

Special Development Services Committee Minutes

Meeting Number 25
November 30, 2021, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Live streamed

Roll Call	Mayor Frank Scarpitti	Councillor Alan Ho
	Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton	Councillor Reid McAlpine
	Regional Councillor Jack Heath	Councillor Karen Rea
	Regional Councillor Joe Li	Councillor Andrew Keyes
	Regional Councillor Jim Jones	Councillor Amanda Collucci
	Councillor Keith Irish	Councillor Khalid Usman
Regrets	Councillor Isa Lee	
Staff	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer	Bryan Frois, Chief of Staff
	Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services	Ron Blake, Senior Development Manager, Planning & Urban Design
	Morgan Jones, Commissioner, Community Services	Loy Cheah, Acting Director, Engineering
	Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of Human Resources	Darryl Lyons, Manager, Policy
	Frank Clarizio, Director, Engineering	Stacia Muradali, Acting Manager, Development - East
	Biju Karumanchery, Director, Planning & Urban Design	Hristina Giantsopoulos, Election & Committee Coordinator

Alternate formats for this document are available upon request

1. CALL TO ORDER

INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We begin today by acknowledging the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples and their commitment to stewardship of the land. We acknowledge the communities in circle. The North, West, South and Eastern directions, and Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Anishnabeg, Seneca, Chippewa, and the current treaty holders Mississaugas of the Credit

peoples. We share the responsibility with the caretakers of this land to ensure the dish is never empty and to restore relationships that are based on peace, friendship, and trust. We are committed to reconciliation, partnership and enhanced understanding.

Under the authority of the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020* (Bill 197) and the City of Markham's *Council Procedural By-law 2017-5*, and in consideration of the advice of public health authorities, this meeting was conducted electronically with members of General Committee, staff, and members of the public participating remotely.

The Special Development Services Committee meeting convened at 9:06 AM with Regional Councillor Jim Jones, presiding as Chair.

There was a break from 11:00 AM to 11:10 AM.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were none disclosed.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 MARKHAM AGE-FRIENDLY WORKSHOP (10.0)

Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services, addressed the Committee to introduce the presentation, Markham Age Friendly Design Guidelines, which was developed with input from key stakeholders, the Seniors Advisory Committee, and the Committee for an Age-Friendly Markham. He indicated that the presentation will provide an overview and status update on the work done so far and the next steps. Commissioner Prasad acknowledged the work of staff towards a more age-friendly Markham and to bring housing affordability and accessibility to all residents of Markham.

Mayor Frank Scarpitti welcomed members of Council, guests and staff for attending this special Age-Friendly workshop and indicated that the City is always looking for ways to be responsive to a changing demographic in our community and noted that the number of residents over the age of 65 is quickly increasing. He recognized the City's strategic initiatives and supporting programs, policies and services that help residents stay active, healthy and engaged in the community. The Mayor further noted how the City has reached out to all segments of the population through the Diversity Action Plan which includes cultural diversity as well as diversity of needs and ability among all members of the community. The Mayor thanked Members of Council, for their active work

together with members of the community, staff, and all our community based committees. The Mayor also thanked the panelists for their work and advice.

Mayor Scarpitti pointed out that this workshop will be looking at ways in which Markham can be more age-friendly and allow seniors to live in their homes longer and provide more senior living options. He welcomed Dave Hardy, facilitator of the workshop.

Stacia Muradali, Manager, Development, Planning & Urban Design, addressed the Committee to indicate that this workshop is in response to the December 8, 2020 Council resolution to develop Age Friendly Design Guidelines by the end of March 2021 and that due to unforeseen circumstances the development of the guidelines and this workshop were delayed to this meeting date. Ms. Muradali provided an overview of the work the City has completed with respect to the Older-Adult Strategy which focused on; Community Support Services, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, in addition to introducing current initiatives for accessibility and independent living that will inform the Age-Friendly Design Guidelines.

Mr. Hardy introduced the next presenter: Andy Langer, from the Committee for an Age Friendly Markham, who presented, Recommendations For An Age-Friendly Community - An Update, that provided an overview and response to the staff report of December 2020 and highlighted the preference of seniors to live in their homes, and offered suggestions for affordable, fully accessible homes with a universal design. The presentation spoke to the recommendations which the Committee for an Age-Friendly Markham presented to DSC on March 18, 2019. Some of the recommendations included the establishment of a land development corporation to make land allocation an ongoing process,, designing homes so they can be more age-friendly. The recommendations for donating land for residential hospices and the support of residential hospice care which were not endorsed by DSC needed to be looked at. Mr. Langer thanked the Committee and acknowledged members of the Committee for an Age-Friendly Markham: Andy Langer, Gail Leet, Diane Gabay, Patricia Anderson, Kirl McDonald, Sal Amenta, Anthony Ko, Regional Councillor Jack Heath, and Melinda Phuong.

The following concerns in relation to this presentation were heard by the Committee:

Sal Amenta, addressed the Committee and indicated that 90% of seniors prefer to stay at home and that approximately 75% of seniors pass away in hospitals while noting that the cost of seniors living at home are lower than those of long-term care. He noted that community involves homes and amenities that can be

accessible by everyone with understanding compassion and urgency. He suggested that Markham City Council work with seniors to create a more positive future and consider the recommendations of the Committee for an Age-Friendly Markham.

The Committee inquired about the requirements for accessible units in the City of Winnipeg.

Mr. Hardy introduced the next presenter, Michel Trocme, Partner, Urban Strategies. Mr. Trocme, addressed the Committee and provided an update on the work that has been on-going towards developing Markham Age-Friendly Design Guidelines. The design elements included consideration for Always Homes, elevators and chair lifts, and other design elements which should be incorporated into future housing developments in Markham.

