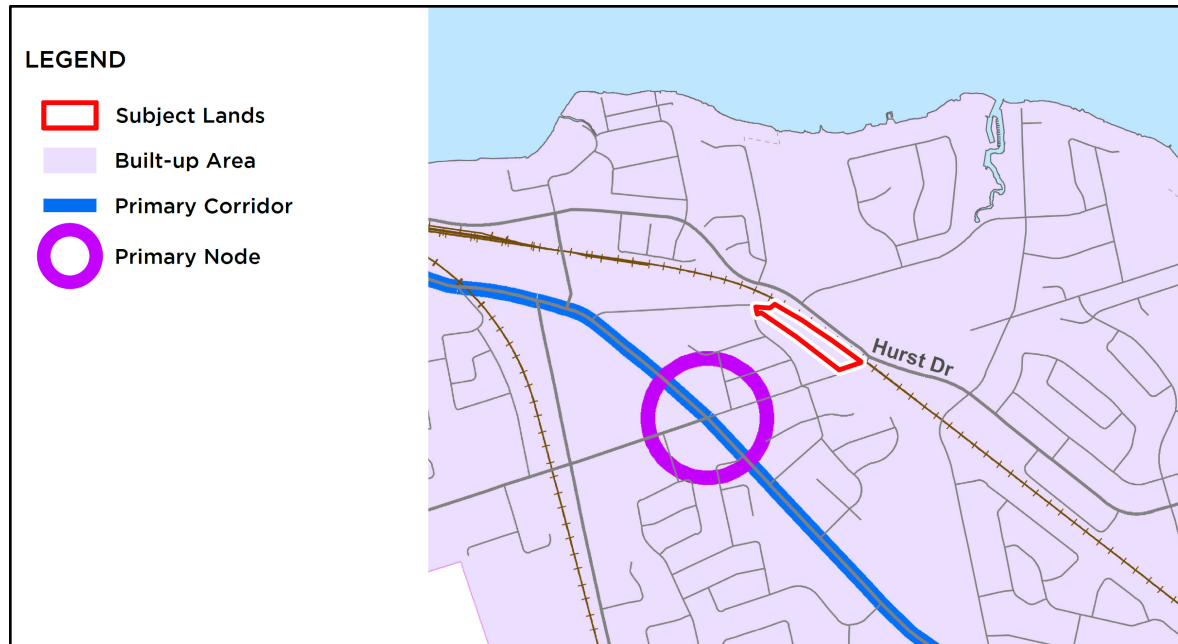
Policy 3.3.2.1 c) of the Official Plan states that the City will encourage residential revitalization and intensification throughout the built-up area in order to support the viability of healthy neighbourhoods and to provide opportunities for a variety of housing types.

Section 4.2 of the Official Plan contains Residential goals and policies. Of note are the following:

- Encouraging the creation of complete communities through a mix of land uses (4.2.1.b).
- Developing residential areas with densities that are transit supportive and contribute to the municipality achieving its intensification and density targets (4.2.1.c).
- Enhancing compatibility between dwelling types at different densities and minimizing potential conflict between incompatible land uses. (4.2.1.f).
- Medium density residential development is described as consisting of multiple dwelling types such as triplexes, fourplexes, apartments and street, stacked and cluster townhouses (4.2.2.d).
- For cluster and/or block townhousing as is proposed for 428 Little Avenue, the density must not exceed 53 units per net hectare (4.2.2.d iv). The calculated density for this proposed development is 27.45 units per hectare.

Medium and high-density residential development is encouraged to locate in Intensification Nodes and Corridors as identified on Schedule I.

Figure 5: Extract from Schedule I to the Barrie Official Plan



Although the subject property is not located in a node or corridor, Official Plan policies do allow for residential intensification outside of the Intensification Areas subject to meeting the following criteria (4.2.2.6 d):

- i) *That the scale and physical character of the proposed development is compatible with, and can be integrated into, the surrounding neighbourhood.*
- ii) *That the infrastructure, transportation facilities, and community facilities and services are available without significantly impacting the operation and capacity of existing systems.*
- iii) *That public transit is available and accessible.*
- iv) *That the development will not detract from the City's ability to achieve increased densities in areas where intensification is being focused.*
- v) *That sensitive, high quality urban design will be incorporated into the development including the efficiency and safety of that environment.*
- vi) *That consideration is given to the preservation of heritage resources.*

I have carefully considered these criteria in light of the development that is proposed. It is my opinion that:

