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Sep 22, 2025

Township of Guelph/Eramosa  
Committee of Adjustments  
8348 Wellington Road 124  
Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0

**Property Address:** 162 Alma Street  
**CofA Application:** A06-25

**Attention:** Members of the Committee of Adjustment  
**Subject:** Planning Justification Letter

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## INTRODUCTION

On behalf of our client, Anthony Almeida, owner of the property located at 162 Alma Street ("Subject Site"), in Rockwood. Perspective Views ("PV") is pleased to provide the following Planning Justification Letter in support of the Minor Variance application to support the proposed 8 unit structure with proposed 14 parking spaces. This letter will provide a brief history, an explanation of the proposal and the technicalities that require the proposed variances, as well as our rationale to support the request.

## LOCATION & SURROUNDING CONTEXT

Topographical imagery can be found in Appendix A. Image 1 illustrates the site on the north side of Alma Street approximately 185m west of Main Street S. The surrounding area is a mix of built forms and uses consisting of residential, commercial, and mixed use. The Subject Site has an existing single family dwelling that we are proposing to demolish, directly adjacent on both sides are recently developed new multi unit residential buildings and directly behind are mostly single family dwellings. Along Alma there are residential, commercial and mix use properties such as a church about 120m east, a mix use plaza 40m west and pharmacy across the street and a gas station and hardware store

## PROPOSAL

We are proposing an 8 unit residential building with 14 parking spaces. The upper 6 units are two stories high and have 3 bedrooms, and the 2 lower units are single story and single bedroom dwelling units providing housing options for growing families. This development is significantly similar to the adjacent properties and maintains several consistencies with those developments while respecting the rear adjacent properties.



It should be noted that a redesign at this stage of the project would be financially detrimental to the project development, especially if we had to lose required parking spaces or reduce the number of units.

The proposed site plan, floor plans and elevations, as well as a rendering of the proposal can be found in the application submissions from our firm.

## **REQUIRED VARIANCES**

When we first started designing the project we complied with the previous by-law however the new amended by-law 7-2022 section 4.11.2.1. requires a buffer strip of 1.5m in width and we are proposing a reduced buffer strip of 0.6m on the west property at the front which tapers to 0.43m towards the rear lot line, 0.6m at the rear lot line and 0.73m at the east lot line.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE FOUR TESTS FOR A MINOR VARIANCE**

As required by Section 45(1) of the Planning Act, the following is our analysis of the “four tests” for the appropriateness of a minor variance request.

### **Does the proposal meet the intent of the Official Plan?**

The property is governed by the County of Wellington Official Plan. The proposed development is in line with the provisions set out in the official plan such as 2.1.2. Sustainable developments, 4.4. Housing, 1. Supply, 2. Variety 3. Intensification to name a few.

Therefore, the proposed building and use conforms to and meets the intent of the Official Plan.

The proposed development is much more in line with the Official Plan and desirable than what is currently existing.

It is for all these reasons that it is my professional opinion that the proposed 8 dwelling unit building meets the intent of the Official Plan.



### **Does the proposal meet the intent of the Zoning By-law?**

The Subject Site is designated C2 which permits various commercial and residential uses.

We are only seeking relief for 1 variance and as already stated complied with the previous by-law. The by-law states the following:

#### *4.11.1 Buffer Strip Requirements*

*Notwithstanding the yard and setback provisions of this By-law, where a lot is used for a non-residential use other than agriculture and the interior lot line or rear lot line abuts a residential use, then a strip of land adjoining such abutting lotline, shall be used for no other purpose than a buffer strip in accordance with the regulations of Section 4.11.2.*

*Notwithstanding the yard and setback provisions of this By-law, where a parking lot and/or a parking area is situated on a lot along a lot line which abuts a residential use, a visual barrier shall be provided and maintained along such abutting lot line in accordance with the regulations of Section 4.11.2.*

It is our interpretation that the bylaw is mainly speaking for properties with significant traffic such as non-residential uses and not specifically for residential parking lots but after discussing with planning staff it was decided that a minor variance would be required to maintain the current proposal.

The west lot line has the access driveway to the parking spaces in the rear lot. Half of the required parking spaces are along the rear lot line and there is only about a 6m long portion of the parking lot that has a 0.73m setback from the property line.

### **Is the proposal desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building or structure?**

The area is an eclectic mix of built forms, setbacks, and uses, and the proposal, which maintains similar consistency with the adjacent multi-unit dwelling structures, specifically enhances and contributes to the character of the area and the streetscape along Alma Street. There is no negative impact or conflict such as traffic or pedestrian as a result of the proposed development. Furthermore, the proposal will provide an improvement to the streetscape and community.

It is for these reasons that in my professional opinion the proposed variance is desirable for the neighbourhood, appropriate use of the land, and community.



