



**Meeting Date: September 7, 2022**

**Submitted by: Dan FitzGerald MPI RPP MCIP, Planner II**

**Report No: PLA-59-2022**

**Subject: Application for Minor Variance (File No. A-18/2022)**

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**Recommendation:**

THAT Minor Variance Application A-18/2022, filed by Sandra Feenstra for relief from the Comprehensive Zoning By-law in order to establish a maximum size of 167 square metres (1797.6 square feet) or 4.3 percent lot coverage for all accessory buildings, and a maximum height of 6.3 metres (20.9 feet) for a property legally described as Part of Lots 14, 15, Concession 3 East, Part 1 of Reference Plan 33R4964, in the Municipality of Middlesex Centre, County of Middlesex, and Municipally known as 6675 Egremont Drive, be GRANTED, subject to the following conditions:

THAT the accessory building be located in the same general location as shown on the attached drawings;

AND THAT the footprint of the accessory building shall not exceed the footprint of the single detached residence on the lands,

AND FURTHER THAT the reasons for granting Minor Variance Application A-18/2022:

- The request complies with the general intent and purpose of Middlesex Centre's Official Plan;
- The request complies with the general intent and purpose of Middlesex Centre's Comprehensive Zoning By-law;
- The request is minor in nature; and
- The request represents appropriate development on the subject property.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee of Adjustment with a recommendation regarding a minor variance for a property located on the south side of Egremont Drive, west of the intersection at Egremont and Vanneck Road.

A location map is included as Attachment 1.

## Background:

The purpose and effect of the Application for Minor Variance is to seek relief from the Middlesex Centre Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2005-005 as it relates to the maximum permissible gross floor area for an accessory building in the Hamlet Residential First Density – Exception (HR1-1) Zone. The applicant is requesting a maximum size of all accessory buildings of 167 square metres (1797.6 square feet) or 4.3 percent lot coverage, whereas the Zoning By-law permits a maximum size of the lesser of sixty square metres (60.0 m<sup>2</sup>) (645 square feet) of gross floor area or three percent (3%) lot coverage, which in this case would be a maximum permissible size of 60 square metres. That applicant is also requesting a maximum height of 6.3 metres (20' 9" feet), whereas the Zoning By-law permits a maximum height of 6.0 metres (19.6 feet). The effect of the proposal is to facilitate the construction of one accessory building. A site plan is included as Attachment 2.

The subject lands are located within the Hamlet of Melrose. It is bounded by residential development to the east and west, and agricultural lands to the north and south. It maintains a frontage of approximately 35.7 metres (117.3 feet) along Egremont Drive, and an area of approximately 0.96 acres (0.39 hectares). It is designated 'settlement area' in the Middlesex County Official Plan, 'Hamlet' in the Middlesex Centre Official Plan, and zoned Hamlet Residential First Density – Exception (HR1-1) Zone in the Middlesex Centre Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

The applicant has provided a conceptual site plan showing the proposed location of the accessory building, located in the rear yard, along the east interior side yard. The applicant is proposing to build a detached garage for the purpose of storage and personal use. The proposed variance is summarized below:

Requirements	Relief Requested
As per section 4.1 (b) (ii) no buildings or structures accessory to a dwelling shall exceed the lesser of 60.0 m <sup>2</sup> (645 ft <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area or three percent (3%) lot coverage in any <u>Hamlet Residential Zone</u> .	167 m <sup>2</sup> , which is an increase in size of 107 m <sup>2</sup> , that being 4.3 percent lot coverage
As per section 4.1 (c) (ii), accessory buildings shall exceed 6.0 metres (19.6 feet) in height in any <u>Hamlet Residential Zone</u> .	6.3 metres, which is an increase of 0.3 metres

## Consultation:

Notice of the applications have been circulated to agencies, as well as property owners in accordance to the requirements of the Planning Act.

Public Comments:

At the time of writing the subject report, no comments or concerns had been received from the public regarding this proposal.

Agency Comments:

The following comments were received at the time of writing this report;

Enbridge Pipelines does not have any assets in the area.

Development Review Coordinator has reviewed the application and has no concerns.

