

Appendix 'A'

Overview of Vision Plan Focus Areas

Highway 7 – Gateway Concept

This is the segment of road between the Rouge River and the railway tracks. The concept is to create a street fronted by buildings of a heritage scale and style on both sides, including tree covered sidewalks. The objective is to create a sense of place echoing historic Unionville in character. This concept is predicated on a desire by residents and the City to not see a grade-separated highway underpass at the railway crossing. Other aspects of this area include:

- Retail uses on the ground floor with residential and/or office uses above.
- Parking is a combination of surface lots and underground.
- Preferred building heights are 2 ½ - 3 ½ with a possible 4-5 storey near the railway.
- The intersection of Highway 7 and Main Street becomes a focal point through features in the architecture of corner buildings (such as a clock tower) and landscape elements (sidewalk portal features) acting as a gateway to the residential and commercial components of historic Unionville to the north.

Staff Comments:

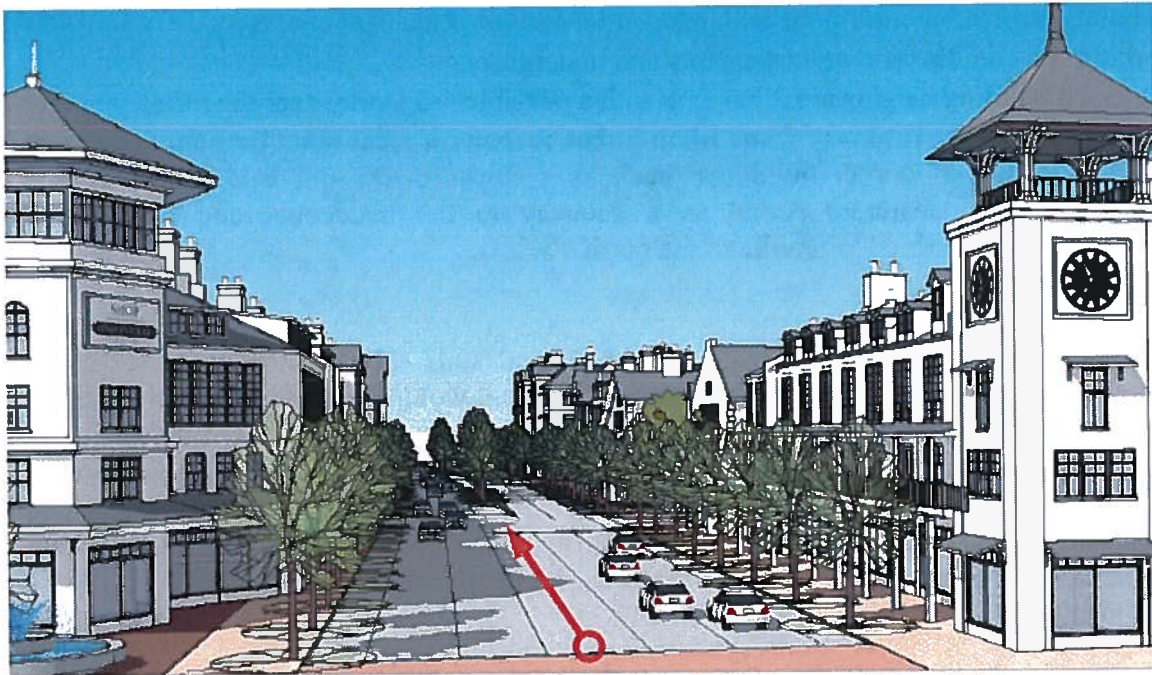
Feedback to date from residents, Heritage Markham and staff show that a grade separated highway underpass at the railroad tracks is not supported, as it would be extremely detrimental to the urban form of development. Heritage Markham also noted that the proposed development height near the railroad tracks should transition down to 2 storeys as it moves northward to the existing residential community. The development proposed on the northeast and southeast corners of Main St and Hwy 7 may prove quite difficult to achieve as this would be within floodplain lands and subject TRCA approval. Limited lot depths along the south side of Hwy. 7 are also a constraint.



TRCA has indicated that it would not be able to support the proposed buildings in the flood regulated areas.

Staff has raised concerns with the constrained right-of-way which may pose operational challenges such as obtaining sufficient soil volume for tree planning and ensuring snow storage areas or an off-site dump location.

It should also be noted that this part of Hwy 7 is part of an identified Markham Community Improvement Plan Area that could make it eligible for municipal financial incentives and programs.

