



Report of the General Manager

Name Proposal for the Development Site in the City of Markham

Recommendations

The Housing York Inc. Board of Directors authorize the development project located at 4310 Highway 7 East, in the City of Markham to be named Unionville Commons.

Summary

This report seeks Board of Directors (the Board) approval to officially name the Housing York Inc. (HYI) affordable housing building currently under construction at 4310 Highway 7 East, in the City of Markham.

Throughout the development process, the project has been temporarily referred to as the "Unionville Seniors Affordable Housing Development." The project now requires a permanent name which is to be approved by the Board.

Background

Construction is underway for 265 units of affordable seniors housing in Unionville, City of Markham, with occupancy expected in late 2022

Over the last several years, the Region has worked with Unionville Home Society and Minto Communities on a master plan to redevelop the Unionville Home Society campus. This plan includes an affordable rental building for seniors, owned and operated by HYI, and a new Minto Communities townhome development that will replace the existing Heritage Village community for seniors.

The new HYI building is currently under construction and occupancy is anticipated to begin late 2022. The building will include 265 apartments for seniors, underground parking, indoor and outdoor amenity spaces for residents, gardens and pedestrian walkways, green/energy efficient building systems and, most uniquely, a planned community hub with programming and services specifically for seniors.

The Board-approved facility naming process guided the proposed naming selection

In [September 2015](#), the facility naming process for HYI was approved by the Board to ensure the naming of all HYI facilities is done in a consistent, fair and efficient manner that aligns with Board-established principles and considers feedback from municipal stakeholders.

The facility naming process requires the following principles to be considered:

- Priority will be given to names carrying geographic, historical or cultural significance to the area
- Consideration will be given to architectural or special features directly related to the facility
- The name will be simple to pronounce, spell and generally be three words or less

In developing the recommended building names, the team researched cultural heritage and archival records at the municipality to identify historically-relevant and culturally-significant factors contributing to the community. In addition, the team engaged in public consultations, and undertook a variety of informal discussions with community members, local municipal staff and Regional staff. The input has been taken into consideration in developing the recommended names for the new building.

Three potential names are recommended for consideration for this building

1. Unionville Commons

The building is located in the historical neighbourhood of Unionville in the City of Markham. The development is currently being referred to as the “Unionville Seniors Affordable Housing Development.” The significance of the planned community hub, the focus on connectivity, and the building being located in the centre of a campus of care should be highlighted by use of the word Commons. “Unionville Commons” is a recommended name that would provide geographic and historic reference, as well as indicate the importance of the social and interpersonal connections that will occur here.

2. Heritage Heights

This name gives homage to the community of Heritage Village which was a part of the Unionville Home Society campus and that has been sold for redevelopment. As part of the agreement to redevelop the campus, which includes Heritage Village, the residents will have the option to relocate into the new HYI building. In anticipation that many of these residents would be moving into the new building, they have been actively engaged in the community consultation process and significantly contributed to the design. They are looking forward to enjoying the modern affordable seniors housing that has been prioritized in their neighbourhood. “Heritage Heights” is recommended to honor the story of a successful community engagement process that contributed to the new building.

3. Rouge Manor

The Rouge River flows just south of the property and holds historical and cultural significance to Unionville. In 1608, French settlers established settlements along the shores of the St. Lawrence River and eventually began to explore lands further inland, claiming the lands of present day Markham. Having explored the river, and witnessing how in certain places its waters were red from the clay near the bank, they named it Rivière Rouge, commonly known as Rouge River. The river encouraged further settlements and trades, maintaining its vital role in servicing the settlers in the area. “Rouge Manor” is a recommended name for consideration as it reflects the French heritage and prominent geographical element of the area.

Analysis

After review and analysis of the three shortlisted names, it is proposed that the redevelopment of 4310 Highway 7 East, in the City of Markham, be named “Unionville Commons.” This name ties in the geographical and historical significance of Unionville, as well as the exciting future potential of community cohesion.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications associated with assigning the building name.

Local Impact

The name is derived from the cultural and historical research that was done, and is reflective of the Unionville community and the heritage of this part of the City of Markham.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the new housing development in Markham be named “Unionville Commons.”

For more information on this report, please contact Kathy Milsom, General Manager at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72091. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by Kathy Milsom
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Approved for Submission: Katherine Chislett
President, Housing York Inc.

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