APPENDIX C

HERITAGE MARKHAM EXTRACT

DATE:

November 17, 2014

TO:

File

R. Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning

EXTRACT CONTAINING ITEM #17 OF THE ELEVENTH HERITAGE MARKHAM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 12, 2014.

17. Studies/Projects -

Main Street Unionville Precinct Master Plan

Feedback on Draft Final Plan (16.11)

Extracts:

R. Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning

The Manager of Heritage Planning requested further comments regarding the Main Street Unionville Master Plan. The Committee had provided initial comments for the draft concepts in July 2014. The Committee reiterated their previous comments and discussed the parking facility in the floodplain on the east side

Heritage Markham Recommends:

That Heritage Markham Committee generally supports the concepts proposed in the Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan subject to the following comments previously submitted:

Hwy 7 Corridor

- No support for the railway underpass
- A general agreement that this corridor is somewhat different from the remainder of the heritage conservation district and can take additional height (more than the current 2 storeys permitted in the District Plan) and intensification
- Height proposal of 3.5 storeys is appropriate, however the higher development concept next to railway line should transition to a two-storey height as it moves north to adjacent single detached units
- Focus on built form rather that uses
- The identification and preservation of heritage properties at 4460, 4470 and 4480 Highway 7

Stiver Mill/Market Square

- The corridor area appears to be over programmed with too many components
- Likely that proposed buildings will meet opposition from railway authorities

Village Core

West side:

- Potential for underground parking under the north section- why only in the south section
- Support the walking path concept, need walkability
- Optimize accessible parking, particularly at-grade parking
- Needs an anchor or draw (see comment for east side)
- Needs a facelift and streetscape improvements
- Concerned that the level of intensification may overwhelm the character of Unionville and may not achieve the revitalization or draw the pedestrian traffic. It will, however, increase the vehicle traffic and may help the businesses

East side:

- Preserve the heritage buildings at 187 and 193 Main Street these were removed from the plans or highly altered
- Streetscape improvements are important
- Safety/crime issues for underground parking area
- Noted potential sites for anchor, or a community draw

North area (Toogood Pond, Varley, Crosby CC):

- Crosby Arena and the amphitheatre could proceed as individual projects

General Comments on the Overall Concept

- General concern about over intensification and loss of traditional Unionville appearance and 19C village charm.
- Acknowledgement that some density is necessary to achieve underground parking
- commercial area needs to be programmed to be successful.
- Delete Recommendation # 16 "Precedent Poundbury" as it does not seem very successful – a member of the committee had just returned and reported that the retail was a failure and most people left each morning to work elsewhere
- As the largest land owner and with an interest in an increased tax base, the City should steer the development of the area
- Crosby Arena, Stiver Mill, and the amphitheatre could proceed as individual projects

CARRIED



Your Voice....Makes our Voice Stronger www.unionvilleratepayers.com

January 8, 2015

Mr. Regan Hutcheson Manager, Heritage Planning and Heritage Districts Development Coordinator City of Markham

Via email: rhutcheson@markham.ca

<u>Unionville Ratepayers Association</u> Comments on Main Street Unionville Community Vision Plan

Dear Regan,

Further to submission of our preliminary comments on December 6, 2014, please find attached a final copy of those comments representing the official vision of the URA as approved by an overwhelming majority of members at our January 5 meeting.

Our final comments differ only slightly from our December 6 comments. The changes have been highlighted in yellow.

Of course I understand that your final report to council is complete, but I also understand that our comments align fairly closely with that report. That is good to know.

I also understand that in your report it is recommended that the Vision inform a new secondary plan for the Unionville Heritage Conservation District. Excellent!

However where I think we diverge slightly is that we believe that recommendations for steps to kickstart and sustain implementation of the Vision should be included in your report and recommended to council, along with the recommendations for the Plan itself. There is plenty of "low hanging fruit" in the Vision on which the City can begin to act immediately. There is no need to wait for a final secondary plan in order to begin the long hard task of implementing the Vision. Starting now will build on and enhance the momentum generated by the consultation process to date. It will also help dispel any lingering public cynicism about the City's ability to drive forward ambitious and complex projects involving shared public and private investments.

