

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 26, 2013

To: Chair and Members
Planning and Housing Standing Committee

Re: **Department of Planning File Number: B.17- B.28 (13-00150)**
369 Blackmarsh Road, Ward 3
Application for Rezoning and Approval to Develop 2 Apartment Buildings and 10 Rowhouse Dwelling Units
Applicant: Karwood Estates Inc.

Karwood Estates Inc. has applied for approval to develop property with an area of approximately 1.7 hectares (4.3 acres) and 20 metres (66 feet) frontage in the area of 369 Blackmarsh Road for the purpose of 32-unit apartment building, a 60-unit apartment building, and 10 rowhouse dwelling units; all would be under the umbrella of a single condominium corporation. The development would involve construction of a road that would originate at and extend through # 369 Blackmarsh Road and connect with a road that is part of a neighbouring residential development referred to by the applicant as “Westfield”. The property is zoned Residential Medium Density (R2) and Open Space (O) and designated Residential High Density (RHD) and Open Space (O). This proposal would require rezoning to the Apartment Medium Density (A2) Zone and involve a Municipal Plan amendment.

It is recommended that this application be considered for approval.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is a consolidation of # 369 Blackmarsh Road; the rear of # 371, #373 and # 375 Blackmarsh Road and a large block of City-owned land that has an area of about 1 hectare (2.5 acres) and which the applicant is proposing to acquire from the City of St. John’s. The City land – the bulk of the subject property - functions as a densely-treed buffer between the Gulliver Farm property and the Village Park property, both of which are designated Residential High Density.

The front part of the subject property (the first 60 metres from the street line with an approximate area of 1200 m²) is occupied by a single-detached house and zoned R2. The remainder (approximately 95%) of the property is undeveloped, treed and zoned Open Space. On its south side it is separated from Captain Whelan Drive by a buffer strip approximately 20 metres deep. The subject property is not affected by the presence of a waterway or a wetland; however, it is within the boundaries of Planning Area 4 (Mundy Pond). The Planning Area 4 Development Plan is an overlay district.

On its west side, the subject property abuts the Gulliver Farm Property, a 6.9 hectares (17 acres) property situated off Blackmarsh Road and Captain Whalen Drive. This land was recently the subject of a rezoning application and is now in the process of being developed exclusively for quadrplexes (61 building lots each containing a 4-unit apartment building, for a total of 244 apartment dwelling units). The Gulliver Farm Property is in the A2 Zone.

ST. JOHN'S

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

CITY OF ST. JOHN'S PO BOX 908 ST. JOHN'S NL CANADA A1C 5M2 WWW.STJOHN'S.CA

North of the subject property, on the same side of Blackmarsh Road, are less than a dozen single-detached houses which are zoned R2 and designated Residential High Density (RHD). On the opposite side of Blackmarsh Road are about a dozen single-detached houses which are located in the R1 Zone. Beyond these, with frontage on Jensen Camp Road, Empire Avenue and Fitzgerald Place, are a large number of rowhouse dwellings; these are zoned Residential Medium Density (R2).

On its east side, the subject property abuts medium density rowhouse condominium units on the site of what was originally intended to be a high density apartment complex (*The Village Park*).

South of the subject property, on the opposite side of Captain Whelan Drive, is a large parcel of land which is mostly occupied by the *Nalcor/Newfoundland Hydro* building and associated parking lots that is zoned Commercial Office Hotel (COH) and designated Commercial General (CG). The *Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation* (NLHC) building and its principal parking lot are located nearby. In the same area there also appears to be potential for another commercial building lot which would have frontage on Hamlyn Road and Captain Whelan Drive.

Within about a kilometer of the subject property are located a shopping centre (*The Village*), two supermarkets, a department store (*WalMart*) and two large retail pharmacies with clinics. Within two kilometers of the subject property are several public schools and Bowring Park. The subject property is also in area which is served by several *Metrobus* routes linking it to various areas of the city.