- The proposed development conforms to all of the zone standards of the Multi-Residential RM2 zone, that is, there are no exceptions being requested to yard setbacks, building height or lot coverage.
- The interface between the 7 existing single detached dwellings is well treed and the development of 428 Little Avenue will be required to provide closed board privacy fencing. As such, I feel the new buildings can be harmoniously integrated into the existing community without loss of privacy or negative impacts to the existing residents.
- The density of 27.45 units per hectare is compatible with the existing low density neighbourhood as the density is well below what would be expected for developments of cluster/block townhousing (up to 53 units per hectare).
- The proposed development is well below the maximum lot coverage and gross floor area and well above the minimum required landscaped open space. There is no overuse of the property.
- Although 84 parking spaces are required, the proposed development provides well in excess of this number. In total, there will be 135 parking spaces with five of these being designated as barrier free. This represents 2.4 parking spaces per unit. There will be 30 designated visitor parking spaces provided so as to avoid any spill-over of parking onto nearby local streets.
- Transit and neighbourhood commercial facilities are located within an easy walking distance of the property.
- The site is located adjacent to Highland Park and a pedestrian walkway will provide direct access to the park.
- Full municipal services are available to the property.
- The City of Barrie has achieved 77 percent intensification for the last 8 years and as such, the development of this property with 56 residential units will not detract from the City's ability to meet its intensification targets as the City has done well in over-achieving the target of 50 percent.
- The proposed development represents high quality architectural design and accommodates an affordable housing component as requested by City staff.
- The site is vacant and devoid of built heritage resources. Archaeological work has been completed and the conclusions are that the site is not of archaeological significance. The Environmental Impact Study and Tree inventory have addressed natural heritage features of the site.

Having reviewed the Official Plan for the City of Barrie, it is my planning opinion that the development proposed for 428 Little Avenue conforms to the Official Plan goals and policies.

7. Provision of Affordable Housing

Reference has been made in this report to the affordable housing policies set out by the Province of Ontario in both the Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Additionally, the City of Barrie Official Plan contains a number of policies in Section 3.3.2.2. In this section, the target of 10 percent of all new housing units per annum are to be affordable housing based on financial criteria related to purchase and rental prices.

Affordable housing is encouraged to locate in close proximity to shopping, community facilities and existing or potential public transit routes such as arterial or collector roads (3.3.2.2.c). In the case of 428 Little Avenue, shopping facilities such as a grocery and drug store are located at Yonge Street and Minet's Point Road, within a ten-minute walk. A bank, restaurants and hardware store are also located at Yonge and Minet's Point Road. Public transit is available along Yonge Street, a 6-minute walk (Route 8) and Hurst Drive, a 2-minute walk (Route 4). Schedule D – Roads Plan to the City of Barrie Official Plan identifies Yonge Street, Hurst Drive and Little Avenue all as arterial roadways.

The City of Barrie Official Plan policies indicate that consideration will be given to modifying existing zoning to help facilitate the provision of affordable housing (3.3.2.2.d). While this is a laudable goal, the development of affordable housing units at 428 Little Avenue can be accomplished within the City's current RM2 zoning standards.

With respect to the proposed development, six of the 56 units are planned as affordable housing units. This represents 10.7 percent of the total number of units. These six units will all be 2-bedroom units, each with approximately 80 square metres of floor area.

8. Requested Zoning Approval

As indicated previously, a Zoning By-law Amendment is being requested to rezone the lands from a variety of single detached residential zones (R1 R2, R3, R4) to Multi Residential RM2. There are no site-specific zoning standards being requested. The following Zoning Matrix illustrates the required and provided standards.

Figure 6: Zoning Matrix - 428 Little Avenue		
RM2 Zoning	Required	Provided
Lot Area	720 sq. m.	20,394.8 sq. m.
Lot Frontage	21 m.	24.5 m.
Front Yard Setback	7 m.	> 7 m. Foster Drive
Interior Side Yard (West)	1.8 m.	7 m.
Interior Side Yard (East)	1.8 m.	30 m.
Rear Yard Setback	7 m.	7 m.
Landscape Open Space (minimum)	35 percent	50.8 percent
Lot Coverage (maximum)	35 percent	18.4 percent
Gross Floor Area (maximum % of lot)	60 percent	36.6 percent
Density (maximum)	53 units per ha.	27.45 units per ha.
Amenity Area 12 sq. m. per unit	672 sq. metres	720 square metres
Secondary Means of Egress	7 m.	7 m.
Height (maximum)	10 m.	7.31 m. - 9.9 m.
Parking (1.5 spaces/unit)	84 spaces	135 spaces (2.4 spaces per unit)

As indicated previously, the proposed development meets all of the standards of the Multi-Residential RM2 zone.

9. Summary

Having reviewed the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the City of Barrie Official Plan, and the City's Zoning By-law, it is my opinion that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment and proposed Site Plan are appropriate for the following reasons:

- Approval of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan will be consistent with the policies set out in the Provincial Policy Statement and will conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

- With respect to the City of Barrie Official Plan, the approval of the planning applications conforms to goals and policies set out in that document.
- The proposed development represents logical and appropriate development for lands that are designated for residential use, within the built boundary of an identified settlement area;
- Allows for the efficient use of land and infrastructure and provides affordable housing units.
- The development is sensitive to the seven adjacent single detached dwellings and can be integrated without adverse impact to the existing community.

For all of these reasons, it is my professional planning opinion that the approval of the planning applications to permit the proposed development at 428 Little Avenue is appropriate and represents good planning.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "C Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Celeste Phillips, MCIP, RPP