In that light I would also like to draw your attention to our concern about too much focus in the early stages on the east side parking deck, a large, complex and controversial project. We fear that any setbacks with that (which are inevitable given the initial reaction from the TRCA) could derail the entire Vision with respect to public enthusiasm and attention and thus support at council. The momentum built by successful implementation of other simpler aspects of the Vision could be used to help drive the parking deck forward at a later date. From a taxpayer's perspective it would be folly to invest in such a project until it is proven that other aspects of the plan will in fact begin to improve the economic health of Main Street and validate the need for more parking, beyond what might be gained my rationalization of the current public and private parking stock.

Equally critical to the implementation process is the early appointment of a "trustee"/ project manager to shepherd the plan forward. Only a dedicated and qualified champion can push the Vision over the many hurdles in its way, including building unity, support and cooperation among the many stakeholders, including members of the UBIA.

In contrast to your report we suggest that funding for this position be shared by the City and the BIA to ensure sufficient compensation for a qualified candidate and to acknowledge that much of the project lies well outside the district covered by the BIA and will have little direct impact on the commercial core of Main Street.

Regan, the URA is enthusiastic about the potential represented in the Vision Plan. We look forward to supporting its implementation beginning this year.

Yours truly,

Peter Miasek

cc. Markham City Council, Bob Fleischaker - UVA, Mary Pan - UBIA, Unionville Main Street Steering Committee, Michael Morrissey, Heritage Markham

URA Comments on Unionville Main Street Vision Plan

Preamble

It goes without saying that Main Street and the Heritage Conservation District are important to most residents of Unionville. They are the heart of our community and give Unionville its distinctiveness and cachet. A degradation of the street would cause harm to us all.

The street has significant advantages – its heritage character, diverse and interesting architecture, buildings close to the street, human scale. We believe it is the most walkable street in York Region, as evidenced by the large crowds of pedestrians on good weather days. The street is also very amenable to programming – festivals, concerts, etc.

However, the street is facing challenges and clearly needs revitalization and support in the light of a very competitive retail environment (big malls, big box stores, internet shopping).

URA supported the amended secondary plan/zoning bylaw passed in early 2014 that allowed for restaurant expansion and a broader range of permissible retail offers. We also agree with the premise that the physical structure of the street and environs also need changing to enhance economic vitality.

The Vision

We are aware that numerous visions for the street have been identified. Some residents oppose further residential intensification of the area. Some would like the status quo, plus beautification, or even long for reverting back to the quiet village street of the 1960's. Some residents are concerned about the loss of parkland. Others question whether Main Street should become a cultural hub (art, sports, theatre) rather than a commercial hub. Some residents envision a pedestrian-only street during many periods of the week. Some want a reduction in traffic, especially during rush hour.

In this light the URA held a Vision feedback session on November 3, 2014. Our comments here are based in large part on the results of that event. A summary of the data collected and the raw data are included here as Appendices.

The URA feels that broadly speaking the Vision proposed by the consultants is the most appropriate one. It strikes a reasonable balance in maintain/enhancing the

street's strengths but improving the climate for retail while recognizing constraints in the area. It provides targets to developers that are reasonable but will protect the heritage/walkability feel of the street. (Heritage preservation must stay at the heart of any further development within the Heritage Conservation District.) It provides guidance on necessary public investments. It positions the street to meet both local needs and continue to be a regional destination. The vision does a good job in satisfying the needs of most stakeholders (Parkview School/YRDSB, sports associations and clubs, retail landlords, residents, visitors).

The URA also recognizes the Vision for what it is — a set of guidelines rather than a plan for micromanaging every aspect of the future development of the village.

We recognize that the plan takes concrete steps to improve the retail climate, including enlarging store footprints, adding more retail to boost critical mass, developing junior anchors, locating more residents near to retail and adding other attractions to increase visits. Despite these, the URA remains concerned that even if implemented there is no guarantee that the retail health of Main Street will improve. However, in the absence of other information, we are relying on the expertise of the consultant team.

There are definitely some major uncertainties in the vision, such as

- Commercial viability of an inn at Stiver House
- Reasonableness of no underpass at Highway 7 GO crossing.
- Reasonableness of a parking structure east of Main Street in light of TRCA concerns and lack of clarity regarding the economic impact.

