

Development Services Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Number: 2
February 11, 2025, 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Live streamed

Roll Call	Mayor Frank Scarpitti Deputy Mayor Michael Chan Regional Councillor Jim Jones Regional Councillor Joe Li Regional Councillor Alan Ho Councillor Keith Irish	Councillor Ritch Lau Councillor Reid McAlpine Councillor Karen Rea Councillor Andrew Keyes Councillor Amanda Collucci Councillor Juanita Nathan
Regrets	Councillor Isa Lee	
Staff	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services Trinela Cane, Commissioner, Corporate Services Morgan Jones, Commissioner, Community Services Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of Human Resources Joseph Silva, Treasurer Bryan Frois, Senior Manager, Executive Operations & Strategic Initiatives	Giulio Cescato, Director, Planning & Urban Design Frank Clarizio, Director, Engineering Stephanie DiPerna, Director, Building Standards John Wong, Technology Support Coordinator Hristina Giantsopoulos, Election & Committee Coordinator Anushrut Bharadwaj, Assistant to Council & Committee Iyana Mundo, Assistant to Council/Committee

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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 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.

The Development Services Committee meeting convened at 10:00 am. Regional Councillor Jim Jones presided as Chair.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were none disclosed.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES - JANUARY 27, 2025 (10.0)

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

1. That the minutes of the Development Services Committee meeting held on January 27, 2025, be confirmed.

Carried

4. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were deputations in relation to item 8.1. Please refer to the item for details.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

There were communications received in relation to item 8.1. Please refer to the item for details.

7. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

8. REGULAR REPORTS - DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY MATTERS

8.1 RECOMMENDATION REPORT, NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'Í OF CANADA, OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT APPLICATIONS

TO PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW BAHÁ'Í NATIONAL CENTRE AND CANADIAN NATIONAL TEMPLE AT 7200 AND 7290 LESLIE STREET (WARD 1), FILE PLAN 22 262723 (10.3, 10.5)

Arvin Prasad, Commissioner of Development Services, provided opening remarks, emphasizing the extensive consultations that have taken place during the review process. He noted that consultations involved the public, staff, Council members, Baha'i Canada, and external agencies and have helped in making adjustments and improvements to ensure benefits for all landowners.

Don Givens, representing Malone Given Parsons, addressed the Committee to provide an overview of the timeline of events. He outlined how environmental, traffic, and community concerns have been addressed to date. Mr. Givens clarified that the current stage of the application involves reviewing the Official Plan Amendment and the Zoning By-Law Amendment.

Karen McKye, representing the Baha'i National Centre, addressed the Committee to express her appreciation and gratitude for the consideration of this application. She thanked the Committee for their attention to the matter and acknowledged the collaborative efforts involved in the review process.

The Committee heard the following depositions:

Esther Ravka expressed concerns regarding the infrastructure needed to service the area, highlighting potential issues with traffic, environmental, and climate impacts on both residents and wildlife associated with the application.

Kimberley Seymour expressed her opposition to the project and noted that more work is needed to address concerns with the scale of the development, tree removal, noise and pollution.

Jack Heath expressed concerns in relation to the ecological corridor surrounding German Mills. He suggested that there be a study of the area and additional public consultation in the form of a working group with Baha'i, residents, and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Evelin Ellison expressed concerns with the environmental impact of the project and that the development should follow the zoning by-law. She suggested that the report be returned to staff and that a working group be established to ensure a sustainable and environmentally sound development plan.

Ashkan Tabib Ashkan Tabib expressed concerns regarding the project, noting the significant amount of time spent hearing deputations on the matter. He suggested that additional work and further consultation are needed to address community concerns, the developments' footprint, and how it will integrate into the surrounding community.

The Committee acknowledged that this has been a difficult file for Members of Committee, Council, staff, the applicant and the community. The proactive response by the applicant in addressing key concerns related to the environment, emergency access, and road improvements were acknowledged by the Committee and it was noted that this is indicative of their effort to positively impact the project and resolve potential issues. The Committee also noted that the applicant's approach is setting an example for future applications.

There was discussion in relation to the Environmental Impact Study and how the environmental and ecological requirements have been met. Staff indicated that Leslie Street will be raised above the Regional flood level to prevent it from being subject to flooding in the future. Additional discussion ensued relating to the traffic accommodations and lake to lake path connections.

The Committee requested a summary of the ecological enhancements made to this application.

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

1. That the February 11, 2025, report titled, "RECOMMENDATION REPORT, National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i of Canada, Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications to permit the development of a new Bahá'í National Centre and Canadian National Temple at 7200 and 7290 Leslie Street (Ward 1), File PLAN 22 262723", be received; and,
2. That the Official Plan Amendment application submitted by National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i of Canada, be approved and that the draft Official Plan Amendment, attached hereto as Appendix 'A', be finalized and brought forward to a future Council meeting to be adopted without further notice; and,
3. That the Zoning By-law Amendment application submitted by National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i of Canada, be approved and that the draft Zoning By-law Amendment, attached hereto as Appendix 'B', be finalized, and brought forward to a future Council meeting to be enacted without further notice; and,

4. **That the deputations from Esther Ravka, Kimberly Seymour, Ashkan Tabib, Jack Heath, and Evelin Ellison be received; and,**
5. **That the written communications from Don and Colleen Bone, Kim Seymour, Jamaal Meerick, Edith Kangas, Gail Lavery, Sue Mason, Valerie Burke, Mark Newton, Harcharan Singh, Sheila Geary, and, Joan Honsburger be received; and further,**
6. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried

8.2 PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN DEPARTMENT 2025 WORK PLAN (10.0)

The Chair moved item 8.2 up on the agenda and it was addressed before item 8.1.

Arvin Prasad, Commissioner of Development Services, provided opening remarks, emphasizing that the various interdisciplinary projects outlined in the work plan align with the City's strategic goals and contribute to a comprehensive vision for the City of Markham.

Giulio Cescato, Director of Planning and Urban Design, acknowledged the efforts of staff in the development of the work plan.

Stephen Lue, Senior Manager of Development, Planning & Urban Design, explained that the work plan provides an overview of initiatives planned for 2025, all of which support a healthy and complete community. Mr. Lue introduced Steven Bell, Senior Manager, John Yeh, Senior Manager of Policy & Research, and Richard Fournier, Senior Manager of Parks Planning, who presented the details of the Planning and Urban Design Department's 2025 Work Plan.

The Committee thanked staff for their dedication and hard work in developing the plan, recognizing that it reflects the City's commitment to environmentally sustainable initiatives. Inquiries were made regarding provincial funding, affordable housing, invasive species, and vertical farming initiatives. Staff provided detailed responses to these questions.

The Committee suggested the inclusion of a Gantt chart version of the work plan and proposed that consideration be given to publicizing the work plan to further engage the community.

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti
Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

1. That the February 11, 2025, report titled, “Planning and Urban Design Department 2025 Work Plan”, be received; and further,
2. That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried

9. MOTIONS

There were no motions.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

11. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS

There was no new or other business.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Ritch Lau
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

That the Development Services Committee meeting adjourn at 12:00 PM.

Carried