



**MINUTES**  
**THORNHILL AREA REVITALIZATION WORKING GROUP**  
**Monday, February 24, 2014, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Council Chamber, Markham Civic Centre**

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**Attendance**

Council Committee Members

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath  
Regional Councillor Jim Jones  
Regional Councillor Gord Landon  
Regional Councillor Joe Li  
Councillor Howard Shore

Residential Representatives

Brian Gordon  
Srdjana Jaksic  
Michael Lee  
Larry Newstadt  
Arnold Rose

Regrets

Mayor Frank Scarpitti  
Councillor Valerie Burke

Business Representatives

Michael Dankev  
Lorne Kumer  
Brian Magee  
Angela Papapetrou  
Paul Zammit

Staff

Ron Blake, Manager, West District  
Stephen Chait, Director of Economic Development  
Catherine Conrad, City Solicitor  
Kimberley Kitteringham, City Clerk  
Bill Wiles, Manager of By-law Enforcement  
Kitty Bavington, Council/Committee Coordinator

**Thornhill Revitalization Area**  
**City-Initiated Area and Site Specific Official Plan Policies**  
**and Zoning By-Law Amendment**

The Thornhill Revitalization Working Group convened at 6:36 p.m. with Councillor Howard Shore presiding as Chair.

**1. Disclosure of Interest – None Declared**

**2. Minutes – January 21, 2014**

Moved by: Srdjana Jaksic  
Seconded by: Regional Councillor Gord Landon

That the Minutes of the Thornhill Revitalization Work Group meeting held January 21, 2014, be adopted.

**CARRIED**

### **3. Economic Development Presentation: BIA and Community Improvement**

Stephen Chait, Director of Economic Development, provided a brief presentation on Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and Community Improvement Plans (CIP), outlining the differences between the programs, their benefits, purposes, and requirements. Mr. Chait responded to questions from the Committee.

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a “made-in-Ontario” innovation that allows local business people and commercial property owners and tenants to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance, and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their district. The general functions of a traditional BIA are to oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality generally; and promote the area as a business or shopping area.

Community Improvement Plans (CIP) help municipalities address revitalization challenges by providing a means of planning and financing development activities that effectively use, reuse and restore lands, buildings and infrastructure. CIPs have been used for variety of priorities aimed at rehabilitating and revitalizing targeted areas. Director Chait indicated that as opposed to a BIA, with a CIP in place, initiatives could be undertaken on a project by project basis.

Staff suggested that a CIP would be the more appropriate way to proceed at this time, and that a BIA program may evolve in the future. The Chair indicated that Revitalization of this area will be an organic process which will evolve over time. The Committee requested a more detailed look at these programs and examples of financial models, at a later date. Once a by-law is adopted, the Committee could direct staff to report back to Development Services Committee within 6 or 12 months with a recommendation on tools to be used.

While the Committee recognized that the mandate of this Working Group is not to start over again with a clean slate, it was acknowledged that the visions of both the residents and businesses must be addressed. It was suggested that the members of the group walk the area and identify what needs to be done.

### **4. Legal Presentation: Legal Non-conforming and Grandfathering**

The Committee was provided with a previous presentation by Catherine Conrad, City Solicitor, regarding Legal-Non-conforming and Grandfathering issues.

Ms. Conrad discussed options to address legalizing existing uses. One workable option is to adopt comprehensive zoning over the entire community with those uses that will move the community to a higher order of development while utilizing site specific zoning categories to permit existing and related uses.

The Committee considered enacting a comprehensive by-law that prohibits auto body shops, then enacting site-specific by-laws for those prohibited uses where they exist at this time. Requirements for Environment Compliance Approval (formerly Certificate of Approval) and satisfying City requirements for expansions were discussed. A visioning exercise was also recommended.

## **5. By-law Enforcement Presentation: Correspondence and Enforcement**

Bill Wiles, Manager of By-law Enforcement & Licensing was in attendance to discuss recent correspondence regarding By-law enforcement of non-conforming uses in the area. It was advised that a follow-up letter had been distributed to clarify timing with respect to enforcement.

It was discussed that Property Standards enforcement should occur on a regularly scheduled basis and that By-law Enforcement Officers should develop a relationship with area business owners.

## **6. Next Steps**

As a follow up to today's discussions, staff was asked to bring zoning strategies to provide for new land uses in the area with restrictions on new manufacturing and auto body/auto repair, while recognizing zoning permissions for existing manufacturing and auto-repair uses. Future initiatives will include a visioning exercise proposal, CIP/BIA options, and a program to engage the community in property maintenance issues.

The next meeting will be Monday, March 17, 2014.

## **Adjournment**

The Thornhill Revitalization Working Group adjourned at 9:40 p.m.