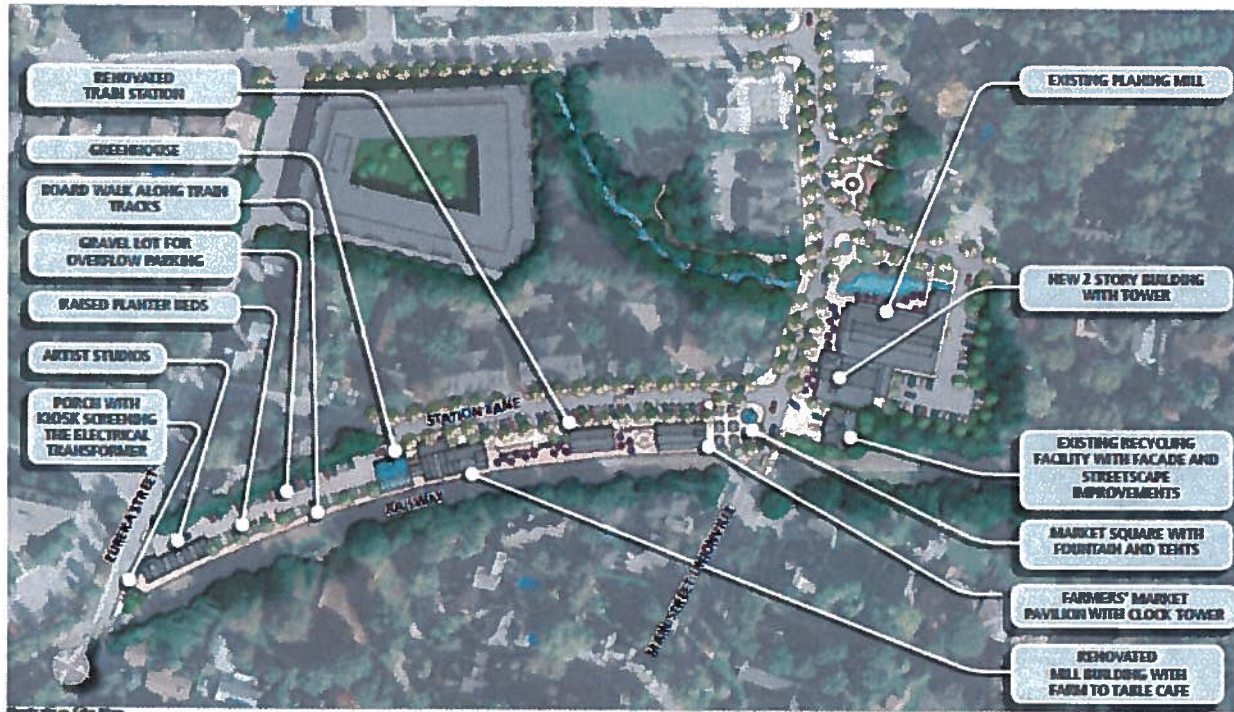


View east along Highway 7 from intersection at Main Street. The tracks are at the end of the vista and must remain as a "level crossing" to ensure the viability of this gateway concept neighborhood.

Stiver Mill – A Cultural Anchor

This area just north of the railroad crossing between Station Lane and Fred Varley Drive is the home of the recently restored Stiver Mill, the Farmer's Market, the historic railway station, the recycling depot, the bandstand and the recreated Planing Mill. There are also residential properties on Station Lane. The objective is to entice people to continue the walking loop from further up Main Street to this destination area by making this area more inviting, attractive and comfortable. Some of the recommended improvements include:

- New façade for the recycling depot
- A southerly addition to the Planing Mill complex to extend the street façade
- A Market Square with Market Pavilion at Main and Station Lane for the Farmer's Market
- Continuation of the Rail Walk Boardwalk to the west
- An expanded Stiver Mill with gallery space, possible café, greenhouse and planters to the west, gravel parking lot or event space, and artist studios near Eureka St
- Alterations to the intersection at the Concession Road to improve vehicular movement and pedestrian safety, and introduction of a landscaped square.
- A water feature proposed at Main St and Victoria Ave. and at Main St and Station Lane



Staff Comments:

Staff has identified rail safety as a prime concern for any future development in this corridor (i.e. Market Pavilion, Greenhouse and Artist Studios). A transparent and formal process must be followed in communications with Metrolinx and the public. Also the current restrictive agreement the City has with GO/Metrolinx impacts this site and presents limitations on uses and further expansion of building footprint.

At staff's request, the consultant did include a reference in the Vision Plan to the matter of rail safety and the need to secure approvals from GO/MetroLinx for any building/structure near the rail corridor.

TRCA has also indicated that the proposed Market Pavilion adjacent to the train station is in the floodplain, and not within the existing Special Policy Area boundary. New buildings are not considered appropriate in the floodplain and to implement this may require a boundary expansion (lead by the municipality and approved by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and MNR with TRCA consultation). TRCA has indicated it would be supportive of some additions to the existing Planing Mill subject to review.

Staff supports the campus-like concept along the corridor, but cautions that there may be too much activity, development and land uses proposed in a constrained area- reducing green space and limiting parking opportunities. Heritage Markham also noted the area appeared to be over programmed with too many components. Community and Fire Services staff noted potential operational, management and maintenance concerns with a public greenhouse, planting beds and the art studios which would need to be addressed. There are site restrictions from Metrolinx and the Province limiting building structures to the existing footprint due to the proximity of the rail line.

The Unionville Historical Society noted that additional water features were not needed, but rather better promotion, protection and connection with the existing water features should be pursued.



Unionville Village Core Area

The Vision Plan acknowledges this area as the centerpiece of the design effort – the principal commercial precinct, easily walk-able and what most people refer to as “Main Street Unionville”. The opportunities explored in this area by the consultant involve the use of large amounts of underutilized space behind and between buildings to create additional retail and residential spaces. The area is an integrated whole that has been divided into three focus areas: **West Side South**, **West Side North** and **East Side**.

