



**MINUTES**  
**THORNHILL AREA REVITALIZATION WORKING GROUP**  
**Tuesday, January 21, 2014, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Council Chamber, Markham Civic Centre**

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**Attendance**

Council Committee Members

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath  
Regional Councillor Gord Landon  
Regional Councillor Joe Li  
Councillor Howard Shore  
Councillor Valerie Burke

Residential Representatives

Brian Gordon  
Srdjana Jaksic  
Michael Lee  
Larry Newstadt  
Arnold Rose

Regrets

Mayor Frank Scarpitti  
Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Business Representatives

Michael Dankev  
Lorne Kumer  
Brian Magee  
Angela Papapetrou  
Paul Zammit

Staff

Ron Blake, Manager, West District  
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 6:38 p.m. with Councillor Howard Shore presiding as Chair.

**1. Disclosure of Interest**

Councillor Valerie Burke disclosed an interest with respect to the Thornhill Revitalization Study by nature of having a family owned business in the Thornhill area, and did not take part in the discussion or vote on this matter.

**2. Minutes – January 13, 2014**

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Jack Heath  
Seconded by: Regional Councillor Joe Li

That the Minutes of the Thornhill Revitalization Work Group meeting held January 13, 2014, be adopted.

CARRIED

### **3. Background Information Provided**

- Staff report dated October 23, 2012
- Working Group Report dated October 23, 2012
- List of Public Representatives

### **4. Presentation**

Ron Blake, Manager, West District, gave a presentation to explain the location and context of the study area, relevant municipal, regional, and provincial policies, the planning framework, the process to date and the public consultation program. The key recommendations from staff/consultants and the original Working Group were summarized, as well as the directions from Council regarding the Canac site.

In summary, the matters to be resolved are:

- How to address auto-body shops and auto repair
- How to address manufacturing uses
- Future role of non-land use strategies – such as Community Improvement Policies and Plan - to promote the revitalization of the area.

The Committee provided clarification on several points, including the intent of the Working Group towards the prohibition of new/existing auto-body repair shops.

The Committee requested a comparison of BIA and Community Improvement specifics. Copies of the staff presentation will be provided to the Committee.

### **5. Discussion**

- Suggestion that the working group should start over in its consideration of options for the area, as per the original Terms of Reference; however, the July 9, 2013 Council direction was to deal with specific, limited issues. This working group could report on other issues and discussions
- Balance of uses is needed - too many similar businesses creates too much competition
- New designations in the Official Plan based on permitted/discretionary/prohibited uses, may be beneficial
- Parking restrictions need to be considered in regard to certain uses with high parking requirements
- Business owners should take initiative to clean up the area
- Next step should be discussion of each member's vision for the area
- The current Official Plan is in effect until the new Official Plan is approved by the Region and we will have three years to bring the zoning into conformity with the new OP. In the meantime, conflicting zoning takes precedence over the Official Plan
- Difficult to restrict capitalism
- No winners in a dispute resolution process (mutual compromise or concessions are necessary)
- Property owners rights are as important as tenants rights
- Suggested existing businesses be recognized with as-of-right permissions, and prohibit any new businesses that have negative impacts

- Identify new businesses that would help the existing businesses, to provide balance
- Could achieve consensus on issues outside the scope of the Working Group mandate that would benefit everyone
- Aerial photographs of business sections adjacent to residences were displayed. Issues were described as visual impacts, outside storage, parking, noise, smells, environmental impacts, and the need for better property maintenance standards on some sites
- Safety, noise, and environmental responsibility should be respected
- It was noted that many of the businesses were there first, and concerns about the impacts on a daycare should have been addressed when it was first established
- There is a need to enforce property standards
- Pride of ownership
- Noise impacts from CN rail affect the study area and surrounding residential
- More landscaping, screening, are needed to improve appearances
- Signage and street furniture would provide a cohesive look
- Comprehensive employment review identified a shortage of employment lands – do we expand the urban boundary or retain this area for employment?
- Staff commented on the findings of the Employment Lands Study
- The matter was raised of allowing more residential in the area – staff responded that this matter had been considered in detail by the previous working group and while residential/commercial was recommended on the Canac site, as a transition with the adjacent to the existing residential neighbourhood, the concern was that residential redevelopment elsewhere would lead to more instability and land use conflicts with the existing business

Some residents submitted letters received from Markham By-law Enforcement regarding compliance with the zoning by-law. Clarification will be requested from the Manager of By-law Enforcement. The Committee received the correspondence for information and suggested this matter be pursued at Development Services Committee or General Committee.

## **6. Next Steps**

Next Meeting – Monday, February 24, 2014

Presentation by City Solicitor  
Presentation by Manager of By-law Enforcement  
Visioning exercise  
Review of report recommendations

## **Adjournment**

The Thornhill Revitalization Working Group adjourned at 9:25 p.m.