Town of Markham Drive-through Design Study
Stakeholder Workshop – October 7, 2009

Summary of Proceedings

Background

The purpose of the workshop was to develop guiding principles relating to the location and design standards of drive-through facilities in consultation with the community, Town Staff and members of the development industry. The workshop is a key component of the study process. The input obtained at the workshop will be used to inform the preparation of the guiding principles and the urban design guidelines.

Approximately 30 people attended the workshop representing various affiliations and professional expertise. See attachment for the list of participants.

During the workshop, the participants reviewed the following:

- Drive-through uses, types and the different users of such facilities
- Relevant issues, such as:
  - Impacts on adjacent land-uses, specifically residential uses (noise, illumination/signage, odour, litter etc.)
  - Impacts on the streetscape and urban design concerns
  - Impacts on pedestrians and safety concerns
  - Stacking lanes – types, locations, and number of cars
  - On-site circulation
  - Environmental concerns such as air quality/idling
  - Traffic generation
- Examples of drive-through facilities and their characteristics – examples from Markham and the GTA
- What other municipalities are doing
- Guiding urban design principles, which will be used to generate the urban design guidelines

Agenda

The workshop agenda consisted of:

- Introduction and presentation describing drive-through uses, varying types of drive-throughs, issues, experiences and examples from other GTA municipalities, existing drive-through locations in Markham based on road classification and policy context.
- General discussion
- Working groups - guiding urban design principles and any accompanying sketches
- Summary of findings and next steps

Presentation and General Discussion

The proceedings commenced with a PowerPoint presentation describing drive-through uses, varying types of drive-throughs, issues, as well as experiences and examples from Markham and other GTA municipalities.

Following the presentation, a general discussion dealt with participants' observations and comments on a variety of issues related to drive-throughs. The following is a compilation of these comments:

- Drive-through facilities are extremely well used as evidenced by their popularity. This is a reflection of a society which is dependant on automobiles.
- As such, retailers have responded to this demand and provided the drive-through option for the travelling public.
- Drive-through facilities serve a user – not the automobile. It is a case where users prefer to be in their cars.
- Drive-through facilities are a function of traditional land use planning (i.e. separating different land uses). This has precipitated the dependency on the automobile.
- There are many benefits associated with drive-through facilities including; improved accessibility for persons with disabilities, convenience for persons with young children and seniors and increased safety (i.e. banks).
- When drive-through facilities are included within service stations it should be acknowledged that they provide specific requirements due to the layout of the pump islands and the location of the building/s.
- Air quality issues associated with drive-through facilities are non-existent, as evidenced by the report prepared by the RWDI study. According to this study, the difference in emissions between a car idling and the emissions created by stopping and starting the engine are negligible.
- The issue of litter that has been attached to drive-through facilities is not entirely accurate as it is the users of these facilities which create litter, not the facilities themselves.
- Noise and light issues associated with drive-through facilities are consistent with that of any other commercial areas.
- The elimination of drive-through facilities would result in increased building sizes – which would consequently lead to more parking, illumination and increased carbon footprint. This would also result in increased operating costs.
- Development standards should be applied across the board on commercial uses, rather than specifically targeting drive-through facilities.
- Residents are pleased to be included in the process so far and would like to provide continued input. Other opportunities for input into the process by the public will include Council dates and deputations.
- Residents are concerned about issues of urban form and pedestrian supportive streetscapes as specifically related to drive-through facilities.
- The matter of urban aesthetics is important.
- Drive-through facilities should not be labeled as a noxious use as a result of one individual site receiving several complaints.
- Any design guidelines for drive-through facilities should be consistent with the existing design guidelines associated with each commercial designation within the Official Plan. Moreover, the guidelines should not be more restrictive – rather they should reinforce existing policy.
- Idling should be a non-issue when placed in the context of a busy intersection. The proportion of vehicles at a busy intersection versus the vehicles that utilize a drive-through facility should give context to the topic.
- Drive-through facilities have two distinct characteristics: the stacking lane; and the order box. Other than that, drive-through facilities are no different than commercial uses.

- The Town of Markham, through a variety of avenues is working towards a fundamental shift in ideology relating to the structure of its communities. Markham is becoming a more urban municipality. Through urbanization, the shift from car-dependency is occurring at a variety of levels, including: promoting higher densities (smaller lots and intensification); transit-oriented development; more emphasis on public transit; and reducing parking requirements.
- This exercise should be viewed as part of a larger effort in working towards a much larger and more encompassing goal of urbanization. This process is a long term goal to eventually get people out of their cars, and promote non-vehicular modes of transportation.
- There is an existing issue with the definition of drive-throughs. Drive-through facilities should not differ from gas bars with car washes.

Work Groups

The participants were divided into five working groups, each led by a municipal urban designer. The task of each group was to provide a list of guiding urban design principles and any accompanying concept sketches. In this regard, two generic sites were made available representing different lot sizes and contexts, which were used as base drawings.