The following concerns were heard by the Committee:

Gail Leet, addressed the Committee to indicate that chair lifts are a choice and are expensive. Builders don't incorporate their inclusion or adaptable accommodations for them as seniors' needs change and that an elevator may be a preferred option. Ms. Leet noted that the Older Adult Strategy dated, 2017 was not updated not presented to the Seniors Advisory Committee and should not be considered going forward. She also indicated that stairs leading to the entry of a home are an issue and that there are not many places to go in the winter. Ms. Leet suggested that there be consideration to what is necessary to enable seniors to live in their homes and what is necessary for everyone else in their design.

Anthony Ko, addressed the Committee and advocated for public transportation for seniors. He suggested increased winter maintenance to clear the snow from sidewalks in the winter.

Sal Amenta, highlighted that the City should go further than guidelines that are intended to assist in the design process and should that they should be made universal design requirements.

Biju Karumanchery, Director, Planning & Urban Design, Planning & Urban Design, Emily Irvine Special Projects Coordinator, Stacia Muradali, Manager, Development, Planning & Urban Design updated the Committee on the on-going work which staff have been doing to make homes more age-friendly in the absence of related legislation including negotiating with developers to voluntarily encourage main floor independent living, secondary suites and conversion of spaces inside the home to accommodate elevators.

The Committee discussed the following with respect to the Markham Age-Friendly Design Guidelines:

- That there be consideration to the elimination of stairs leading to front entry ways;
- A suggestion for a pilot project to assist with retrofitting existing homes to facilitate keeping seniors in their homes for a longer period;
- That the policy for affordable housing be connected to timelines of the inclusionary zoning policy; and,
- The provision of transportation for seniors to be more mobile.

Staff advised that there is work being done to minimize the number of stairs to a property which is dependent on grading. Staff noted the concerns identified and will provide an update in the new year as part of the Age-Friendly Design Guidelines.

The Committee welcomed discussion panelists, Wayne Cassidy, Principal Cassidy and Co. Architects, Melissa McEnroe, Manager, Affordable Housing Development, York Region, Mike Clare, Markham Inter-Church Committee for Affordable Housing, Andy Langer, Committee for an Age-Friendly Markham, and Kate Chung, Accessible Housing Network.

Dave Hardy facilitated the panel discussion through the following guided questions:

1. Tell us about your experience with implementing "always" homes and what you think the challenges are, and what the City of Markham can do (e.g. incentives) to encourage developers to incorporate "always" homes elements/ guidelines into new homes.

The panel discussed home layout options that consisted of first floor main bedrooms, second floor for older children and recreation space, and accommodating purpose built secondary suites. Additionally there is consideration for carriage home suites that are built over an existing garage, options for a rough-in for future elevators, in-law suites, shared spaces, and interior/exterior access to secondary suites to incorporate barrier free living

1. What in your opinion are some of the obstacles to acquiring land and the availability of land for seniors housing and what do you think the City's role should be in increasing the supply of land for seniors housing?

2. What in your opinion are the main factors affecting the affordability and accessibility of seniors housing and what do you think the City can do in making seniors housing more affordable and accessible?

The panel discussed the 265 unit purpose built rental for seniors in Unionville Commons and that it is within walking distance to Unionville Main Street with amenities. The panel acknowledged the importance of having amenities and campus of multiple levels of care within walking distance and noted that there is an opportunity for different scales of housing to enable people of all levels of mobility, ages to live in the same community in multiple areas during the course of one's life. It was further indicated that over time certain costs will decrease and there will be improvement with each consecutive build to obtain incremental progress on accessibility and affordability. The development of design guidelines to create standard universal design elements in units in a building that is a non-seniors building, such as larger clearing areas for mobility devices, wall ovens, accessible washrooms, and adjustable counter height can help reduce the costs by addressing accessibility components before they are needed. There was discussion on the importance of adaptable universal design and how it can help create barrier-free living for every one of all ages in the community.

It was noted that as the boomer generation begins to age and downsize, these standards will become a market demand and developers will create these options for purchasers. The panel suggested that the City and Region consider incentives for development partnerships to build affordable and accessible housing.

3. Do you have criteria for the locations you choose for seniors housing and in your experience what are the impediments to acquiring land in those locations? What do you think the City's role is in making these locations more available for seniors housing (ties in to supply of land)?

The panel discussed the need for a separate organization to negotiate and repurpose land to assist with the affordable housing challenges and the need for regulatory framework for these communities to work effectively. The panel noted that developers, landowners, architects, government and residents need to work together to recognize the needs of an aging population and that careful consideration to affordability is required due to the increase in costs with additional accessibility guidelines. There was additional discussion related to the conversion of parking lots for affordable housing, that developments should be multi-generational for greater community inclusion

Dave Hardy thanked all the panelist and participants for their contributions to the discussion.

Commissioner Prasad thanked the facilitator, panelist, consultants, participants, Members of Council, and staff for contributing to the discussion on the age-friendly topics. He noted that discussions with developers will continue and that the City will continue to support an age-friendly Markham.

Mayor Scarpitti thanked everyone in attendance and acknowledged that there are areas to work on. He noted that the hospice work is forging ahead and that while it is not directly the City's responsibility, and that the City will continue to seek opportunities around hospices. Mayor Scarpitti indicated that discussions with different stakeholders and levels of government to build framework, universal design, changes to the building codes will take place to continue to improve accessibility and housing affordability.

The Committee consented to receive the presentation.

1. That the presentation titled "Markham Age-Friendly Design Guidelines – Project Overview and Status Update" be received; and,
2. That the presentation titled "Staff Presentation on the 12 recommendations from the Committee for an Age-Friendly Markham- November 30, 2021" be received.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Development Services Committee Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM.