

Shelburne council approves zoning for private school at 712 Main Street East

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Council approved a zoning amendment allowing By Design Learning Centre, an established independent elementary school currently operating in Orangeville, to relocate to 712 Main Street East in Shelburne.

Council considered the application during its Aug. 24 Planning Act public meeting. The proposal would allow the existing two-storey commercial building to be used as a private school serving students from kindergarten through Grade 8.

The property has previously been used for a variety of commercial purposes, including an insurance office, medical office, pharmacy and hearing-aid centre. The school plans to use the existing building, with nine classrooms shown in its submitted floor plans.

Council members raised questions about transportation, outdoor space, the building and the property's proximity to neighbouring industrial uses.

The school does not currently plan to provide school bus service, with students expected to be transported by parents or guardians. The application also does not propose an outdoor play area at this time, with programming primarily planned for inside the building.

A nearby industrial property owner did not object to the application but raised concerns about the compatibility of a school beside an industrial operation, including potential noise and truck traffic. The applicant plans to install fencing around the property and keep school activities within the site.

Traffic and student drop-off were also discussed. The property has 38 parking spaces, compared with 23 required under the town's parking calculation. However, the Ministry of Transportation has requested further information about the proposed traffic circulation and student drop-off and pickup arrangements to ensure vehicles do not queue onto the highway.

Council ultimately approved By-law 31-2026, rezoning the property from Service Commercial to Service Commercial Exception to specifically permit a private school.

The approval does not mean the school can begin construction immediately. The applicant must still satisfy applicable building, transportation and other requirements before opening at the site.