



MINUTES
UNIONVILLE SUB-COMMITTEE
May 23, 2017, 6:00 pm
Council Chamber

Committee Members

Mayor Frank Scarpitti
Deputy Mayor Jack Heath
Regional Councillor Joe Li
Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong
Councillor Alan Ho
Councillor Don Hamilton
Councillor Amanda Collucci

Council Members

Councillor Valerie Burke

Staff

Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer
Ron Blake, Senior Development Manager
Lilli Duoba, Manager, Natural Heritage
Biju Karumanchery, Director of Planning and
Urban Design
Shirley Marsh, Sr. Planner, Urban Design
Dave Miller, Manager, West District
Gary Sellars, Senior Planner
Soran Sito, Manager, Environmental Assets
Patrick Wong, Planner II, Natural Heritage
Kitty Bavington, Council/Committee Coordinator

The Unionville Sub-Committee convened at 6:04 pm with Councillor Amanda Collucci in the Chair. Councillor Collucci welcomed everyone.

**1. Sixteenth Land Holdings Inc. (York Downs Golf Course)
Environmental Systems**

Maria Gatzios of Gatzios Planning + Development Consultants Inc., representing the applicant, gave a presentation to provide an overview of the proposed development with a proposed total unit count and density of 19.2 units/ha.

Ms. Gatzios confirmed that the applicant has appealed the applications to the Ontario Municipal Board, but intends to continue to work with the City on developing the site appropriately.

Jo-Anne Lane, of Beacon Environmental, on behalf of the applicant, gave a presentation on the environmental review, including details of the field investigations. Highlights include:

- 3900 trees must be removed and will be replaced by nearly 12,000 trees throughout the development area
- Barn Swallows, a threatened species, are present, and new structures must be built to replace the nests
- Eastern Wood Peewee habitats are being maintained, so there are no impacts
- Butternut trees - there are 23 trees on the site and a health assessment and discussions with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) are underway
- Redside Dace is an endangered species with habitats in the Bruce and Berczy Creeks. The development limit respects the habitat and discussions are underway with MNR.

Ms. Lane advised that development constraints are identified to determine the limit of the development, i.e. physical top of bank, stable top of bank, floodlines, feature limits etc. Buffers are applied to maintain and protect the natural features on the property. Ms. Lane confirmed that the goal is to restore the valleylands, and that native species trees will be planted, with their survival being monitored.

Discussions included the impact of light pollution and other impacts on Barn Swallows, which are very urban environment tolerant. New nests will be located within the valleylands. Bird habitats just off the subject site will not be touched but will benefit from the new foraging area. With respect to potential impacts to the Redside Dace by storm water run-off and salt, there are rigid requirements for storm water management. The separated forest area is not currently connected to the other forest and green space, but it will be part of a wide swath of the preserved natural area. The Committee questioned the environmental conditions of the Berczy Creek valleylands between the York Downs lands and Warden Ave, within Markham lands.

The next steps will be to continue tree compensation discussions with Markham; ongoing communications with MNRF regarding *Endangered Species Act* requirements; and, confirmation of development limits with the City, MNRF and TRCA.

The Committee had comments regarding the use of an Automatic Vacuum Waste Collection system. The applicant indicated that it is interested in investigating this option, and may consider giving free rain barrels to home purchasers.

Amber Palmer of Burnside / Stantec, consultant for the applicant, gave a presentation on the watersheds and storm water management plan. The goal is to address the water balance, water quality, erosion, and quantity control. Staff confirmed that the City currently has the same filtration gardens being proposed for this site. It was suggested that the SWM pond adjacent to 16th Ave may create a hazard to wildlife by its proximity to busy roads. A wide culvert will be provided to allow wildlife to move from one forest area to another, where there is a road crossing. Wildlife Rescue will remove fish and reptiles to new or temporary habitats during construction, and all the SWM ponds will be landscaped to provide passive recreation.

Brad Stephens and Doris Cheng were in attendance from TRCA, and responded to questions throughout the meeting. With respect to a possible road connection to Warden Avenue, the TRCA representatives advised that it did not form part of the applicant's proposal and has therefore not been reviewed; however, it would appear to be a very difficult proposition with a significant number of challenges.

Patrick Wong, Planner II, Natural Heritage for the City of Markham, gave a presentation on the Greenway, or Natural Heritage system. He identified the natural heritage and hydrologic features on the site, and discussed: woodlands proposed to be preserved; wetlands have been identified and have yet to be assessed; recommended widths for vegetation protection zones; restoration and enhancement opportunities; and, habitats for endangered and threatened species. The City is not responsible for administering the Endangered Species Act as this is the responsibility of MNRF staff. The landowner must work with MNRF regarding the protection of habitat for endangered and threatened species and must ensure all requirements of the MNRF are met.