Staff Comments

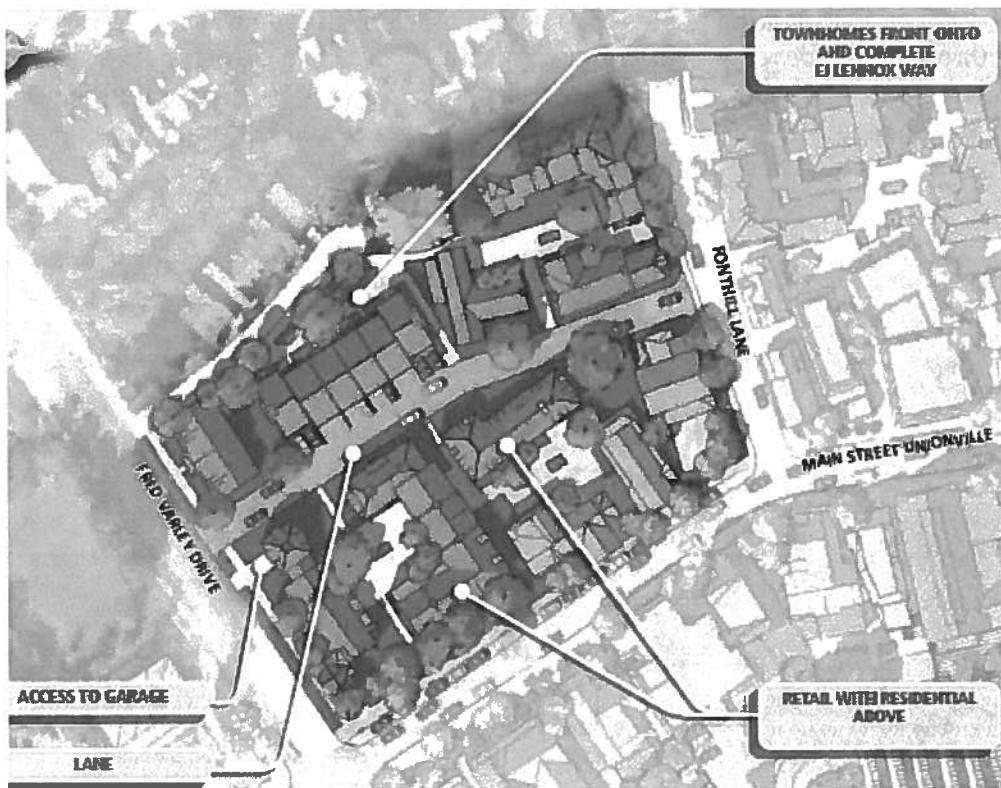
The proposed scale and height of the mixed use and residential infill illustrated in the village core area, especially along the Main Street frontage, potentially threatens to diminish and overshadow the significance of the existing heritage buildings and affect the small village character. However, staff does recognize the need to achieve a certain density of development to allow investment and underground parking. The type and scale of infill product will need to be carefully considered through the development of design criteria to ensure that it does not dominate its historic neighbours and allows appropriate transitions to existing heritage buildings. The proposed shift of commercial parking from the west side to structured parking on the east side in a floodplain environment also poses a significant constraint.



Village Core – West Side South

Wide Side South includes the area between Fred Varley Drive and Fonthill Lane, west of Main Street. Additional retail and residential opportunities are provided behind the existing building on Main Street in an area that was primarily occupied by surface parking and green space. Some of the key aspects include:

- New townhouses are introduced fronting onto E.J. Lennox Way with a vehicular laneway providing access.
- New buildings are introduced behind Main Street buildings – parking is provided underground
- Three residential buildings around a courtyard are proposed immediately south of Fonthill Lane – parking is provided underground.



Staff Comments

Implementing the plan as proposed would require the relocation or removal of the existing heritage barn structure behind 158 Main St. Staff would want to ensure that not all green space between buildings is completely occupied by building mass. Historically, villages also traditionally include gardens and open spaces.

TRCA has also indicated that the floodplain extends into this area and cautions against introducing new residential dwellings and intensification of a flood prone area.

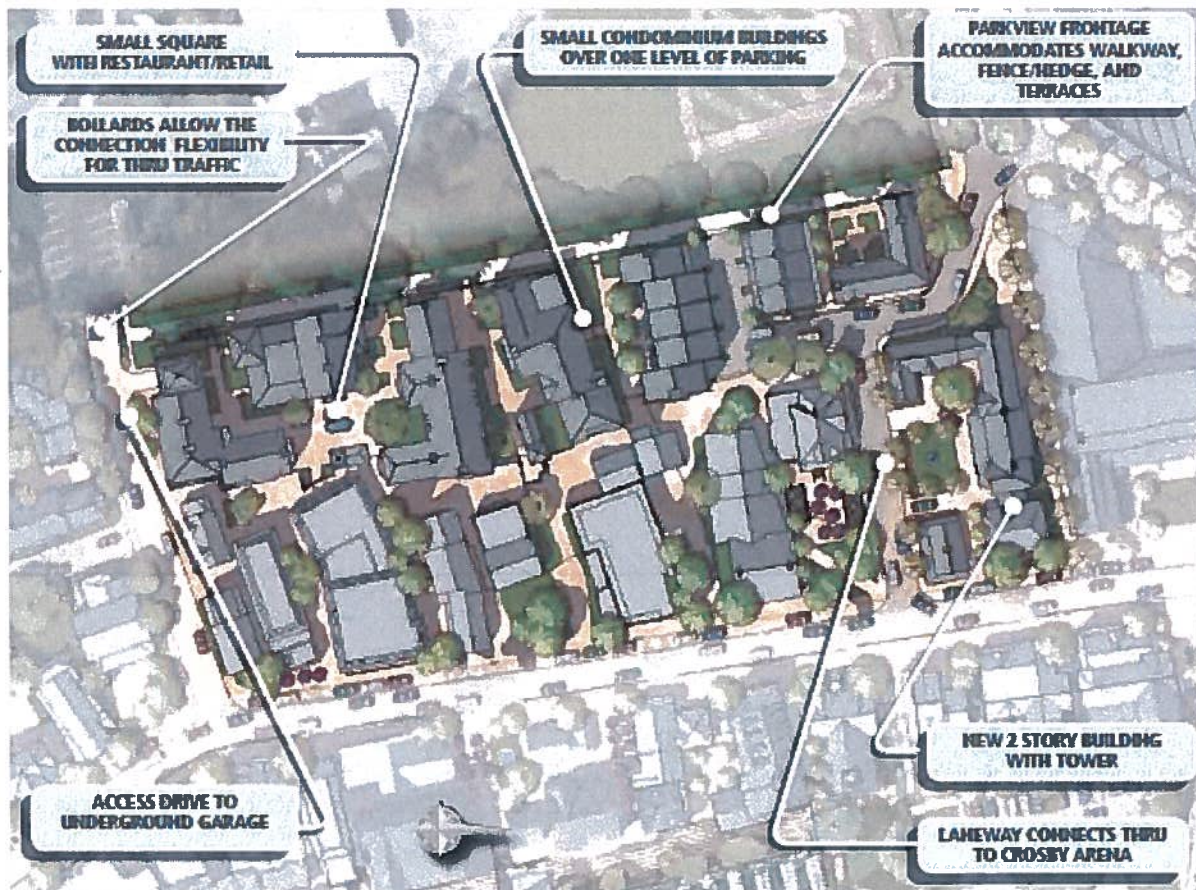


View looking northwest from the corner of Main Street and Fred Varley Drive

Village Core – West Side North

The area extends from Fonthill Lane to Crosby Arena. The concept adds depth to the village's existing fabric. The opportunities include:

- New infill buildings are proposed behind existing buildings fronting onto Main Street. The massing and architecture is generally reflective of traditional Unionville character although the height is 3-3 ½ storeys versus 2-3 storeys, and the vast majority of buildings are residential with only 2 mixed retail/residential.
- New buildings are oriented in an east-west direction helping to create a series of pedestrian passageways leading to interior courtyards ("Unionville Mews").
- Western facades of new buildings creates an edge comprised of residential units fronting onto a walkway running parallel along the Parkview School property. This concept creates residential "eyes on the park/school" enhancing security, but remaining separate from the school property.
- Commercial parking requirements are moved to the east side of Main Street and residential parking moved underground (except for the townhouses)
- Fonthill Lane is reconnected to Fonthill Blvd to the west but is separated by removable bollards (due to the concerns raised regarding increased traffic near the school).
- Stiver House is recommended to become part of a new Stiver House Inn – valet parking with remote parking storage elsewhere in the district.



Staff Comments

The issue of opening Fonthill Lane to Fonthill Blvd in cooperation with school officials was one of the most contentious features on an earlier version of the Vision concept and generated some of the Plan's harshest criticism. The matter of retractable bollards for occasional use of the roadway perhaps during special events would require further consultation with the School Board and the Parkview School community (see correspondence from the School Board – Appendix 'C'). It is important to understand that the potential connection from Fonthill Lane would be with the school parking lot – an area that is used both during and after school hours – and not directly to Fonthill Blvd. The school board also notes that if development proceeds on the west side of Main Street, all parking requirements and traffic circulation will need to be accommodated without using the Board's property at the school site.

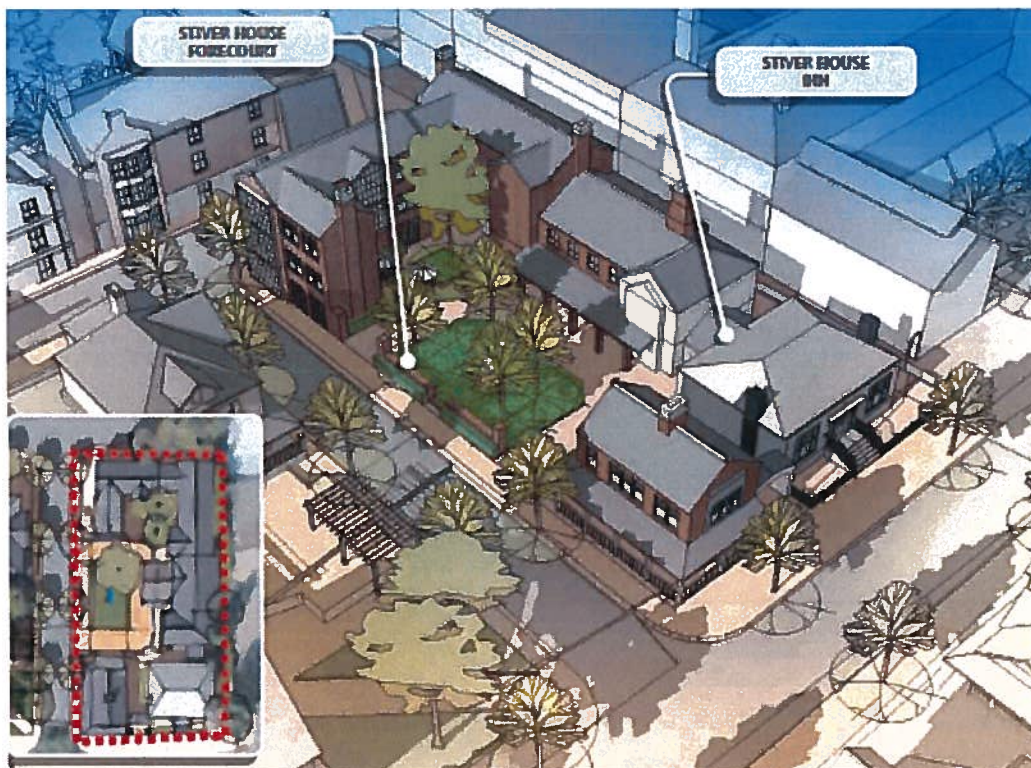
Staff notes that it is positive that the Unionville Mews concept is associated primarily with residential products since based on our local experience at other developments such as Markham Village Lanes and Village Shoppes, the use of back lanes for retail uses were major failures and could not attract tenants or shoppers. However given this rear area will be primarily residential, it is unclear as to whether visitors will be attracted to explore these mews. The idea of appropriately scaled residential infill would re-introduce a residential component to the historic core that has been missing for many years as dwellings have been converted to stores, restaurants and offices. This could help breath new life into the core and potentially help provide support for retail uses offering daily needs. The issue of underground parking and its economic viability has been raised. The consultants indicate that underground parking is feasible at the proposed scale of development.

The concept of commercial parking being relocated to the east side parking area would be a complex exercise requiring extensive levels of cooperation, unique financing and a new comprehensive parking strategy for the entire area.

Heritage Markham noted a general concern regarding the level of intensification potentially overwhelming the character of Unionville and asked if the underground parking could be expanded to the north part of the focus area to provide additional parking opportunities.



View looking northwest from Fonhill Lane (new construction behind Main Street buildings).



Stiver House Inn concept (south of Crosby Arena)

Village Core – East Side

The area extends from the intersection of the Concession Road to Carlton Road. Properties along the east side of Main Street sit atop a ridge and are shallow due to the steep grade change leading to the floodplain area below which provides a large parking area. Specific aspects of the plan include:

- Expansion of retail space by introducing additions to existing heritage buildings as well as new stand-alone buildings (2-3 storeys in height).
- Introduction of a municipal parking structure – a parking platform located over the existing parking lot in the floodplain- doubling the capacity. The upper level could be accessed directly from Main Street by pedestrians.
- An option to introduce solar panels above the garage perhaps helping to keep snow off the platform in winter and generating electricity.
- A public square (Centre Square) on municipal property connects Main Street to the parking platform and provides an area for washrooms and an elevator system. Also offers a connection to the adjacent valleyland trails through a proposed stairwell at the east side of the garage.
- An elevated boardwalk (River Walk) would extend behind the existing buildings connecting the east side frontage to the upper deck of the parking platform. This would also create retail courtyards and passageways.
- Near the Centre Square, the introduction of a junior anchor size store is recommended to intensify retail activity in the centre of core area



Staff Comment

The introduction of a parking structure in the floodplain is not supported by the TRCA (see Appendix B). This area is a Special Policy Area (SPA) and is not intended for new or intensified development. The TRCA has clearly noted that the Unionville parking lot is impacted by flooding during a regulatory event ranging from 3-5 meters in depth, and has real development constraints from a policy perspective as well as technical constraints. As the study document notes, the parking structure and boardwalk will “require cooperation among landowners, businesses and municipal and regional authorities. Land ownership constraints exist, as well as the need to address issues relating to parking facility ownership, financing, maintenance and gaining the permission to locate it in the floodplain”. Staff has noted the need to commence high-level discussions with TRCA to determine if this infrastructure project can be supported and under what conditions.

Earlier in the process, TRCA staff indicated they may be supportive of structural improvements to the rear portion of the buildings (i.e. modest additions and associated landscape terracing to create a “sense of place”). Geotechnical studies would be required to ensure structural stability, but future development must be in keeping with their existing policies and land use permissions.

For this concept to work, it will require property owners to pool their properties and financial interests. It may prove challenging to convince property owners on the east side to supply parking to support commercial uses on the west side to make up for lost parking as the result of residential development on the existing rear parking lots. A specific development coordinator would be helpful to work with all the property owners to explore mutual benefits, attract investment and manage the build-out.

The desirability, suitability and feasibility of introducing the array of solar panels in a heritage conservation district will require further study.

Heritage Markham Committee recommended that two heritage buildings not be removed as originally proposed which is now reflected in the Alternate Plan with the new building program entirely behind these heritage structures.



Looking west with parking platform at rear of Main Street properties.



Looking east from Main Street at Centre Square leading to new infill development , washrooms and the parking platform.

Village Square – Main Street at Carlton Road

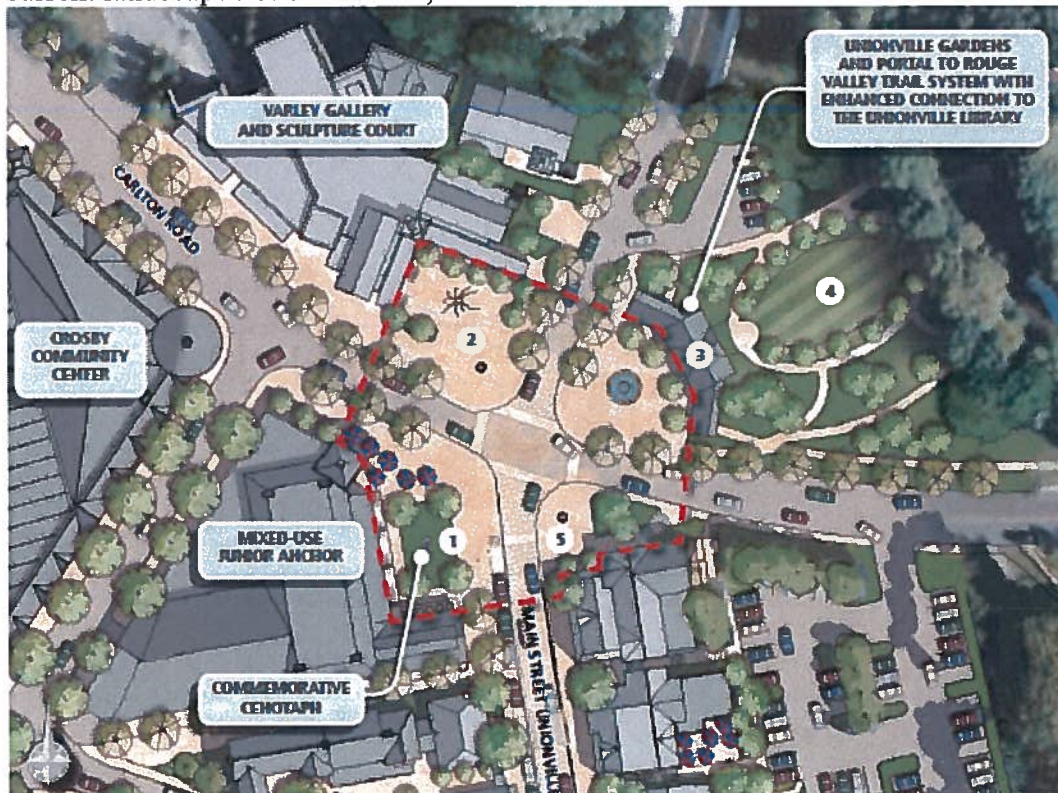
This area comprises the intersection and the four corners of Main Street and Carlton, which can be closed to traffic for special occasions and used as an expandable gathering space. Key opportunities identified include:

