



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: March 24, 2015

SUBJECT: Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan – 2014
a) Creation of an Advisory Committee, and
b) Background Information on a Property Development Coordinator position

PREPARED BY: Regan Hutcheson, Manager, Heritage Planning, ext 2080

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the staff report titled “Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan-2014 a) Creation of an Advisory Committee, and b) Background Information on a Property Development Coordinator position”, dated March 24, 2015, be received;
- 2) That a new advisory committee called the Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee be created as per the terms of reference in this report (Appendix “A”);
- 3) That staff be authorized to contact each of the identified organizations in the new advisory committee’s terms of reference to appoint a member to represent the organization on the new committee, and that representatives from the public at large be appointed through the Clerks Department’s board/committee volunteer process;
- 4) That Don Hamilton, Councillor, Ward 3 and Jim Jones, Regional Councillor be appointed as the Council representatives on the Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee;
- 5) That the concept of the Property Development Coordinator and potential funding options be referred to the new Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee for review and comment;
- 6) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to create a new advisory committee called the Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee as recommended in the recently endorsed *Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan -2014*. Further, the report provides background information on the creation of a proposed Property Development Coordinator position and potential funding options for this position.

BACKGROUND:

Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan was recently completed

On January 13, 2015 after a two year study process, the *Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan-2014* was endorsed in principle by Council. The overall objective of the study was to create a plan to help guide future decision-making by all involved in the historic Unionville community, and help find the appropriate balance to protect the unique heritage

environment while ensuring its economic vitality and prosperity. The final plan addresses specific issues impacting the ongoing success and stability of the area, and explores new opportunities and strategies to support and enhance the historic village.

The proposed Vision Plan offers a bold new strategy to further enhance this special area of Markham. The Vision Plan acknowledges that historic Unionville will face considerable challenges if it is to remain a vibrant commercial environment over the long term. The Plan evaluates these challenges in detail, identifies opportunities for improvement and recommends a set of interconnected solutions that can unfold over the next 20-30 years. The Vision Plan takes a high-level, long-range view of how to approach several related issues in a cohesive manner, and notes that solutions must be interconnected – there is no one single solution. As part of the larger, overall vision, individual focus areas were identified and targeted for in-depth study. Each area has its own challenges, issues and stakeholders, including “champions” who can help to realize the specific vision concepts.

A number of implementation recommendations were approved by Council

Staff identified a number of primary recommendations to begin the implementation process in the January 13, 2015 staff report. The Council resolution providing direction to staff is attached as Appendix “D”. Council endorsed in principle the *Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan* as a guideline for a future Secondary Plan for the area and directed that affected parties/ stakeholders were to be guided by the general direction of the Vision Plan when initiating or reviewing proposed changes in both the public and private realms.

Council also authorized the preparation of a new Secondary Plan for the heritage conservation district, and a Pattern Book to guide the design of new infill development. Planning staff is undertaking the preparation of the Secondary Plan in-house which will establish the planning and regulatory framework for the identified development opportunities. The Pattern Book document will be prepared by a consultant. Once the planning documents are approved by Council, staff will use the policy framework to review and process development applications from the private sector. As part of the secondary plan exercise, staff from both the Planning Department and the Community Services Commission will be exploring opportunities identified in the focus areas of the Vision Plan that can be implemented as well as parking optimization options.

Planning staff (Heritage Section) is also developing an Implementation Summary document that identifies the major concepts and recommendations from the Vision Plan, and details ownership of the concept (public, private or combination), further study or information requirements, timelines, funding opportunities, etc.

Council also requested further information from the Commissioner of Development Services “regarding the proposed role, responsibilities and funding options for a trustee or Property Development Coordinator to work with the Unionville BIA and local commercial property owners to implement the Vision Plan”. Staff was also directed to take the necessary steps to create a new advisory committee to help implement the Vision Plan. These last two directions are the subject of this staff report.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**Creation of a Community Vision Plan advisory committee**

Council directed staff to prepare a mandate and suggested member composition for an advisory committee with the objective of overseeing and assisting in the implementation of the new Community Vision Plan.

Staff recommends that the new advisory committee be called the Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee. The proposed terms of reference for the new committee is outlined in Appendix "A". The committee will assist with the overall realization of the Community Vision Plan as well as suggest plans and projects to further its implementation, and provide feedback on issues, priorities, projects, policy documents and studies. For example, staff anticipates that this committee will provide community feedback during the development of the new Secondary Plan currently underway.

It is recommended that the Committee be comprised of one representative from each of the major historic Unionville community organizations as well as three representatives from the Unionville Business Improvement Area Board. These members will be appointed by their respective organizations. There should also be the opportunity for members of the public from the Unionville community to be represented on the Committee. These members will be secured through the Clerks Department's volunteer board member selection process. To represent Council, it is suggested that the Ward 3 Councillor (Don Hamilton) and one other member of Council (Regional Councillor Jim Jones) be appointed. The staff liaison would be from the Planning Department (Heritage Section) and secretarial services would be provided by the Clerks Department.

Review of the Property Development Coordinator position

The final recommendations from the consultants in the Community Vision Plan advocate "that the City work with the ownership group(s) to put in place a Development Manager or Trustee to facilitate coordination and enable the group to work together to achieve the ends outlined in the Vision".

Staff had noted in the Development Services Committee report (January 13, 2015) that in order to implement the Vision Plan concepts, especially in the commercial core area, individual property owners will need to work together cooperatively (perhaps similar to a mall environment) if success is to be achieved and would benefit from the services of a property development advisor with commercial and residential expertise. A Property Development Coordinator would work with the BIA and all the property owners to explore mutual benefits, coordinate cooperative development opportunities, attract investment and potentially coordinate the build-out. Staff had identified this position as being privately funded by benefitting property owners in the core area.

Council requested further information on the role, responsibilities and funding options associated with this function. The Mayor and specific members of Council were scheduled to meet in February with commercial property owners from the core area of historic Unionville to discuss the Vision Plan concepts and the funding of this position, however due to a low response rate the meeting was postponed.

The proposed role and responsibilities of a Property Development Coordinator as contemplated by City staff are detailed in Attachment "B". Potential funding options are identified in Attachment "C". It is recommended that this information be provided to the new Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee for its review and feedback.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:

Not Applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Existing staff from the Planning and Urban Design Department (Heritage Section) would be the direct staff liaison with the new advisory committee. Clerks Department would be required to provide secretarial services at the committee meetings.

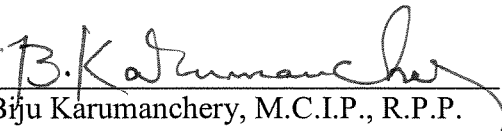
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

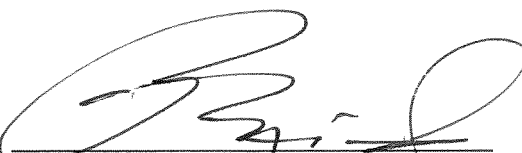
Certain options, opportunities and recommendations in the Vision Plan align with a number of the City's strategic focus areas including Growth Management (intensified but complementary residential/retail growth opportunities in a heritage district); Environment (sustainable options, trail connections, streetscape trees); Parks, Recreation, Culture and Library Master Plan/Public Safety (development options at Stiver Mill, Toogood Pond and the Crosby Community Centre area, trail portals and connectivity); Municipal Services (option for a municipal parking structure); Accessibility (accessible washrooms and elevator from Main Street to floodplain parking area).

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Finance Department was consulted on funding options for the Property Development Coordinator position. Clerks Department was consulted on the creation of the new advisory committee.

RECOMMENDED BY:


Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Acting Director, Planning & Urban Design


Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix "A"	Terms of Reference – Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee
Appendix "B"	Property Development Coordinator- Role and Responsibilities (Draft)
Appendix "C"	Property Development Coordinator Position- Funding Options (Draft)
Appendix "D"	Council Resolution (January 13, 2015) Community Vision Plan- 2014

Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee

Terms of Reference

Mandate

To provide advice and assistance to Council on the implementation of the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan (2014) and on related local matters affecting the Historic Unionville area by providing a community perspective.

Composition

The Committee shall be comprised of no less than seven (7) members and no more than fifteen (15) members in total including:

- Representatives of the public from the Unionville community; and
- Three representatives to be appointed by the Unionville Business Improvement Area (BIA) Board; and
- One representative to be appointed by each of the following organizations to represent the organization on this Committee:
 - Unionville Villagers Association Representative (1)
 - Unionville Historical Society Representative (1)
 - Unionville Ratepayers Association Representative (1)
 - Unionville Village Conservancy Representative (1)
 - Heritage Markham Committee (1); and
- Local Councillor (Ward 3); and
- One additional Member of Markham Council

Duties and Function:

- To assist with the implementation of the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan, as endorsed by Council;
- To monitor, update and recommend revisions to the Community Vision Plan and other related document, as necessary, to ensure these plans and documents reflect the community's desired objectives;
- To recommend to Council a plan or a series of plans, projects and/or activities that would enable the Community Vision Plan to be achieved;
- To provide input on issues, projects, policy documents and studies, and advise on local matters affecting the Historic Unionville area by providing a community perspective;
- To recommend to Council improvements to the Historic Unionville area that complement and support the Community Vision Plan;
- To encourage interested parties to make improvements to the Historic Unionville area that complements and supports the Community Vision Plan.

Area of Interest

The Committee's primary area of interest to undertake its duties and functions is within the boundaries of the Unionville Heritage Conservation District. However, on occasion there may be policies/programs or development on adjacent or nearby properties that may also impact the Committee's area of interest.

Chair of Committee

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be determined by the Committee.

Sub-Committees

Sub-committees may be formed, if necessary, for specific matters of interest. Sub-committees will report to the Historic Unionville Community Vision Committee.

Reporting

To report through the Development Services Committee through its minutes and staff reports as necessary, and through the assigned Council representatives.

Remuneration

None

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will be monthly or at the call of the Chair, in the evening.

Staff Resources

Staff from the Planning and Urban Design Department (Heritage Section) and Clerks Department

Role and Responsibilities

Position: Property Development Coordinator (Unionville Core Area)

Type of

Position: Contract (One Year) or Hourly to an upset limit

Role:

The role of the Property Development Coordinator is to identify and facilitate the necessary cooperative efforts among commercial property owners in the core area of historic Unionville to achieve the concepts presented in the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan.

The Property Development Coordinator will work with the BIA, and commercial property owners to explore mutual benefits and opportunities, attract investment to achieve desired commercial and residential objectives, and assist the property owners in coordinating and integrating development applications on private lands.

Responsibilities:

- Liaise directly with the BIA and commercial property owners (“the client group”) in the core area to explore their interest in participating in redevelopment options including new commercial opportunities, residential intensification and parking optimization strategies as identified in the Vision Plan.
- Explore the creation of a formal “land owners development group” or “cost sharing agreement”
- Provide group cost sharing management services for the client group (maintaining records of discussions, cost analysis/budget, agreements, etc)
- Examine joint efforts and cooperative ventures between property owners
- Recommend land uses and development concepts to property owners based on market conditions
- Provide advice, expertise and recommendations based on identified development opportunities.
- Manage disputes that may arise between owners and assist in mediation
- Manage budgets and work plans for the client group
- Liaise with the City of Markham staff and other public agencies such as the TRCA, School Board officials, as necessary.

Recommended Qualifications:

- Independent professional or consulting firm
- Commercial and residential development expertise
- Strong organizational, presentation and communication skills
- Advanced analytical thinking/ problem solving skills
- Excellent negotiation skills
- Knowledge of the municipal planning and development approval processes (Ontario Planning Act, urban and regional planning principles)

Property Development Coordinator Position Funding Sources Considered

1. Private Funds - Property Owners
The entire cost associated with retaining the services of a Property Development Coordinator would be borne by the commercial property owner in the historic core area of Unionville. This is the original concept recommended by City staff.
2. Private Funds – Municipal Property Taxes
The City could front end the cost of the contract for the position and place the cost on the taxes of the property owners within the study area through a Local Improvement Charge. This charge could be allocated to the property owners based on a variety of options including frontage, assessment, or a flat rate. The problem is that the City is not in the best position to determine the potential benefit to each property owner and therefore would be unable to determine the fairest allocation method.
3. Private Funds – BIA Levy
The City could increase the BIA levy on individual property owners to pay for the cost of the position. This can only be allocated based on assessment which may not be the fairest approach (as mentioned in option 2). Furthermore, there may be other property owners within the BIA that are outside the core area and would not reap the benefit from the redevelopment.
4. Public Funds – Section 37 Monies
These funds are not applicable for this purpose. There needs to be a planning relationship between Section 37 funds collected and where the money is spent. Since the Property Development Coordinator benefits the historic Unionville land owners, Section 37 should not be used as a funding source.
5. Public Funds – Development Charges
These funds are not applicable for this purpose. The Property Development Coordinator will work with the property owners to explore the potential and interest in redeveloping the historic Unionville core area which may not necessarily result in growth. As there is no growth-related impact and the position is directly related to servicing the requirements of the stakeholders in the future Secondary Plan, the cost to retain the services of a Coordinator is seen as a local cost and development charges should not be used as a funding source.
6. Public Funds – Grant
The area is identified as a Community Improvement Area in the Official Plan. The Planning Act contains provisions that provide municipalities with a range of tools to stimulate investment and revitalization (such as loans, grants, tax assistance for brownfield remediation, loans/grants for façade improvements, funding for studies, etc.). A community improvement plan is required to be prepared for each area to guide implementation.

