



MINUTES
UNIONVILLE SUB-COMMITTEE
December 16, 2010
Ontario Room
Meeting No. 6

Members

Councillor Don Hamilton
Councillor Alan Ho

Staff

Biju Karumanchery, Senior Development Manager
David Miller, Senior Project Coordinator
Kitty Bavington, Council/Committee Coordinator

Regrets

Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Constituent Representatives

Harry Eaglesham, Unionville Ratepayers Association (URA)
Russ Gregory, The Gregory Design Group
David Huntley
Jeff Morris, President of Unionville Ratepayer's Assoc.
Pam Scarrow
Robin Tinney, Realtor, ReMax All-Stars
David Wakeham, URA Infill Bylaw Committee
Elaine Wilton, URA Infill Bylaw Committee

The Unionville Sub-Committee convened at 9:00 AM with Councillor Don Hamilton in the Chair.

**1. REVIEW OF SUGGESTED STANDARDS
FOR INCLUSION IN INFILL BY-LAW**

Staff provided a summary of the suggested standards, as per subcommittee discussions, in the form of draft tables and a location map. Once finalized, a report outlining the conclusions and recommendations of the subcommittee will be presented to the Development Services Committee.

It was recommended that a community consultation meeting for informal Q & A with the subcommittee members be held, prior to the statutory Public Meeting, so that residents will understand the impacts on their properties and have an opportunity to have their concerns addressed. If necessary, a follow-up subcommittee meeting can be held and feedback can be incorporated into the formal Public Meeting presentation. The staff report will be posted on the Town's website for review, with contact information for David Miller to respond to any questions.

Notification range for the meetings has not been determined. An ad will be placed in the newspaper, and consideration will be given to mail a notice to every property owner. The subcommittee directed that sufficient information be included in the notice, to ensure the residents are made aware of what can/cannot be built/rebuilt on their properties and other properties, as well as potential impacts on the community and property values. There is a concern in the community for the development of disproportionately sized dwellings, and the public presentation should include an illustration or example to compare what currently exists to what would be permitted under the new standards. It was suggested that a covering letter from the Ward Councillor, Don Hamilton, be included with the notice, and that the local newspaper may be interested in doing a story on the issue. The residents may also want their Ratepayer's Association to take a position or send out flyers.

The subcommittee reviewed the area map, and staff clarified that 16-20 Sciberras Road at the south end have been excluded, as by-law only deals with detached dwellings.

There were lengthy discussions regarding the tables of draft standards.

Tables 1 and 2: R3 and R4 by By-law 11-72 and R3 of By-law 122-72, as amended

- Noted possible change to Tables by adding asterisk and note to height provision (* "superseded by new maximum height provision").
- Provide the standards in both feet and metres, for easier comparisons to the existing and new documents.
- What method will be used to measure the height: ridge vs. midpoint measurements. Previous presentations illustrated measurements from grade and crown of road. Current provisions measure from grade to mid-point. The new measurement proposes from crown to point of roof.
- All Markham infill by-laws measure from the road, and new construction by-laws measure from the established grade.
- New house builders prefer higher room heights: 10 ft on main floor, 8 or 9 ft on second floor (includes depth of floor) plus attic and space above grade for basement.
- There can be a problem if the house is sited much higher than road due to the grade. Staff noted that the majority of houses in the subject area are built on a fairly flat grade.
- The building height does not always have as much impact as massing and roof design.
- Landscaping can help to minimize the height impacts, however it takes a considerable time for new trees to grow enough to be effective, and planting trees can't be mandated.

It was agreed that it is difficult to determine what is appropriate for every property across the board. Exceptions can be made through the Minor Variance application process, which is subject to public comment. Previous studies determined that measurement from crown of road provided more control, and staff recommend using this measurement for public discussion purposes.

It was suggested that the height could be reduced by 2.5 feet (9m instead of 9.8m). The majority of the members considered that this may be a problem for new homes being built and agreed to leave it at 9.8 for now. One concern is that the height of 9.8 m will not address overshadowing effects. It was agreed that public input would be considered, and that a provision encouraging landscaping and other mitigation measures would be added.

Table 3: Infill By-law Development Standards

Discussions included the setback, and the projection of a front porch and steps that can impact the overall depth. It was agreed to accept the proposed standard and leave exceptions for the Minor Variance process.

The subcommittee considered whether the garage projection should be 2.5, instead of 2.1m as proposed, if it is included in the overall depth of the house. Different projections were suggested if the garage is attached to a covered porch, as opposed to a front wall, to allow for design and roof variations. The proposed garage width is limited to three cars (8m) on lots less than 21.3m (70 feet). Other infill by-laws limit garage widths to 7.7m for a 60 ft. lot or less. It was agreed that the proposed standard garage width would be changed to 7.7m for lots 70 feet wide or less, and 10m for lots greater than 70 feet.

Floor area ratio calculations are applied to equate otherwise smaller houses on larger lots. Within the different zones the calculations attempt to provide for equal sized houses, ranging from 48 to 55% FAR. All square footages include the garage. An explanation to this effect will be added to the notes. Industry representatives stated that the value of land will not provide a return unless it is a large house, while residents argued that new construction needs to compliment the community.

The main issues before the public will be the impact on property values (the larger house, the better price) versus preservation of community character. It is important to present clear information to the public, both sides need to be heard. The subcommittee requested that data be produced for the public meeting that clearly demonstrates the height issue.

2. NEXT MEETING/STEPS

Another subcommittee meeting will be called in the second or third week of January to continue refining the draft standards.

Staff advised that they anticipate bringing forward a report and recommendation together with a presentation to the Development Services Committee early in 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

The Unionville Sub-Committee adjourned at 11:45 AM.