

**October 20, 2015**

Planning Administration  
Town of Halton Hills  
1 Halton Hills Drive,  
Halton Hills, Ontario  
L7G 5G2

**To Whom It May Concern:**

**Re: Architectural Design Brief for the Application for Official Plan  
Amendment and Rezoning for 71 Main Street, Georgetown, Ontario.**

### **Introduction**

We are the architects for the above noted project, and are writing to comment on the Architectural Design aspects as it pertains to the OPA and Rezoning application. As part of a greater revitalization effort, this mixed-use 11-storey project proposes to add density to the town centre of Georgetown while minimally impacting the scale and condition of the public street. The overall design strategy retains the historic character of the McGibbon Hotel façade, respects the existing built fabric of Main Street South and Mill Street, and provides a light upper residential volume hidden from direct sightlines.

Originally driven by a strong local demand for an alternative housing stock in the town, this project injects 140,000sf of spacious condominium suites (1,100sf average suite size) for an active, established community. It also provides 14,500sf of commercial retail space located directly on Main Street South.

This new proposed building at 71 Main Street South will breathe an active new life to the immediate context. The project respects key elements of Halton Hills Urban Design Guidelines as well as seeking to fulfill the initiatives of the Downtown Georgetown Business Improvement Area (BIA), this mixed-use project will serve as a catalyst for redevelopment in the heart of the town.

### **Cultural Significance of the existing McGibbon Hotel**

The McGibbon Hotel has historically and culturally stood to define the corners of Main Street South and Mill Street. Today, the McGibbon Hotel struggles to

be an active and alive place. The new design is challenged with the task of breathing new life into the McGibbon Hotel site while respecting its historic past.

The new mixed-use development intends to maintain the major concepts of the red brick façade and massing of the McGibbon Hotel to pay tribute to its historic past. Minor design alterations have been proposed on the original façade that are intended to open up the ground level retail – similar to the building’s original 1890s glazed storefront.

A feasibility study will be conducted on the existing McGibbon Hotel façade preservation. If the existing façade is deemed unsafe, then a new façade designed in the spirit of the original shall be erected. The new façade design would include the general rhythm and sizes of the original window openings, material palette (potentially reusing the existing stone sills), and overall proportions of the original mass.

Initial site analyses have uncovered elements of limestone in the material palette of the surrounding buildings. For this reason, the Development team is considering limestone on its own adjacent façades from the old McGibbon Hotel to act as a contrasting element to the red brick – acknowledging the corner as an important place in the community.

### **Street Scape/Public Realm**

Main Street South and Mill Street are the intersections at the town centre of Georgetown. Main Street serves as the pedestrian and vehicular retail thoroughfare and Mill Street is an auxiliary road that leads to the surrounding residential neighbourhoods. The Main street façade maintains the retail frontage while the entrance to the residential lobby is located on Mill Street, away from the busy traffic of Main Street. The Main Street façade restores the original recessed store front entry and window relationship, creating an articulated street frontage consistent with the scale of Main Street. Signage band above the Storefront is restored back to the Historical reference of Main Street, positioned respectfully not to dominate the corner but acknowledging its importance with a return of the Storefront glazing down along Mill Street.

The residential entry from Mill Street is positioned between the historical portion of the building and the New Build portion of the project animating the sidewalk with setbacks with pedestrian friendly landscaped hardscape flanked by a double height retail space, further animating an otherwise an under used Mill Street. An auxiliary parking entrance is located on the north, accessed from the outdoor car park and away from the pedestrian thoroughfare. We

believe the additional 219 underground parking spaces would alleviate the need for on-street parking on Main Street.

The new stone façades adjacent to the McGibbon Hotel have intermittent recessed balconies. This serves to 'break-up' the mass to relate to the rhythm of the street frontages.

The project's addition of 200 to 250 new residents would enhance the local life in the area. This would encourage further pedestrian and customer traffic for the local retailers from both the residents of the mixed-use project as well as their visiting friends and relatives.

### **Building Massing**

Further to breaking-up the stone façade at the lower floors, the upper massing of the building is designed to have minimal impact on the streetscape of Main Street South and Mill Street. Working closely with sightlines and employing a strategy of terracing, the upper residential portion steps away from Main Street to produce added density without compromising on the character of the street.

Along with breaking-up the mass, the balconies are designed to be nestled in the building, rather than be fully exposed to the elements outside. This provides protection and added comfort of the exterior space. The stepped terraces, on the other hand, are larger expansive roof decks, which act as an extension of the interior living spaces.

### **Common Spaces in an Amenity Rich Neighbourhood**

Located in the Business Improvement Area of Downtown Georgetown, the new mixed-use development is situated in an 'amenity rich' neighbourhood. The BIA offers a host of ongoing events on Main Street that include, but are not limited to, street festivals, farmers markets, concerts, and parades. Further, the newly renovated Halton Hills Public Library, located just southwest of the McGibbon Hotel are complimentary community places for the new mixed-use development.

For these reasons, the amenities of the proposed mixed-use development have been designed to compliment, rather than compete, with the surroundings. Amenities such as guest suites, multifunctional space adjacent to a large outdoor terrace, and a fitness gym with a yoga studio have been included in the building. These amenities create another dimension of public space at Main Street South and Mill Street.

### **Conclusion**

The mixed-use project at 71 Main Street South, Georgetown is a challenging and ambitious undertaking. Working to compliment the characteristics of Main Street South and Mill Street are the motivating forces for the design. Further driven by a desire for growth, the new building would serve to enhance a culturally rich and historically important place in the heart of the town.

Respectfully,



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