### **Is the proposal minor in nature?**

The proposal is minor in nature considering that both neighboring developments are similar and we are still able to provide a visual barrier with a solid board fence, and it is possible to plant grasses or shrubs as described in the by-law. It does not change the residential character of the neighbourhood. No adverse impacts related to noise, privacy, safety, or drainage are anticipated. The reduced buffer is internal to the property line and does not encroach on municipal lands.

It is for these reasons that it is my professional opinion that the requested variance is minor in nature.

### **SUPPORT & OPPOSITION**

All municipal staff support this proposed development, and only one neighbor brought up a couple points of opposition, although unrelated to the 4 tests of the planning act we will briefly address. The argument about storm water management, we have engineered an infiltration system to manage all of the storm water on the subject property. The argument about greenspace, in comparison to 150 Alma, is that we are providing a greater percentage of softscaping than the neighboring property and do not require a variance. There seems to be a misunderstanding regarding the requested variance along the west lot line as this is only an approximate 6m length and the setback is 0.73m, and this is only for the parking lot, and so will not negatively impact any trees on the opposite side of the property line. I find the overall argument to be ironic considering that they did not need to consider a buffer of 1.5m when they developed under the previous by-law, however this proposed development is in no way reckless but rather well thought out.



## CONCLUSION

For the reasons listed above, it is our professional opinion that the proposed variances are in keeping with the intent of the Official Plan, are in keeping with the intent of the municipal bylaw, are desirable for the appropriate development of the lands, and are minor in nature, both individually and cumulatively. We therefore respectfully request that the proposed variances be approved by the Committee of Adjustment.

We trust you will find all in order, however if you have any questions or require additional information, please contact us at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Matthew Ribau, Dpl. Arch. Tech.

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## APPENDIX A - Location Map