A final review of this report conducted with members on January 5 identified the following new concerns and elaborations of the concerns above:

- The positions of Metrolinx and York Region must be finalized before any developer can reasonably be expected to do anything within about 200 metres of the current level crossing on Highway 7. There are roles for our regional councillors and MPP to push for clarity on the future of the crossing now.
- There was concern expressed about the potential for future all day 15 minute GO service through the heart of Unionville. Would frequent GO service and the attendant noise and traffic disruption negate any of the improvements recommended in the Vision? Should a tunnel (as was done in Old Weston) be recommended?
- With heavy traffic on Main Street how can ingress and egress be better managed for residents of the recommended new units on the west side of the street?

Nonetheless, at this time, we agree with the consultant to plan for the positive and to push hard to make it come to life once the plan is approved.

Implementation

It is now essential for staff to immediately prepare an implementation report, which should include:

- Available planning tools
- Phasing (timelines) for steps under the City's control
- Funding sources for City work (loans, grants, Community Improvement Plans, Development Charges, Section 37 funds, other)
- Governance recommendations role of BIA, role of commercial land-owners, retail enhancement plan, progress tracking
- Appointment of a "trustee"/project manager
- Appointment of a Control Architect to guide property owners and the City
- Establishment of a statutory, qualified and independent Heritage Architectural Review Committee to provide required approval of all new developments within the Heritage Conservation District.
- Property tax relief relief study
- Role of residential community

The URA strongly recommends that citizen involvement continue on this project, per the report recommendation #17, using a multi-stakeholder steering committee to oversee the program, review the impact of the recent OP/ZBL changes and advance public improvements.

We also strongly support the hiring of a "trustee"/project manager with a strong mandate to promote and manage the implementation of the plan, to bridge the needs of the public and private sectors, to source and manage sources of public funding, and to attract the private real estate and retail investment required to implement much of the plan.

While the focus of all energies should be on the implementation of the Vision, the URA recommends that a statutory review of the Vision and any related legislation or regulations (e.g. precinct plan, secondary plan) be conducted every three years. A review would examine the status of implementation of the Vision and its ongoing validity in the face of any new information in the previous three years. This would trigger changes to the legislative and regulatory framework as needed.

Of the very long list of public and private improvement projects in the report, we have ideas on some of the more important short-term physical (public) and management steps that could be taken to advance the vision. These include

Physical

- Start work on washrooms as soon as possible.
- Open up Fonthill/Parkview School gate as a trial for future festivals in consultation with the YRDSB
- Reconfigure east and west parking lots under city management (under a \$1 per year lease arrangement from private owners)
- Finalize improved gateways to new Rouge trail system
- Start streetscape design, including gateway features at Highway 7 and Main Street.
- Complete improvements to the Varley Park behind the Millennium Bandstand with a link to Main Street south of the Asuka Sushi restaurant.
- Improve lighting in Blacksmith Lane (Fonthill/Parkview School connection) and on the trail to the Library.

<u>Management</u>

- Tax relief study
- Establishment of permanent governance structures
- Appoint a highly qualified "trustee"/project manager
- Appoint a Control Architect
- Establish Heritage Architectural Review Committee
- Develop a unified and cooperative program to attract quality retail
- Begin substantive conversations with Metrolinx, York Region, YRDSB and the TRCA

Please note also that the URA is concerned about the potential for short term failure relative to the east parking deck in light of opposition from the TRCA and likely funding challenges. This could derail the momentum of the entire vision and feed public cynicism. We recommend that quiet dialogue with the TRCA start as soon as possible but that final implementation be scheduled for much later to allow for the inevitable setbacks and to ensure that the cost will be justified by the economic impact. Success of other aspects of the Vision relative to retail health will bolster the case for the parking deck.

The URA is also available to champion specific projects.

•

APPENDIX 1

Summary of URA Review of Main Street Vision Plan November 3, 2014

Approximately 25 members attended a Vision Plan feedback session. After an overview of the plan was presented they were given an opportunity comment on each of 5 geographic areas related to the plan. Participants placed their comments under column headings "Like", "Improve" and "Questions". This generated 114 comments. Each participant was then given 8 red stickers and was asked to place them beside the 8 comments they most strongly supported. These are the "ratings" refered to in this summary.

Highway 7 Gateway

Of the 5 areas reviewed there was probably the greatest agreement with the vision for Highway 7 Gateway. The total redevelopment of the area received a high rating (6).

