

Special Development Services Committee Minutes

Meeting Number: 18

May 26, 2022, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Live streamed

Roll Call	Mayor Frank Scarpitti	Councillor Reid McAlpine
	Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton	Councillor Karen Rea
	Regional Councillor Jack Heath	Councillor Andrew Keyes
	Regional Councillor Joe Li	Councillor Amanda Collucci
	Regional Councillor Jim Jones	Councillor Khalid Usman
	Councillor Keith Irish	Councillor Isa Lee
	Councillor Alan Ho	
Staff	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer	Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation
	Trinela Cane, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Darryl Lyons, Senior Manager, Policy & Research
	Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services	Amanda Crompton, Senior Planner, Policy & Research
	Morgan Jones, Commissioner, Community Services	Hristina Giantsopoulos, Election & Committee Coordinator
	Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of Human Resources	Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator
	Adam Grant, Fire Chief	Erica Alligood
	Stephanie DiPerna, Director, Building Standards	Clement Messere, Acting Manager, Development - West
	Frank Clarizio, Director, Engineering	Lawrence Yip, Senior Planner, Urban Design
	Biju Karumanchery, Director, Planning & Urban Design	Samson Wat, Senior Project Engineer

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Special Development Services Committee convened at 7:00 PM with Regional Councillor Jim Jones in the Chair.

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.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There was no disclosure of pecuniary interest.

3. DEPUTATIONS

3.1 DEPUTATIONS REGARDING PROVINCIAL BRIDGE STATION TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITY (TOC) PROPOSAL (10.0)

The deputations were heard with the respective item.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 COMMUNICATIONS - PROVINCIAL BRIDGE STATION TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITY (TOC) PROPOSAL (10.0)

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish

Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

1. That the communications submitted by the following individuals providing comments regarding the above subject matter be received:
 - Dennis Choptiany
 - Marshall McCall
 - Graham Churchill
 - Elisabeth Tan

Carried

5. MEMORANDUM & PRESENTATION

5.1 PROVINCIAL BRIDGE STATION TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITY (TOC) PROPOSAL (10.0)

Arvin Prasad, Commissioner of Development Services, advised that the Province of Ontario is leading negotiations with developers to build new communities integrated with subway stations. This initiative is referred to as the Transit Oriented Community (TOC) Program. The Province has proposed a Bridge Station TOC, to be located within the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan area. The proposal undermines a decade of work undertaken to develop the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan. The City's objective for the Langstaff Gateway has always been to build a complete community where transit is the primary mode of transportation. The Bridge Station TOC varies from the City's vision of the Langstaff Gateway, as it proposes more height and density, more residential units, fewer employment opportunities, fewer community amenities, and less parkland. At tonight's meeting, staff will provide an overview of the Provincial Bridge Station TOC Proposal in relation to the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan.

Darryl Lyons, Senior Manager of Research & Policy, provided a presentation titled "Provincial Bridge Station Transit Oriented Community Proposal".

Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of Human Resources, advised that in her opinion the Province has been negotiating in good faith, but that only incremental progress has been made to date. Ms. Storto noted that the content of the negotiations remain confidential.

The following Deputations were made on the Provincial Bridge Station TOC proposal:

Peter Palframan spoke in opposition of the Provincial proposal for the Bridge Station TOC, and in support of Council's position on the proposal. Mr. Palframan expressed concern that developers were influencing the project, that there was no public participation or consultation in the planning of the project, that the project has no consideration for existing residents, that the City's plans for the Langstaff Gateway has been disregarded, and that democracy is being questioned. Mr. Palframan supported an alignment along Yonge Street for the Yonge North Subway extension, as this was the option that residents were consulted on and due to it being the better alternative. Mr. Palframan encouraged Council to do everything possible to overturn the Minster Zoning Order (MZO) for the Bridge Station TOC.

Graham Churchill, Richmond Hill resident, thanked Council for their leadership on trying to address the issues related to the Bridge Station TOC. Mr. Churchill acknowledged that the Greater Toronto Area is growing substantially and that a

plan is needed to address this growth and to ensure food security. Mr. Churchill advised that he has written a letter to the Prime Minister, signed by 21 resident groups, requesting that: 1) TOC transactions be investigated; 2) agreements with developers be paused; and 3) that the federal government withhold its contribution to the YNSE until provincial TOC agreements are made public. Mr. Churchill expressed the following concerns: that the land value within the Bridge Station TOC has increased substantially due to the change in zoning; that the Municipality's authority to plan the community has been taken away; that there will be fewer employment opportunities; that there will be fewer community amenities; that it will be the second densest place in the world and the densest place in the western hemisphere; that York Region taxpayers will be on the hook to pay for problems that arise due to the Bridge Station TOC; and that it appears that the Province will be using the \$2.2 billion that would have gone to the municipality to pay for the subway.

Dwight Richardson, resident of the Royal Orchard Community, spoke in support of Council's actions in regards to the Bridge Station TOC and for standing up for democracy. Mr. Richardson was amazed that the Province would throw 10 years of municipal planning on the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan out the door. Mr. Richardson suggested that meetings regarding the Bridge Station TOC should be held in an open session and that citizens should have the right to know about the financial arrangement being made by the Province in regards to the project. Mr. Richardson noted that democracy thrives on debate and that it is a messy process. Mr. Richardson advised that every problem has a solution and that overturning of the MZO will take time and effort.

