

Thornhill Sub-Committee

Minutes

January 24, 2024, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Electronic Meeting

Sub-Committee Members	Regional Councillor Jim Jones, Chair Councillor Keith Irish Councillor Isa Lee	Councillor Andrew Keyes Mayor Frank Scarpitti (Ex-Officio) Regional Councillor Joe Li (Ex-Officio)
Regrets	Deputy Mayor Michael Chan (Ex-Officio)	
Council Members	Regional Councillor Alan Ho Councillor Ritch Lau Councillor Reid McAlpine	Councillor Karen Rea Councillor Amanda Collucci
Staff	Giulio Cescato, Director of Planning & Urban Design Stephen Lue, Senior Manager, Development Rick Cefaratti, Senior Planner, West District	Erica Alligood, Election / Committee Coordinator Rajeeth Arulanantham, Assistant to Council / Committee

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Thornhill Sub-Committee meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM with Regional Councillor Jim Jones in the Chair.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'Í'S C/O MALONE GIVEN PARSONS LTD., APPLICATION FOR OFFICIAL PLAN

AMENDMENT AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT TO PERMIT A NEW BAHÁ'Í NATIONAL CENTRE

Giulio Cescato, Director, Planning & Urban Design, provided an introduction advising that this Thornhill Sub-Committee meeting was requested following the Statutory Public Meeting for this application. Director Cescato advised that the Applicant has brought forth an updated proposal to the Sub-Committee but the City has not yet received a formal resubmission of application materials. Director Cescato advised that another statutory public meeting will be required before the revised applications are brought to Council and noted that the Applicant has worked with Staff to revise the proposal based on comments from internal department, external agencies received to date, as well as those received from the public and Members of Council at the original statutory public meeting. Director Cescato introduced Rick Cefaratti to provide an introductory presentation, noting that it would be followed by a presentation from Malone Given Parsons and representatives of the Applicant.

Rick Cefaratti, Senior Planner, Development, provided a presentation. Mr. Cefaratti introduced representatives of the Applicant to deliver a more comprehensive presentation on the revised proposal.

Siamak Hariri, Architect, Steve Schaefer, SCS Consulting, Mark Schollen, Schollen and Company, Mark Jamieson, BA Consulting Group, and Don Given, Malone Given Parsons provided a presentation delivering an overview of the changes to the application responding to comments from the May 23, 2023 public meeting, including comments related to emergency access, ecology, transportation and parking.

The Sub-Committee provided the following feedback:

Floodplain and Modifications of Leslie Street

- Asked for clarification whether the TRCA is supportive of the floodplain solution being explored. Mr. Schaefer advised that based on discussions with the TRCA Engineering Team, there is generally supportive of the concept of raising Leslie Street but clarified that work continues with respect to engineering drawings and permits.
- Asked if homes on Waterloo Court would be permitted to be constructed today considering those homes are located within floodplain. Mr. Schaefer confirmed that there is not appropriate ingress and egress that would allow for construction of those homes today, noting that a new development would have to find a similar solution to have alternate access.

- Asked if, in the event of a storm which would flood the area, Waterloo Court and the Baha'i Centre could be evacuated, rather than raising Leslie Street. Mr. Schaefer advised that policy requires safe ingress and egress based on flood depth, noting that an evacuation of that magnitude could be concerning.
- Inquired about the ownership of Leslie Street, particularly the portion intended to be raised. Mr. Schaefer advised that the entire portion that the Applicant is proposing to raise is owned by the City. Mr. Schaefer explained that when the street was realigned it went onto the Baha'i property, but would be conveyed to the City, as would the area being widened onto Baha'i property.
- Asked if a connection to the existing lake-to-lake trail would be permitted. Mr. Schaefer confirmed that would be included within the right-of-way.
- Asked about the process for raising Leslie Street and what would be done to control side run-off of water from Leslie Street being raised. Mr. Schaefer advised that the portion of Leslie Street being raised would be filled with clean earth fill. Mr. Schaefer further advised that stormwater run-off continues to be explored noting that a similar run-off is anticipated but that a curb or storm sewer may also be explored.
- Asked how the Leslie Street raising and widening would impact Waterloo Court during construction. Mr. Schaefer confirmed that access for Waterloo Court would be maintained but advised that there is not yet a detailed design timeline. Mr. Schaefer confirmed that the work would be completed within one season.

Parking

- Asked how many lay-by parking spots would be provided along Leslie Street. Mr. Jamieson indicated that the exact number of spots would be dependent on ecology and the TRCA, noting that it could include three to four lay-bys, totaling 10 to 20 cars, with the intention of providing a more organized way of parking along Leslie Street.
- Inquired if there would be parking expected on Waterloo Court. Mr. Jamieson advised that the intent is not to rely on Waterloo Court for any parking to ensure there are no offsite impacts.
- Asked how the parking lot proposed at 7015 Leslie Street differs from the lot currently at this site and if this lot would be open to the public. Mr. Jamieson advised that the existing lot is currently gravel, without defined

spaces. Mr. Jamieson noted that as it will be more organized, it will fit a firm number of parked cars, confirmed that the lot would be open to the public, that there may be a gate that closes in the evenings to maintain the safety of the lot, and that the same principle would apply to all the Baha'i Centre parking areas.

- Asked if there is still underground parking proposed on site. Mr. Hariri confirmed that there is one level of underground parking proposed, approximately 37 spaces total.
- Inquired about the area of net pavement at the main site and parking areas. Laura Williamson, GEI Consulting, advised that around the temple, most surface area will be gardens and vegetation. Ms. Williamson advised that at 7015 Leslie Street, the exact paved area would be established through detail design noting that the surfaces would be permeable.

Ecology and Vegetation

- Asked how long the warranty period would be for the landscaping. Mr. Schollen advised that the warranty period is typically two years but for restoration projects there is an ongoing monitoring program which can go on for five years.
- Asked how many trees would need to be removed for the sake of widening Leslie Street. Mr. Schollen advised that as there is not detailed design yet, they would report back on tree removal related to the Leslie Street widening.
- Asked when more detail would be provided on mitigation to protect wildlife as part of the project. Ms. Williamson advised that wildlife protection would be incorporated into the ecology strategy for the project and that brochures would be prepared to provide details on mitigation measures. Ms. Williamson added that there would also be educational signage placed in addition to restoration measures, which will explain risks to wildlife in the area such as unleashed dogs. Ms. Williamson also explained that the construction window would include restrictions for vegetation removals to ensure that nesting birds and bats are protected.
- Inquired about the removal of dog strangling vine. Ms. Williamson advised that there would be ongoing invasive species mitigation as part of the project.

- Asked what size trees would be planted. Mr. Jamieson advised that a range of sizes would be planted depending on the portion of land, clarifying that it is a restoration project, not a landscaping project.
- Inquired if milkweed would be planted. Mr. Jamieson noted that a range of pollinator species would be explored, including milkweed, and that Staff at German Mills Habitat would be consulted to see what species will thrive in that location.

General Discussion

- Inquired as to any plans to relocate the log cabin on the Baha'i site. Mr. Hariri confirmed that the log cabin is proposed to remain in situ.
- Asked if the temple is open to the public and for the approximate number of people on site on any given day. Mr. Hariri confirmed that the temple is open to the public during the day. Mr. Schollen advised that the temple typically sees 30 to 40 people per day, with approximately 100 people visiting on weekends. Mr. Schollen noted that attendance is typically spread out throughout the day.
- Asked how many larger events are hosted at this site each year. Alyssa Hrynyk, Malone Given Parsons, advised that there could be a national convention hosted annually which would be three days in length and could see an attendance of up to 400 people, the capacity of the site. Mr. Hariri added that there are 9 holy days throughout the year which could see higher volumes than average days, noting that the number of visitors would likely not be more than a public holiday.
- Asked if there are still plans for overnight accommodations in the main building. Mr. Hariri confirmed that overnight accommodations are still contained within the plans, which would likely be two-night stays during events hosted at the centre, with the number of lodging rooms being slightly reduced.
- Inquired about other Baha'i temples in the world, asking how this temple would compare to the one in Chile. Mr. Hariri advised that the temple in Chile has a greater capacity as it serves the whole continent, noting that the proposed temple would be more modest in scale as it will only serve Canada. Mr. Hariri added that there is a temple in Chicago which has a capacity of 1500 people.
- Asked when the next statutory public meeting could be expected. Stephen Lue, Senior Manager, Development, advised that once Staff receive the

formal resubmission of application materials, a public meeting will be scheduled ensuring that notice requirements and timelines are adhered to. Councillor Irish indicated that he plans on hosting a Community Meeting after the public meeting is held.

- Expressed support for the positive changes demonstrated as a result of community and Committee input, noting that Staff would still need to review some of the proposed changes, particularly with respect to the raising of Leslie Street.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Moved By Councillor Keith Irish

Seconded By Councillor Andrew Keyes

That the Thornhill Sub-Committee meeting adjourn at 11:30 AM.

Carried