- Development of a Varley Sculpture Court in front of the art gallery.
- Creation of a formal Cenotaph Square at the southwest corner.
- Introduction of a Rouge Portal Pavilion/Kiosk on the northeast corner providing orientation/way-finding information and bike rentals for the Rouge River trail system. Also behind this pavilion, it is suggested that “Unionville Gardens” be created as an attractive horticultural parkette as well as a place for wedding photography opportunities.
- A small square with an announcement pylon is suggested for the southeast corner.

Staff Comment:

As noted in other areas of the study, TRCA approval would be required for any infrastructure development in the floodplain area (northeast corner pavilion and gardens) to ensure these features do not compromise floodplain functions. In reference to the pavilion structure, the City’s Cycling Master Plan (2010) does identify the needs for a bicycle facility on Main Street Unionville between Hwy 7 and Carlton Road.

The Unionville Historical Society also provided comments asking that the cenotaph and its current landscape not be touched, moved or altered.



Crosby Community Centre

This focus area includes the Crosby Arena, the playing fields to the west and the privately owned Curling Club. Earlier concepts for this area included the replacement of these facilities with a large retail anchor store and residential infill. However, after extensive feedback and further consideration, it was determined that the site should remain a sports-related area with the sports facilities providing the anchor. The final Vision Plan offers two alternatives for enhancing this focus area while a third option is presented focusing on providing structured parking. The **preferred scheme** includes:

- Removal of the existing arena, relocation of the Curling Club and replacement with a dual rink facility including meeting rooms, offices and ground floor retail/cafes. Parking would be both underground and on the surface. The large complex would possess an external building facade that echoes the village scale and character.
- A new mixed use building with ground floor retail and residential above is proposed for the lands south of the new arena. This building would be coordinated with Cenotaph Square to animate this key corner.
- Improved connections to the playing fields, a children's play area, an outdoor plaza with a stage and outdoor skating rink are suggested features west of the Community Centre Arenas (additional recreational facilities are included to respond to community desires to intensify programmatic use of the park including winter activities).
- An additional baseball field is proposed for the west end of the park alongside the existing soccer pitch in a shared arrangement – for use by little league teams so as to not require floodlighting.



Alternate Scheme

The alternative plan is focused on improvements to the existing facilities, and includes:

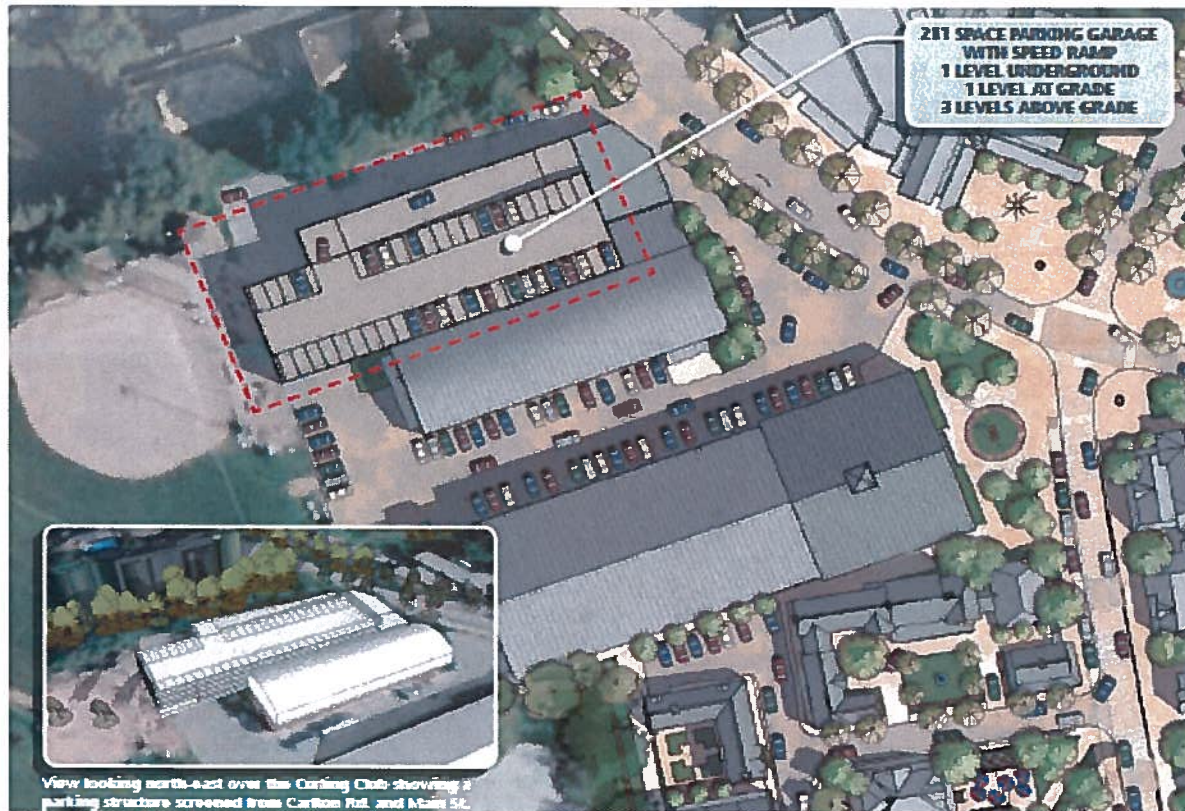
- Retention of the Curling Club and the surface parking layout.
- Retention of the Crosby Park playfields in their current configuration
- Introducing a complementary addition to the front of the existing arena to provide additional programming space and amenities.
- Rebuilding the existing cenotaph area as Cenotaph Square in front of the new addition with enhanced landscaping and removal of the vehicular drop off pavement.