The greatest concerns regarded the level of traffic, adequate transit and facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. One concern about pedestrian and cycling facilities rated 4. A question about traffic management also rated 4.

The heritage feel of the draft designs was also popular, (3).

The gateway concept at Highway 7 and Main Street was also liked (3). However two participants questioned the viability of a welcome centre, while one expressed support for the idea. It seems that clarity regarding the purpose and funding for such a centre should be reviewed before it is approved.

Stiver Mill Area

There was general satisfaction with the current state of this area and the plans for its further improvement. The boardwalk is popular, as is the notion of extending it further west and south, even to the GO station (5).

The proposal of a fountain at the east end is popular (4). This would be a visual draw for pedestrians coming from the north. Some concern was expressed that the area be better integrated with Main Street.

The Farmers Market is popular and moving it to the east end of the site seems to be accepted, though there was plenty of support (5) for a <u>multipurpose</u> market pavilion.

Core West Side

The vision for the West side received strong support -- mix of residential and retail (6), back alleys and residential (4), squares between buildings (3), access laneways (6), destination retail (3), building on the south side of the Smylie lot (3) (though this latter idea also raised some concern.) It was also suggested that the laneways might in some way be covered for the winter.

Particular concerns and questions included adequate parking, retail viability overall and the feasibility of the Stiver House Inn.

Core East Side

The parking deck (4), washrooms (3) and a retail anchor on the east side (2) were all seen in a positive light, thought there was one suggestion that the parking deck could be larger, extending further south. Others also questioned the location of the public washrooms (2). The presence of the solar panels also raised some concern (3), presumably for the lack of heritage character. One comment supported the solar panels. There was also some concern about the lack of sufficient greenery on the parking deck.

The most popular suggestion generated in the entire process was the pedestrianization of Main Street (9). While there are of course issues related to the impact of such a move on the retail environment, as expressed early in the consultation process, by Bob Gibbons, it is clear that more days of pedestrian-only access would be popular among residents.

Village Square and Toogood Pond

The notion of integrating all 4 corners of the Carleton and Main intersection was popular (5). Two levels of underground parking under a new double rink was also well received (3) (Note that there was some confusion about the adequacy of parking for the rinks with several participants missing the presence of the underground parking in the vision.)

However support for 2 new rinks and moving the curling rink to Toogood pond was unclear. Opposition to moving the curling rink rated a 3.

There was also some concern about the amount of traffic at Main and Carleton. It is unclear how or if a redesign can mitigate this problem.

Various comments both supported and questioned the necessity of the amphitheatre, presumably in light of the presence of the band stand on Main Street

Number	Item	Rating			
Village Squ	iare and Toogood Pond				
Like					
A1.1	NE Corner of Carleton and Main	2			
A1.2	Double Rinks				
A1.3	2 levels of parking under rinks	3	3		
A1.4	More Retail at N End	1			
A1.5	Carlton and Main integrated Square	5			
A1.6	Mixed use buildings				
A1.6	Curling Rink at Toogood				
A1.7	Little league diamond	1			
A1.8	amphitheatre				
Improve					
A2.1	don't like curling rink at Toogood Pond	3	3		
A2.2	not enough parking for 2 hockey rinks	6	5		
A2.3	Heavy traffic at Main and Carlton	2	2.		
A2.4	Toogood amphitheatre not necessary				
A2.5	Multi-function sports facility like Oakvilly or Whitby	1			
A2.6	Traffic circle at Main and Carleton	1			
A2.7	Gazebo for weddings instead of amphitheatre				
A2.8	Traffic light at Main and Carleton				
A2.9	Open access to fields				
Questions					
A3.1	Not enough space for Cenotaph				
A3.2	Crosby Community Centre was dedicated by Crosby Family. How to reconcile.				
A3.3	No one will walk to amphitheatre on the pond. Only need one amphitheatre	2			
A3.4	Impact of curling club on walkers thru park and existing residents	1			
A3.5	use of rinks in off season				
A3.6	parking				
A3.7	viable retail				