**Analysis:**

Section 45(1) of the Planning Act authorizes the Committee of Adjustment to grant relief from the Comprehensive Zoning By-law requirements if a request is deemed to be desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building, or structure; the requested relief is minor; and the general intent and purpose of both the Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law are maintained.

In addition to the above, Section 10.9 of Middlesex Centre's Official Plan must also be satisfied in order for a minor variance to be granted. Section 10.9 provides the following policies with respect to minor variance applications:

- I. The proposal is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood;
- II. The proposal is in keeping with the general intent and purpose of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law;
- III. The proposal is in keeping with the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan;
- IV. The proposal is appropriate and desirable use of land; and
- V. The variance is generally minor in nature. The interpretation of what is minor is not necessarily based on the extent by which the by-law is varied. Rather, it is based on whether the effect of the variance could be considered minor.
- VI. There are valid reasons as to why the by-law cannot or should not be complied with, and that reasonable alternatives that comply with the by-law have been considered.

As previously noted, the subject land is designated 'Settlement Area' according to the County of Middlesex and 'Hamlet' in the Middlesex Centre Official Plan. The lot is zoned 'Hamlet Residential First Density – Exception (HR1-1) Zone' by Middlesex Centre's Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The applicant noted that the proposed increase in size is based on the request to co-locate storage and have a space for personal use.

Planning has reviewed the proposed minor variances in relation to the four Planning Act tests as listed above. The analysis has been broken up below which takes into consideration each variance against the four tests.

Is the variance considered minor in nature? YES

The interpretation of what is minor is not necessarily based on the extent to which the zoning by-law is varied. Rather it is based on whether the impact of the variance can be considered minor. In review of the proposed minor variance, staff have reviewed whether to consider the variance minor based on the location, the context of development on the lands, and the existing characteristics of the neighbourhood. The proposed increase in size of 107 square metres is not anticipated to have any negative impacts on surrounding land, given the proposed location is located entirely behind the existing dwelling. Additionally, the proposed size is similar to a previous accessory building on the lands, which is consistent with other accessory buildings located in close proximity to the proposed development. Respecting the request for height, generally the proposed increase is due to the proposed format of development and uses of the site. The increase in height, as described by the applicant, is mean to accommodate a recreational vehicle. The scale of development in comparison to the house is consistent. Therefore, the impact of the proposal can be considered minor in that it would be in keeping with the existing character of the area.

Is the variance an appropriate use of the land? YES

The development of an accessory building would be consistent with the character of the area which includes residential uses and uses accessory thereto. Therefore, the proposed variance would represents an appropriate use of the land.

Does the variance maintain the intent of the Official Plan? YES

The intent of the Official Plan through the Residential designation is to provide for a variety of dwellings and accessory buildings in the area. The proposed accessory building would be directly associated with the residential use of the property, therefore planning staff find that the subject proposal would maintain the general intent and purpose of the Municipal Official Plan.

Does the variance maintain the intent of the Zoning By-law? YES

The general intent and purpose of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law as it relates to the maximum permissible size for an accessory building is to limit an accessory building to maintain the dwelling as the principle use of the lands. Similarly with respect to height, the purpose of limitations is to reduce the impact on neighbouring developments while also limiting the usability of the building for commercial opportunities. As the building would still be smaller than the dwelling, Planning Staff is satisfied that the proposed increase in size would not detract from the residence being the main structure on the lands. As such Planning Staff are satisfied that the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law would be maintained.

Given the above, Planning Staff is satisfied that the proposed minor variance can be supported. Planning staff recommend that the subject application be approved, as the proposal meets the four test of a minor variance of the Planning Act.

This opinion is provided prior to the public meeting and without the benefit of potentially receiving all comments from agencies or members of the public. Should new information arise regarding this proposal prior to or at the public meeting, the committee is advised to take such information into account when considering the application.

**Financial Implications:**

None.

**Strategic Plan:**

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Balanced Growth

This Planning Report relates to Objective 2.3 – Promote designs and concepts that reflect a “small-community feel” in new development by matching existing development patterns within the pre-existing residential character.

**Attachments:**

1. Location Map
2. Proposed Site Plan