DISCUSSION

	Current	Proposed
St. John’s Municipal Plan	Open Space (O) District and Residential High Density (RHD) District	Residential High Density (RHD) District
St. John’s Development Regulations	Open Space (O) Zone and Residential Medium Density (R2) Zone	Apartment Medium Density (A2) Zone

Planning Considerations

1. Almost the entirety of the subject property is designated Open Space (O), per the St. John’s Municipal Plan. The functions of open space lands include shaping the growth of the City and enhancement of its beauty (aesthetics); protection of areas of physical instability and for the purpose of flood control; protection of ecologically valuable areas; recreational activity; and buffering of incompatible land uses.

Where the subject property is situated between two large properties designated for high density residential development - the Gulliver Farm property on one side, and the Village Park land on the other - it would seem that the present Open Space designated City-owned land provides for possible recreational opportunities for area residents, for community aesthetic, and a buffer separating the different development areas. However, the Parks and Open Spaces Division advises that no public open space is required in this area and that it has no objection to the proposed rezoning. On this basis, removal of the Open Space designation can be justified.

2. An overall objective of the Municipal Plan is to encourage compact urban form by accommodating development with higher densities and infill development. A residential objective of the Municipal Plan is to maintain neighbourhood character and quality of life in residential neighbourhoods.

Low rise apartment buildings and the A2 Zone, except for the Gulliver Farm Property, are not common to the immediately surrounding neighbourhood in which the subject property is situated. However, this housing form makes efficient use of land at a time of great demand for new housing and the City is endeavoring to be more efficient in its delivery of services.

3. The subject property is within the boundaries of Planning Area 4 (Mundy Pond). The Planning Area 4 Development Plan is an overlay district and its residential policies prescribe that multi-family housing development (semi-detached and rowhousing dwellings and apartment buildings) shall be situated along Blackmarsh Road. However, the PA4 Development Plan is outdated and Council has permitted deviation from it several times; recent examples include: land on Mundy Pond Road adjacent to the Salvation Army Church, 640-642 Empire Avenue and the adjacent Gulliver's Farm Property. In this case, development of the subject property for two 4-storey apartment buildings and a block of 3-storey rowhouses would be consistent with recent application of the PA4 Development Plan and the overall Municipal Plan objective of development intensification.

Technical Considerations

Review and approval of a site development plan, including controlled site access, parking lot layout and landscaping/buffering, would ordinarily be addressed at the time an application for development approval is submitted to the City. At this time, the Department of Engineering has reviewed the information provided by the applicant and provided the following general comments.

1. Water Service

Municipal water services are available in the area to which the proposed development could connect. Depending on the size of the development, infrastructure upgrading may be required at the developer's expense.

2. Sanitary Sewer Service

Municipal sanitary sewer services are available in the area to which the proposed development could connect. Depending on the size of the development, infrastructure upgrading may be required at the developer's expense.

3. Storm Sewer Service

The proposed development is subject to the City's Net Zero Runoff Policy. Onsite stormwater detention will be required in accordance with municipal standards.

4. Access

At this stage, there are no traffic issues identified with the rezoning. Should the rezoning occur the applicant will be required to submit detailed development plans to allow the City to assess any traffic and access issues.

CONCLUSION

Rezoning of the subject property to allow a mix of residential land uses would be responsive to changing local demographics and housing affordability concerns. It therefore has merit and warrants consideration. **It is therefore recommended that the proposed rezoning to the A2 Zone should be considered for approval.**