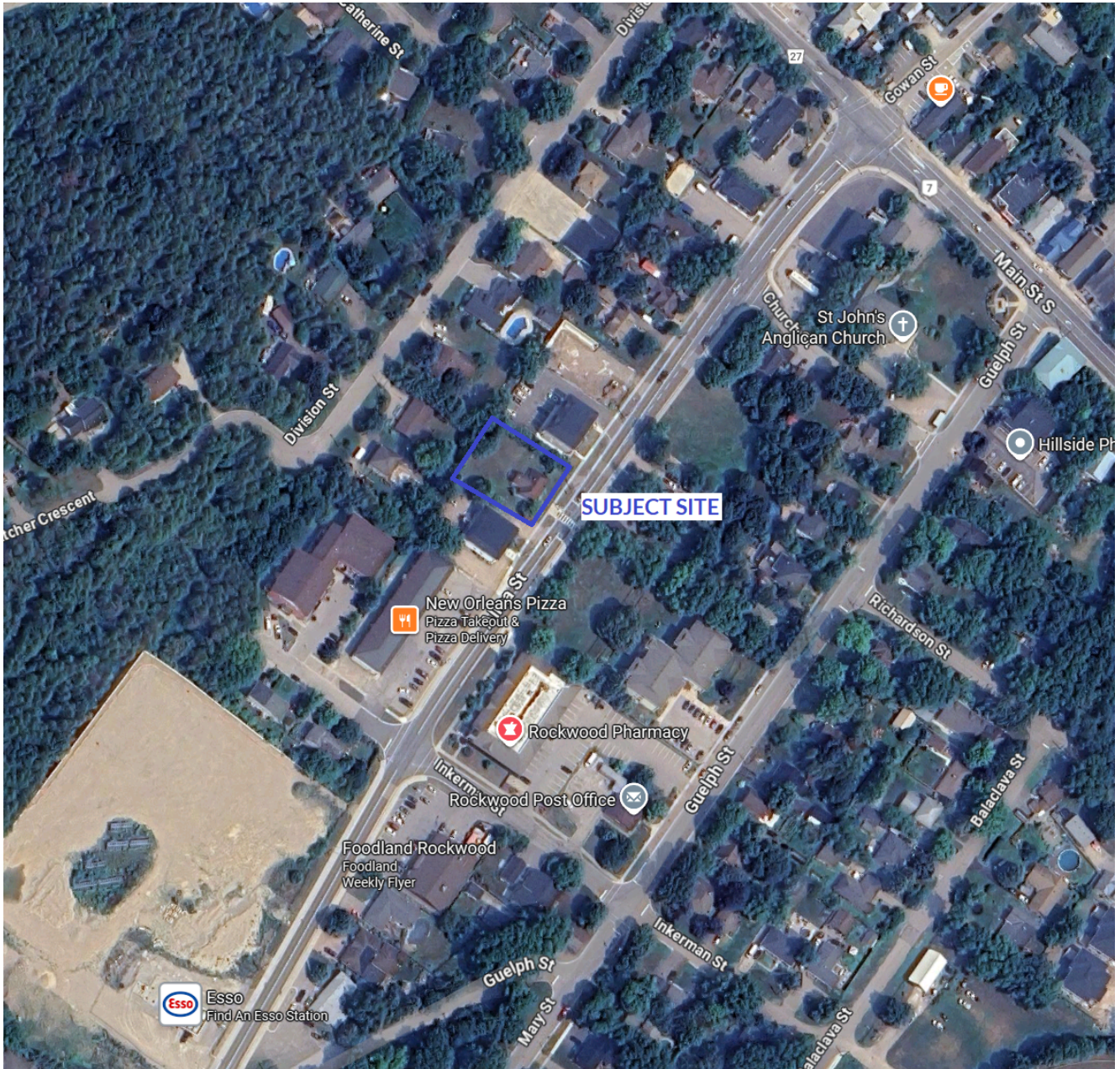


Image 1 - Areal Imagery of Subject Site



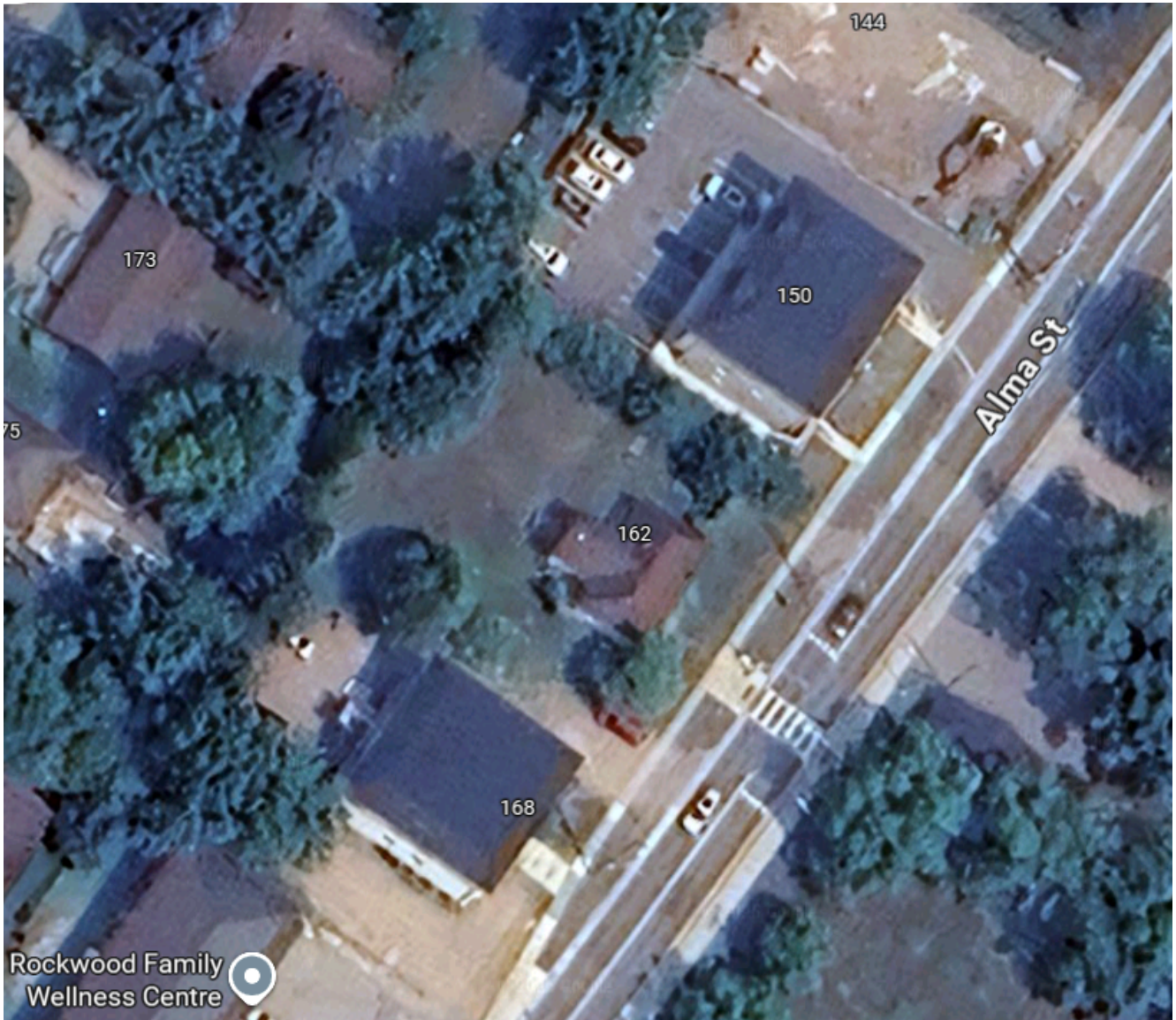


Image 2 - Aerial Imagery of Subject Site & Adjacent Properties