Shirley Marsh, Sr. Planner, Urban Design for the City of Markham, spoke about the tree preservation and compensation process. The goal is for no net loss of trees or canopy cover. The Arborist Report and Tree Inventory Plan have been received and are under review. Key matters to be resolved include determining the method of calculating compensation rates for loss of trees; and the impacts of a lumbering operation for the tree removal. Trees within the buffer zones and Greenway will not be touched.

Gary Sellars, Senior Planner for the City of Markham gave a brief summary of the public comments and concerns that have been received to date regarding environmental issues.

Natalie Stokes spoke in support of a safe pathway system through the property, similar to the Toogood Pond system, to enable the public to enjoy the nature and wildlife on the golf course.

Meg Stokes spoke in support of creating a connecting green space that would be available to the public, and in support of tree preservation. Safe street crossing locations were discussed.

Susan Deacon spoke of the impacts on her family's home, adjacent to the golf course lands, with respect to the potential loss of mature trees near the property line, a loss of privacy, and potential impacts on ground water quality and on the habitat of Barn Swallows. Ms. Deacon requested that a sufficient buffer be maintained to provide protection for the habitat.

Chris Farano spoke in support of the opportunity for the valuable golf course green space to be shared with the community.

Adrian Chan spoke of the history of Markham and its evolution through urbanization, and supported the proposed master-planned community.

Susan Tam spoke in support of the proposal, and the opportunity for people to have a place to live and grow.

Peter Miasek spoke of protecting this unique property, and urged the applicant and staff to include more wildlife habitats and green space corridors/linkages, and to ensure tree preservation.

Eileen Liasi spoke of developments in marshy areas with organic soil issues that produce methane, potentially resulting in many problems. Ms. Liasi recommended complete removal of the top soil from the property. Staff will consult with the applicant on this issue.

Michael Gannon had questions regarding:

- Comments by the TRCA, which indicate that many items that have not been addressed. TRCA staff advised that it is a lengthy, ongoing process and they will work with the developer until the issues are addressed;
- The Stantec report requires massive amounts of regrading and top soil removal, which may be transported along 16th Avenue. Ms. Gatzios advised that this has not yet been determined;
- The City's 2014 Official Plan is still under appeal with a hearing scheduled for next year, and what is the impact on this application? Ms. Gatzios advised that this landowner is not part of appeal, and that although this application has been submitted under the

requirements of the 1987 Official Plan, the applicant will try to have regard for City's new policy framework under the 2014 OP.

Minhao Ye, speaking on behalf of Xu Gueng Zhao, spoke of the impact to the houses on Royal Troon, with respect to the loss of trees and property values.

Darren Chan spoke of the effects of urbanization in the GTA and the growth of Markham, and supported a master-planned community that would help to reduce traffic and pollution.

Jean Capewell had concerns about the large SWM pond within the green space that may contain toxic material. Amber Palmer and TRCA reps explained the purpose and function of the SWM pond to deal with contaminated materials. Ms. Capewell also questioned the management plans for other animals (fox, deer) and minnows.

Ricardo Mashregi had comments regarding the SWM plan, hydrostatic pressure, high water table and impact on basements, and special engineering requirements that are expensive to maintain. Mr. Mashregi requested larger lots for the proposal.

Alick Siu showed a short video and an aerial photo of the golf course that illustrated the number of trees on the property, and suggested that the developer design the subdivision to direct development to the existing non-treed areas, to maximize tree preservation. The applicant's consultants advised that significant re-grading of the site will be required, which will impact some existing trees even if they are not located in areas proposed for development

Teresa Fung spoke of helping the endangered species and preserving the trees, suggesting they be transplanted if possible. Ms. Fung was opposed to back-lotting against sensitive natural feature areas that may not be protected by future owners. Ms. Fung suggested that a safe pathway for bicycles and pedestrians from Toogood Pond to Angus Glen be implemented, and noted her preference that Markham remain as a small urban community. TRCA confirmed that pathways are permitted through publicly-owned open space. The applicant's consultants advised that only small trees can be successfully transplanted.

Several deputants provided written copies of their comments.

The Committee thanked the residents for attending this evening and providing comments.

Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting dates were announced:

- June 12 (Transportation)
- June 19 (Community Design).

A fifth recap meeting, and possibly more meetings, will be scheduled for the fall.

Adjournment

The Unionville Sub-Committee adjourned at 10:00 pm.