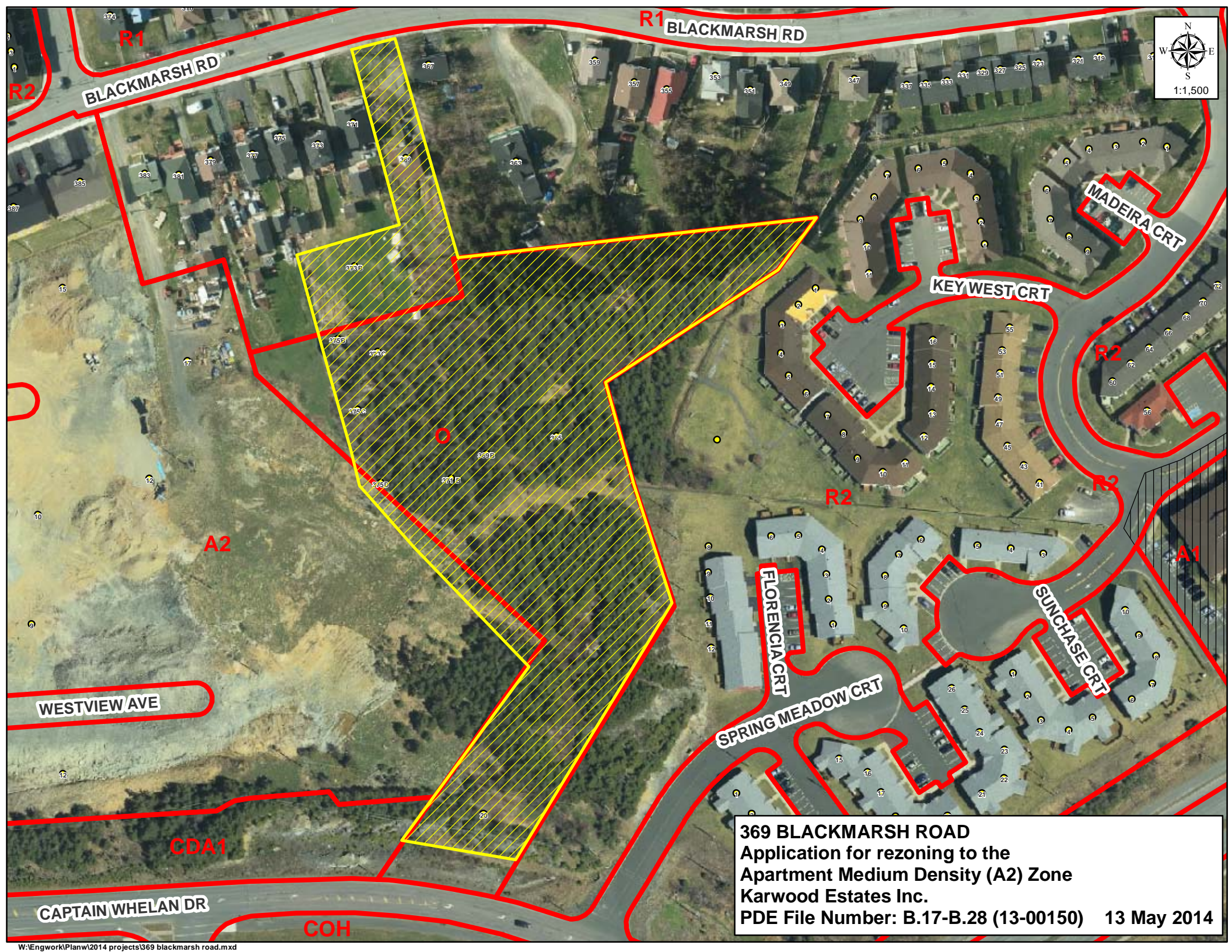
If the Planning & Housing Committee concurs, it is recommended that the application be advertised in accordance with the requirements of Section 5.5 of the Development Regulations and a public meeting chaired by a member of Council be held. At a later stage, a public hearing chaired by an independent commissioner will be required.

This is provided for the consideration of the Planning and Housing Committee.

Paul Boundridge, MCIP
Planning Coordinator

Ken O'Brien, MCIP
Chief Municipal Planner

PBD/dlm



369 BLACKMARSH ROAD
Application for rezoning to the
Apartment Medium Density (A2) Zone
Karwood Estates Inc.
PDE File Number: B.17-B.28 (13-00150) 13 May 2014

BLACKMARSH ROAD

Total Lot Area 17 336 m2
Townhouse Lot Area 2 724 m2
Apartment Lot Area 11 962 m2
Apartment Lot Area Coverage 15%

Parking Required
1.25 Stalls/Unit
92 Units x 1.25 = 114 Stalls

Parking Provided 115 Stalls