The City could consider providing a grant to specifically fund the position. There is currently no provision for municipal funding in the 2015 Operating/Capital budgets. If municipal funding were to be considered in the future, the role and responsibilities of the position may need to be re-visited, with a greater focus on municipal public policy, goals and objectives, and less focus on coordinating private development interests.

7. Combination of Private and Public Funds

The cost associated with position could be funded by a combination of private funds and municipal financial assistance (e.g. 50/50)

RESOLUTION OF COUNCIL MEETING NO. 3 DATED JANUARY 13, 2015

REPORT NO. 5 – DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE**(1) MAIN STREET UNIONVILLE
COMMUNITY VISION PLAN - 2014 (10.0)**

- 1) That correspondence from Reid McAlpine representing the Unionville Ratepayers Association regarding the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan-2014 be received; and,
- 2) That deputations by Reid McAlpine representing the Unionville Ratepayers Association, Doug Denby, and Christiane Bergauer-Free regarding the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan-2014 be received; and,
- 3) That the Staff report titled “Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan-2014”, dated January 13, 2015, be received; and,
- 4) That the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan be endorsed in principle (subject to modifications in Appendix ‘D’ to this report) as a guideline for a future Secondary Plan for the area and that the City and other affected parties/ stakeholders be guided by the general direction of the Vision Plan when initiating or reviewing proposed changes in both the public and private realms of the Unionville Heritage Conservation District; and,
- 5) That staff be authorized to undertake the preparation of a new Secondary Plan for the Unionville Heritage Conservation District as is recommended in the new Official Plan, and the preparation of a Pattern Book to help guide the overall design of new multi-storey development specifically for the Hwy 7 and Village Core/ Crosby Arena focus areas; and,
- 6) That as part of the Secondary Plan exercise, staff explore opportunities for the focus areas and the parking optimization recommendations from the Vision Plan as well as take into account the staff and agency comments provided in Appendices ‘A’ and ‘C’ to this report; and,

- 7) That the Development Services Commission staff and Markham Council members be authorized to initiate discussions with senior staff and Board members at the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to determine the feasibility of introducing a parking platform in part of the floodplain lands east of Main Street, including the type of studies and analysis required to appropriately explore the concept, and initiate discussions with senior staff and Trustees at the School Board on options for opening the connection between the school property and Fonthill Lane as required for special events parking access; and,
- 8) That the following be referred to staff for additional information to be brought back to the Development Services Committee:

"That York Region be requested to work with the City of Markham and Metrolinx to investigate options to eliminate the need for a grade separation at the Highway 7-railway interface while protecting the functions of Highway 7 and the Stouffville corridor GO rail service expansion plan, as a grade separation at this location would have detrimental impacts on the local community from an economic, heritage conservation and aesthetic perspective."; and,
- 9) That the Commissioner of Development Services provide an update Memo to the Committee regarding the proposed role, responsibilities and funding options, for a trustee or Property Development Coordinator to work with the Unionville BIA and local commercial property owners to implement the Vision Plan; and,
- 10) That the local Councillor, Mayor, Regional Councillor Jim Jones and any other interested Councillors meet with the Unionville BIA and commercial property owners to discuss the Vision Plan and funding of the Property Development Coordinator position; and,
- 11) That staff be directed to prepare a new mandate and suggested member composition for the Main Street Unionville Committee (as described in this report) which would be re-constituted as an advisory committee with the objective of overseeing and assisting in the implementation of the Vision Plan; and,
- 12) That installation of Public Washrooms on Main Street Unionville be referred to the 2015 Budget process; and further,
- 13) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.



Kimberley Kitteringham
City Clerk

Copy to: Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services
Biju Karumanchery, Acting Director, Planning & Urban Design
Regan Hutcheson, Manager, Heritage Planning