Niumber	Item	Rating			
Core West	Side				
Like					
B1.1	Residential and retail	ϵ			
B1.2	back alleys and residential	4			
B1.3	squares between buildings	3			
B1.4	access laneways	ϵ	5		
B1.5	destination retail key	3	3		
B1.6	building on Smylie lot	3			
Improve					
B2.1	building on Smylie lot	1			
B2.2	add school property to west side				
B2.3	covered laneways for winter	5	5		
B2.4	traffic flow				
B2.5	more green				
B2.6	Full time connection to Fonthill				
B2.7	Remove/redesign/rebuild rear additions to Old Country Inn, Queen's Hotel, Confectionary etc. to be more s	treet (laneway) friendly		
Questions					
B3.1	how much residential vs other				
B3.2	viability of new retail	2)		
B3.3	adequate parking?	2			
B3.4	phasing	1			
B3.5	how to start				
B3.6	Stiver House Inn not economically feasible	3	3		
B3.7	Is one story underground parking viable?				

Niumber	Item	Rating		
Stiver Mill	Area			
Like				
C1.1	Good plan			
C1.2	Farmers market at east end	1		
C1.3	better integration with main	1		
C1.4	covered market			
C1.5	fountain looks great	4		
C1.6	Greenhouse			
C1.6	Artist studios	2		
C1.7	Boardwalk	2		
C1.9	Visual appeal to draw pedestrians south			
C1.10	Recycling Centre			
C1.11	Train Whistles			
Improve				
C2.1	extend boardwalk to GO station	5		
C2.2	Make proposed farmers market building multipurpose	5		
C2.3	provide overflow parking at west end			
C2.4	pedestrian safety at intersection	1		
C2.5	current landscaping interferes with parking			
C2.6	Impact on existing station lane residents			
C2.7	remove recycling centre	2		
Questions				
C3.1	How to visitors know about this area? Signage	2		
C3.2	Future uses of buildings			
C3.3	Where is train track?	2		
C3.4	Green house vs rebuilt sheds to west of mill			
C3.5	sufficient parking for market?			

Niumber	Item	Rating		
Hwy 7 Gate	way			
Like				
D1.1	Total redevelopment	6		
D1.2	Lots of ground floor retail			
D1.3	3.5 story scale OK	2		
D1.4	Like Main Street Welcome Centre			
D1.5	Develop NW corner of 7 and Main			
D1.6	gateway concept (north/south)	3		
D1.7	lots of residential			
Improve				
D2.1	More public transit			
D2.2	Ensure heritage look	3		
D2.3	more green			
D2.4	better pedestrian and cycling	4		
D2.5	more signage and pathfinding			
D2.6	add clock			
D2.7	extend transit to Markville Mall	1		
D2.8	Bus 'hub' at 7 and Main			
D2.9	No cars on main street			
D2.10	Sequencing lights at Hwy #7			
D2.11	Recycling centre on Main Street???			
Questions				
D3.1	Inaction due to current ownership			
D3.2	traffic management	4		
D3.3	How to do it & \$\$	1		
D3.4	not sure if enough space for multiple lanes and turn lanes at #7 and Main square			
D3.5	what is a view shed?			
D3.6	Don't count on no rail underpass depends on Metrolinx and maybe SmartTrack surface subway plan			
D3.7	Feasibility of tourist centre			
D3.8	What is the point of a welcome centre?			
D3.9	Why heritage look? Fake!			

Niumber	Item	Rating		
Core East S				
Like				
E1.1	Solar panels			
E1.2	Park access			
E1.3	parking deck	4		
E1.4	public washrooms	3		
E1.5	expansion of buildings to east	1		
E1.6	Boardwalk along east side			
E1.6	Retail anchor like "Cullen Barn"	2		
Improve				
E2.1	bicycle parking	2		
E2.2	solar panels	3		
E2.3	larger longer (north-south) parking deck			
E2.4	location of washrooms	2		
E2.5	Main streed pedestrian only, no car access	9		
E2.6	# of garbage bins - frequency of collection	1		
E2.7	make main street one way	1		
E2.8	Solar area more green	1		
E2.9	Anchor style			
E2.10	digital parking display			
Questions				
E3.1	Can Starks building be removed? Position (not cladding or renovatons) indicate it might be heritage underno	eath		
E3.2	What's the retail business plan?	1		
E3.3	No boulevard parking			
E3.4	How to service stores if Main Street is pedestrian only	3		