George Hanff, representing the Aileen-Willowbrook Ratepayers Association, spoke in shock and opposition of the Bridge Station TOC. Mr. Hanff expressed concern in regards to: the impact the project will have on the existing infrastructure and community; that the project is very risky; that taxpayers will pay for the mistake; and that there is no protection of the existing green space. Mr. Hanff suggested this type of density would be more appropriate Downtown Toronto. Mr. Hanff called on Council to do everything possible to block the Bridge Station TOC.

Barry Nelson, representing the Thornhill Historical Society, noted that the Province has the authority to pass MZOs, but that this is usually done for items of urgency, such as the need to build a hospital or courthouse. Mr. Nelson provided a brief history of the City's plans for the Langstaff Gateway going back 12 years to when Peter Calthorpe, internationally renowned architect, created the vision for the community, which included the remediation of the creek. Mr. Nelson noted that the creek will now be covered, and that this decision was approved by the

City prior to the MZO order. Mr. Nelson strongly opposed the MZO for the Bridge Station TOC and suggested that the City needs to think about what it can do to remove the MZO and to uphold the original vision for the lands while protecting the environmental features of the lands. Mr. Nelson suggested that the TRCA should be consulted on the Bridge Station TOC.

Evelin Ellison spoke in opposition to the MZO and the Bridge Station TOC. Ms. Ellison hoped that the Province would answer the community's questions prior to the election, and that a more democratic process would be followed in regards to the planning of the Bridge Station TOC. Ms. Ellison expressed concern regarding the impact the Bridge Station TOC will have on the environment, the sewer and waste systems, and on hydro, as she was unsure existing systems and services could handle this type of density. Ms. Ellison questioned which hospital future residents of the TOC will go to, as existing hospitals are already crowded. Ms. Ellison also questioned what residents and the City could do together to improve this plan.

Arnold Korne, Royal Orchard Resident, expressed concern that his building will have the Yonge North Subway run under it, and he was unsure if the building's foundation could handle it, as it is an older building. Mr. Korne was also concerned in regards to the disruption the construction of the subway will cause to residents living in his community, noting that many are selling their homes in a panic. Mr. Korne noted that the Province has failed to respond to the community's concerns, and continues to push any concerns onto Metrolinx. Mr. Korne asked Members of Council to take on the responsibility of ensuring the existing community is looked after.

Doug Denby suggested that the City should fight the MZO for the Bridge Station TOC and not allow the Province to destroy the area. Mr. Denby suggested that this could possibly be achieved by making a statement on voting day.

Nimisha Patel, representing Box Grove Connected, spoke in opposition to the Bridge Station TOC in support of residents living in Thornhill, and to ensure that this does not happen in other areas of Markham. Ms. Patel expressed concern that this could also happen in the Box Grove Connected community when plans for the 407 Transitway start to advance. Ms. Patel was also concerned that the City and the residents do not have a say in the plans for the Bridge Station TOC due to Province passing a MZO, and that the environment is being neglected.

Eric Lakien, representing the Landmark Condominiums on Bayview Avenue, spoke in opposition to the Bridge Station TOC and supported the comments of the previous deputant.

The Committee provided the following feedback on the Bridget Station TOC:

- Suggested that Markham's growth should be spread more evenly across the City;
- Questioned how the Bridge Station TOC will be aligned with the lands on the east side of the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan;
- Noted that the City should not be placed in a poor financial position due to this project and that there should be some type of cost recovery model of which the municipality can recover its costs related to this project;
- Suggested staff consider all potential costs related to the Bridge Station TOC;
- Questioned if the municipality would be put in a position where it has to postpone municipal servicing to other proposed developments to provide municipal servicing to the Bridget Station TOC;
- Clarified that the landowner is typically required to make infrastructure improvements to ensure that the municipality can handle the servicing requirements of the new development;
- Expressed concern that the landowner could be exempt from having to install an Automated Vacuum Waste Collection System (AVAC) in the Bridge Station TOC;
- Noted that installing an AVAC system in the Bridge Station TOC would derive environmental benefits, and that it would be economical due to the scale of development;
- Noted that there would be a lot more usable land on the north side of Highway 7 if the hydro lines were buried;
- Questioned what the City will still have control over in regards to the Bridge Station TOC;
- Clarified that the City will be involved in subsequent planning processes, such as it will be actively involved in site plan control and the issuing of building permits, and it may have limited say on the location of buildings;
- Expressed concern that the Province will proceed with TOCs in other areas of Markham, such as in the Markham Centre or Markham Road Mount Joy areas;
- Suggested that the City should not cooperate unless legally required to do so;
- Suggested that when another government gets elected there may be an opportunity to make changes to the project.

Staff responded and provided clarification to inquiries from committee members and the public.

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti
Seconded by Councillor Keith Irish

1. **That the deputations by Peter Palframan, Arnold Korne, Doug Denby, Graham Churchill, Dwight Richardson, George Hanff,(Aileen-Willowbrook Ratepayers Association), Barry Nelson (Thornhill Historical Society), Evelin Ellison, Arnold Korne, Doug Denby, Nimisha Patel (Box Grove Connected), and Eric Lakien, regarding the Provincial Bridge Station Transit Oriented Community (TOC), be received,**
2. That the memorandum entitled “Memo to Council – Bridge Station Transit Oriented Community (TOC) Comparison to Langstaff Secondary Plan and Parkland” be received; and further,
3. That the presentation entitled “Provincial Bridge Station Transit Oriented Community Proposal” be received.

Carried

6. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Amanda Collucci
Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

The Special Development Services Committee adjourned at 9:24 PM.

Carried