Alternate Parking Option

The third option is an opportunity for an alternative parking garage facility located immediately to the north of the existing Curling Club. This option could be explored in the event that the parking platform for the Village Core East cannot be achieved. The garage features would include:

- Five levels (one below grade, one at grade and three levels above) accessed by a speed ramp on the north side, providing 211 spaces.
- Introduction of a liner of small format office and retail uses along the Carlton Road façade of the structure to animate and humanize this frontage.



Staff Comment

At the request of Community and Fire Services staff, the Vision Plan clearly states that if redevelopment of the property for arena use is to occur, at minimum a dual rink facility would be the model as it is not efficient to build single rink facilities anymore. However, the City's Integrated Leisure Master Plan does not identify development or redevelopment of the recreational infrastructure at this location. Further, any large-scale project of this type would require a dedicated funding model/ source of funding.

Any field use proposals would require further review based upon the demands of existing users, other planned and existing facilities including the new sports park, and the impact on the existing environment (trees).

Two of the three options require the cooperation of the privately owned Curling Club. The existing facility is self-sustaining with a dedicated membership. Although the Club is content to remain in its existing location, the concept to relocate the facility to Toogood Pond was explored by the consultant as part of the master plan process. The following criteria were identified as prerequisites by the Club: in exchange for the value of the existing site owned by the Club, the new facility would involve no cost to the membership, be close to the current location, provide comparable features and dedicated parking, provide clear and unrestricted title to land and building, and support an economic operating model and cost base comparable to its current situation.

Given that the proposed parking platform in the floodplain is problematic and will be difficult to achieve, but is the linchpin for almost any meaningful development in the core area, staff asked the consultant to explore the option of an alternate parking facility near the Crosby Arena area.

The Unionville Historical Society has commented that the existing memorial arena is an important part of Unionville history and should not be moved or demolished, although restoration of this would be positive.



Illustration of the Preferred Approach in the Vision Plan

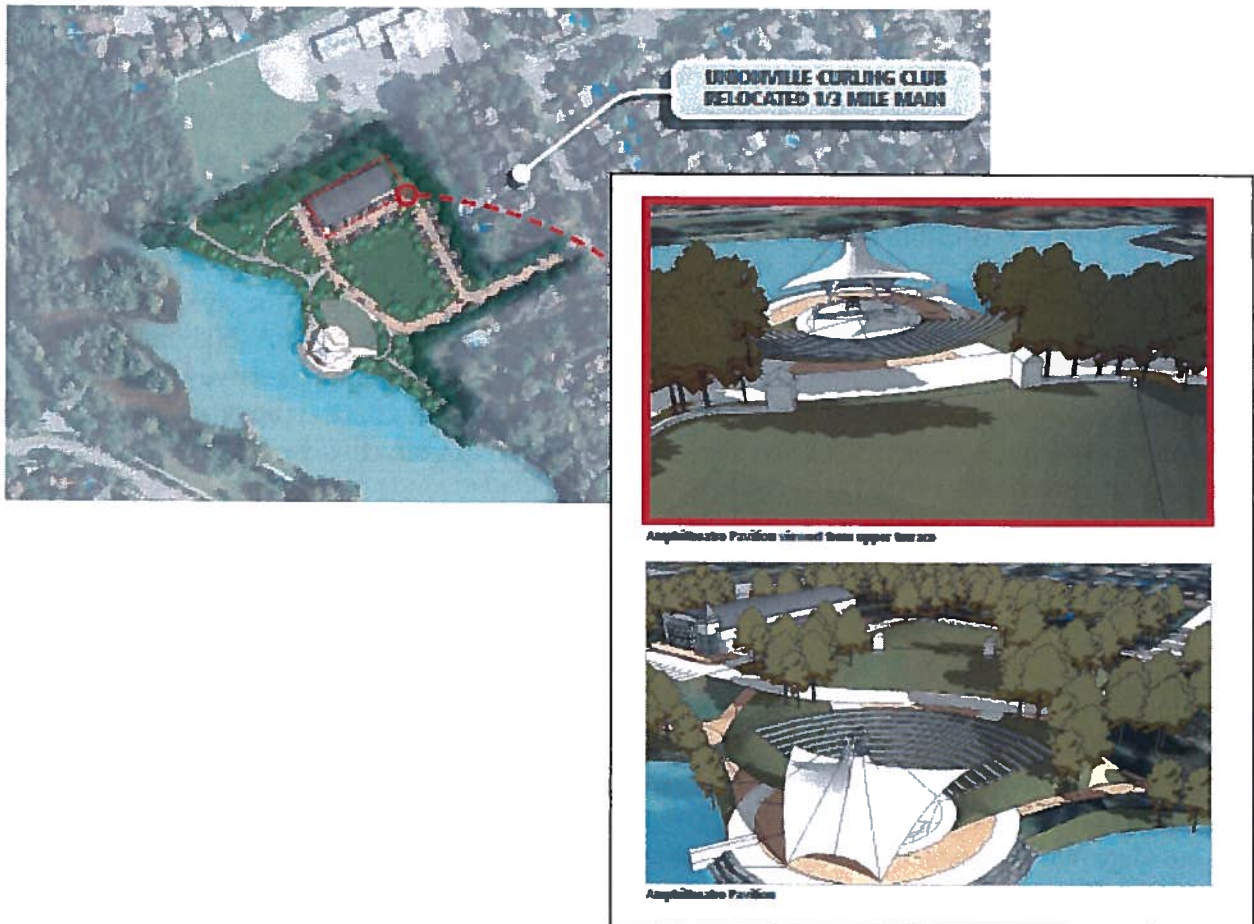
Toogood Pond Park Concepts

There are two key concepts suggested for the Toogood Pond area, which would extend the walkability of Main Street north of the Varley Gallery and help reinvigorate the Toogood Pond Park area near the existing food services building:

- Replacement of the food services building at the water's edge with a covered open air pavilion and amphitheatre which can be seen from Main Street and Carlton Road. Seating uses the existing topography and a berm is created to form a buffer from sound and light for adjacent residential properties.
- Relocation of the Curling Club to the north area of the park in a new building with shared parking ringing the terraced lawn. The site proposed for the Curling Club is outside the floodplain, but the pavilion/amphitheatre is not.

Staff Comment

Projects proposed with the floodplain lands places limits on development potential and will require examination and negotiation with and approval by the TRCA. The combination of the Curling Club and amphitheatre could be a good mix as they both operate primarily at different times of the year and could share parking. Some have questioned whether the village needs or could support a second outdoor performance venue given the existing bandstand. There is also the issue of loss of green space and potential impacts on adjacent property owners that would need to be further explored.



Additional Concepts for the Village

The Vision Plan identifies four additional concepts that can help support or extend the Main Street vision: streetscape strategy, parking strategy, environmental sustainability, and the Rouge River Walk concept.

Streetscape:

The Streetscape Improvement Program attempts to address issues such as the need for traffic calming, crowded sidewalks, lay-by parking that encroaches on sidewalks and is not clearly marked, and insufficient amenities including seating/patios, bike parking, lack of trees and uncoordinated street furnishings. The streetscape strategy includes the following concepts for consideration:

- Decorative paving to calm traffic and organize parking spaces
- Provision of a consistent pedestrian sidewalk zone of 2 metres in width
- Consider a prototypical patio platform for temporary use to expand restaurant seating areas into the boulevard.
- Introduction of new consistent streetscape elements (lights, bins, furnishings, etc), winter theme elements hanging over the streetscape, and maintain electrical transformers below grade or behind buildings.
- Increase the tree coverage in clusters where it is feasible including gateway locations
- Consider infrastructure that is adaptable to all season requirements.

Staff Comment:

Staff supports the concept of an enhanced streetscape for Unionville, subject to design and funding considerations. A pedestrian first approach is a worthy objective and should warrant further examination of the removal of parking along the boulevard area in the commercial core. The current parking situation on the west side requires caution by drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, impacts the exposure of storefronts and commercial patios, and generally detracts from the area. Also the proposed future uses of the boulevard in the streetscape plan would need further refinement as the uses include parking, restaurant patios, bike racks and horticultural elements in addition to street lights and signage. A comprehensive streetscape plan that meets operational and maintenance requirements would need to be produced. Also, the number of public washrooms and their location will require further review.

Winter theming as proposed is an interesting concept, but would involve significant cost and effort to implement and maintain, and will likely not provide the necessary clearance for larger City vehicles.

Parking

A parking strategy is required as there is a direct relationship between the success of a retail district and its parking supply. The Vision Plan acknowledges the current deficiencies of existing parking (both policy and physical constraints) and notes that cooperation between landowners, the City and residents is required to develop a broad-based parking plan that can stabilize disparate interests and optimize parking opportunities. The Plan focuses on the historic commercial core area and demonstrates that currently there is enough parking to meet the

parking need, but that if redevelopment is to occur, insufficient parking is available unless the parking on Main Street and other nearby local streets is included. See below:

	Parking Needed	Parking Provided	Parking Balance	Available On-Street
Existing Situation	658	755	97	434
Proposed – New Community Centre and East Side Parking Deck	1,331	1,141	-190	434
Proposed – Retain Crosby Arena and Curling Club, Add East Side Deck	1,152	949	-203	434
Proposed – Retain Crosby Arena and Curling Club with a Parking Garage at Curling Club	1,153	953	-200	434

The Vision Plan suggests that the parking strategy must be multi-faceted and incorporate a variety of strategies including improved/optimized parking layouts of existing lots, a parking facility, a park-once concept, changes to municipal parking policies requiring on site parking, a payment in lieu of parking program, and a different strategy for festival and special event parking requirements (i.e. shuttle services to off-site locations).

Staff Comment: Parking concerns have been and continues to be a major challenge for this area. The Vision Plan offers a number of suggestions each with its own set of implementation challenges. Of particular note is the suggestion that on-street parking in surrounding neighbourhoods be used year round rather than just during festivals. Many of these streets do not have sidewalks which could be a safety issue. Further study will definitely be required as the Vision Plan moves forward. There is a need for Main Street property owners to work together to achieve integrated and coordinated parking solutions.

Environment

The Vision Plan also recommends a number of actions to promote long-term environmental sustainability such as enhanced tree planting, the park-once strategy to reduce vehicular use and encourage walking, the harvesting of rain water, introducing a subsurface water retention system in the floodplain for storage, electric car charging stations, bike parking and the possible introduction of a solar photovoltaic system on the upper deck of the proposed parking platform.

Rouge River

The Rouge River Walk concept promotes the linkage of historic Unionville and Main Street to the overall Rouge River valley trail system including connections to the trails at Toogood Pond Park, at the Orientation Pavilion and from Main Street through Centre Square and the parking facility.