- Site 1 – Small site adjacent residential uses
- Site 2 – Large site within an existing commercial block

All groups deliberated on the site plans and provided input on:

- Building placement
- Pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle access to the site
- Stacking lanes – locations, number of cars
- Order box location
- Landscaping locations
- Buffering features, including landscaping and noise attenuation
- Street frontage treatments
- Building attributes, including facades facing public spaces such as streets and service areas
- Parking lot locations and treatment
- Signage

<u>Group 1 - Guiding Principles & Observations</u>

- Locate/orient buildings towards the street frontage/s and provide pedestrian access to entrances from the streets
- Drive-through stacking lanes should not be located between the building and the street
- Establish differing criteria depending on different types of drive-through facilities (i.e. banks / restaurants) relating to stacking lanes and any setbacks to sensitive land uses
- Use 12 vehicle minimum stacking spaces for restaurants
- Require a minimum separation between vehicular site access and entrance to the stacking lane
- Buffer parking areas and stacking lane from sensitive land uses; introduce noise mitigation measures
- Introduce decorative landscaping along street frontage where drive-through facilities abut streets for aesthetic purposes.

- Landscaping is particularly important at:
    - corner sites
    - along building walls
    - adjacent abutting residential lots
- Site No. 1 may be too small for restaurant uses
- Site No. 2 provides for more freedom in locating buildings on the site

Group 2 - Guiding Principles & Observations

- Provide for good pedestrian access from both the street and from parking areas within the site
- No stacking lanes in between the building and the street
- Provide for landscaping adjacent to stacking lanes to separate from street edge and parking areas - use masonry walls combined with landscaping
- Integrate garbage areas into the building
- Building should be located at street edge – on corner sites, building/s should address both streets
- Provide for bicycle racks at entrances
- Incorporate pedestrian connections and landscaping into site
- Provide landscape buffer on lots abutting residential
- Provide for architectural treatment on street facing walls
- Integrate signage into building façade
- Provide directional signage as regulated by existing by-law
- Locational Criteria:
    - Drive-throughs should not be permitted in higher order corridors where high density exists i.e. Yonge Street, Markham Centre, Highway 7, and in heritage and hamlet areas
    - They could be permitted along commuter corridors which do not directly abut residential
    - Discourage drive-through facilities in neighbourhood areas (with the exception of banks, pharmacies)
    - Encourage walk-in facilities in neighbourhood areas
    - Utilize drive-through facilities as a good interim use within transitional areas (i.e. areas which are planned for higher density but have not achieved that density yet)
- Site No. 1:
    - Is a good site for drive-through pharmacy, bank or walk-in restaurant
    - built form should be at street edge
    - the entrance should be oriented to street edge/corner
    - should have large buffers along all side/rear lot lines abutting residential

- Site No. 2
    - Should have buildings oriented to the intersection/corner
    - Consider placing the stacking lane along street edge (buffered with landscaped strip)
    - Pedestrian access should be from the intersection/corner and from within internal parking

Group 3 - Guiding Principles & Observations

- Equal attention and urban design standards should be applied to all tenants at the sites, do not just requiring a higher standard from the drive-through tenant
- Where there are sensitive land uses abutting the site, such as residential, locating the stacking lane in between the building and street may be considered if it results in greater separation/buffering between the stacking lane and surrounding sensitive land uses - this is dependant upon the provision of appropriate streetscaping and building articulation to address both the street and to buffer the stacking lane from the street
- Generous amounts of landscaping should be used within parking areas as well as between the site and abutting sensitive uses
- Terraced landscaping should be considered to allow appropriate visibility for vehicular traffic
- Abutting land uses should determine site orientation and the level of buffering required
- Minimum stacking lane length for restaurants should be 10-12 spaces
- Encourage patios where right circumstances exist and within proper urban context
- For Site No. 1, pedestrian access locations into the site should be identified and marked
- For a small site such as Site No. 1 encourage buildings to be located close to the street but also have some flexibility in order to reduce potential impacts adjacent residential uses
- For Site #2, building should address the street at the intersection/corner but provide flexibility where circumstances are warranted such as grade conditions, as well:
    - A minimum percentage of building frontage should be achieved at the intersection/corner
    - Pay particular attention to pedestrian routes within the site
    - If there are more than on drive- through facilities, group them appropriately for an efficient site layout
    - Consider drive-through facilities and their specific requirements early in the site planning process

Group 4 - Guiding Principles & Observations

- Locate stacking lanes interior to the site
- Ensure that stacking doesn't overflow onto parking areas and vehicular accesses onto the site
- Provide buffering from residential areas
- Integrate building elevations of drive-throughs into existing character where appropriate
- Architectural details are important along the street frontages
- Provide a low masonry wall to buffer drive-throughs from street, corner lots and open spaces
- Situate order boxes as far away from sensitive land uses while maintaining regard for the overall site design.
- Provide good parking design to accommodate stacking lanes
- Avoid dead ends in the parking layout
- Utilize green space within parking areas and as buffering
- For Site No. 1, provide pedestrian street entrances as well as entrances through parking areas
- Site No. 2 provides for a more flexible site layout

Group 5 - Guiding Principles & Observations

- Stacking requirements must be identified for the specific type of drive-through facility
- Keep stacking lanes away from abutting residential property lines
- Situate drive-throughs along regional collector roads
- Orient drive-throughs to keep stacking lane entrances away from vehicular entrances to the sites to avoid spill-over onto adjacent public roads.
- Incorporate on-site safety measures such as speed humps
- Service stations have specific requirements when they incorporate drive-through facilities – the stacking lanes have to be kept separate form the pump islands
- Maintain pedestrian connection from street
- Make pedestrian accesses easily identifiable through use of signage, decorative hard surface treatment and landscaping
- Provide buffering/screening by extending built-form of building beyond drive-through lane to property line
- Incorporate provisions for snow removal
- Consider design criteria early in the site plan process in the instance of multi-use and multi-building developments
- Ensure that entire site is held to the same design standard for both drive-through facilities and other uses

Summary of Work Group Findings

There were many design principles and observations common to the groups' findings. They are summarized below:

- A large portion of our urban environment is designed to accommodate the car, and the car is often the primary means of transportation in most all municipalities in the GTA, including Markham. Therefore, drive-throughs provide a popular service to the driving public, and they are a convenience that is widely sought after.
- However, there are various impacts that should be considered in assessing if, where and how drive-through facilities should be accommodated in an urban environment. The considerations encompass environmental, traffic, noise, lighting, safety as well as urbanistic factors.
- It is preferable for buildings to be located adjacent to the street. On corner sites, the building should address both street frontages.
- Locate stacking lanes deep within the interior of the site.
- Flexibility and site specific considerations are important in determining the best locations for buildings and stacking lanes. As such, depending on the size, characteristics and location of the site it may be appropriate to situate a stacking lane in between the building and the street if an adequate amount of buffering/separation for the stacking lane/order box from adjacent residential uses cannot be otherwise provided.
- A minimum distance between the entrance to the stacking lane and the vehicular site access should be established to avoid circulation and on-site conflicts.
- Provide for well articulated pedestrian accesses into the building, both directly from the street as well as from within the parking areas.
- Provide bicycle racks at/near building entrances to promote alternative means of transportation.
- Introduce generous landscaping into the site design, including; landscaping to buffer residential areas; landscaping to separate stacking lanes from parking areas; and landscaping to break up large asphalt areas.
- Use noise attenuation features, such as fences and walls to eliminate or substantially reduce impacts from drive-through stacking lanes.

- Provide appropriate architectural treatment along street facing facades.
- Integrate signage into building facades.
- Integrate appropriate directional signage as per municipal regulations.
- Apply high standards of urban design to all facilities and buildings on the site.
- If drive-through facilities are being considered for a location, commence the design process early in the planning phase.
- Integrate building elevations into the existing community character of the neighbourhood where appropriate.
- Stacking requirements are specific to the type of drive-through facility and should be established based on type of use.
- Preferably locate drive-through facilities along regional collector roads.
- In instances where stacking lanes have to be located between the building and the street, utilize landscape buffering/screening, including masonry walls.
- Explore the potential for drive-throughs to not be permitted along major streets where high density exists (i.e. Yonge Street, Markham Centre, Highway 7) and in main street, heritage and hamlet areas.
- Explore permitting drive-through facilities within sites situated along commuter corridors which do not directly abut residential.
- Consider discouraging drive-through facilities in neighbourhood areas (perhaps with the exception of banks, pharmacies.)
- Encourage walk-in facilities in neighbourhood areas to promote more complete communities by providing commercial uses within walking distance of residences.

Town of Markham Design Guidelines for Drive-through Facilities
Appendix 'A' - List of Workshop Participants
October 7th, 2009

Name	Organization
Persaud Armstrong Nirmala	Wismer Ratepayers Association
Bailey Lauren	Fieldgate Commercial Properties
Georgis Faris	Region of York Transportation & Works
Victor Labreche	Labreche Patteson
Luchich Maurice	TDL Group (Tim Horton's)
McKinlay Jim	McDonald's Restaurants of Canada
McKinnon Keith	KLM Planning Partners Inc.
Miasek Peter	Unionville Ratepayers Association
Mollet Calvin	Region of York
Montgomery, Michael	Angus Glen Development Ltd.
Roy Jean	Canadian Petroleum Products Institute
Terzievski Dan	Region of York
Webber Fred	German Mills Ratepayers Association
Nirenbergy Harvey	Mintrock Inc.
Bruno Tucciarone	
Joseph Palmisano	Town of Markham
Ron Blake	Town of Markham
Liz Wimmer	Town of Markham
Val Shuttleworth	Town of Markham
Edward Mak	Town of Markham
Catherine Jay	Town of Markham
Mansoor Ali	Town of Markham
Doris Cheng	Town of Markham
Regan Hutcheson	Town of Markham
Shirley Marsh	Town of Markham
Dave Miller	Town of Markham
Khaled Mamun	Town of Markham
Ronji Borooah	Town of Markham
Biju Karumanchery	Town of Markham
Sally Campbell	Town of Markham
Moiz Behar	Moiz Behar Planning & Design Inc.
Chris Pereira	Moiz Behar Planning & Design Inc.