

William Baker Neighbourhood – Planning Submission Meeting

Wilson Village BIA Meeting

Online Meeting Via WebEx

Thursday, March 4, 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 am

Participants

Wilson Village BIA (Rina Camarra, Anthony Rossi, Nathan Duarte)

Canada Lands (James Cox, Matt Miklas)

The Planning Partnership, Master Planning consultant to Canada Lands (Donna Hinde)

Swerhun Inc. Facilitation consultant to Canada Lands (Nicole Swerhun, Matthew Wheatley)

This summary was written by Swerhun Inc. and was shared with participants for review prior to being finalized. The provides a review of the key topics discussed in the conversation; it is not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

On Thursday, March 4, 2021 Canada Lands and members of its consultant team virtually met with the Wilson Village BIA to provide an update and answer questions about their recently submitted District Plan and development applications. The feedback and questions shared by members of the Wilson Village BIA are summarized below; responses and comments provided by Canada Lands and its consultant team are included in *italics*.

- 1. Representatives of the Wilson Village BIA said they are really looking forward to the development of the William Baker lands and appreciate the ongoing conversations with Canada Lands and the team.** The BIA said they feel the continued conversations with Canada Lands and their consultant team are helping to produce something wonderful. They reiterated their strong support for the pedestrian/cycling bridge and the parks and woodlot shown in the District Plan.
- 2. Concerns about the function and design of the southernmost east-west road connecting Keele and Sheppard.** Representatives of the BIA said they understand the logic behind having and the need for this street, but they have concerns that it will be used as a shortcut for people trying to avoid the busy intersection of Sheppard and Keele, creating safety issues for people living in the area, especially seniors. A representative shared their experience with Dubray Avenue (see map at end of this summary), explaining that they worry this could be a similar type of street to what is being proposed here (i.e., a two-lane local neighbourhood street near a major intersection – Keele and Wilson), and Dubray Avenue is regularly congested and creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians, and they don't want the same thing to happen with the new street being proposed in the southern part of William Baker. *Canada Lands and the Planning Partnership said they have been working closely with their traffic engineer to identify traffic calming measures including a*

central crosswalk. They also explained that their traffic engineers have said that they anticipate this to be the least likely road used as a shortcut because of its design (e.g., two-lanes and curved path) and because the roads further north provide a more direct connection between Sheppard and Keele. Canada Lands also explained that the City will be reviewing the design of the road to ensure it provides the best approach and will have the ability to put in additional traffic calming measures such as speed bumps.

The BIA said they are pleased to hear about traffic calming measures for this street as they will be essential to creating a safe environment. They said the design of the street, including the width and alignment of the road could help calm/reduce traffic. They also said it will be important for the design to include space for both pedestrians and cyclists, not just cars. The BIA also discussed the possibility of improving the flow of traffic at Keele and Sheppard to discourage the use of the new street as a shortcut. They explained that Keele and Wilson used to have a “slip lane” that allowed cars to more quickly move through the Keele and Wilson intersection without having to stop and wondered if something similar could be explored at Sheppard and Keele in order to increase the incentive to drivers to stay on the main streets and not cut through William Baker.

3. Interest in seeing an increased focus on connections from William Baker and Downsview Park to the Wilson Village BIA area (and other BIAs in the area).

The BIA said Downsview Park is their central park and they are entrusting Canada Lands with the important responsibility of making it a great place for the community. They said there is real potential for positive connections to be made between the local businesses and Downsview Park. The local businesses are not currently seeing benefits from the activities that take place in the park. *Canada Lands said they appreciated this feedback and said they would take it back to the head of their new Attractions Department who has responsibility for Downsview Park.*

4. There’s a new type of employment in the Downsview area, and there’s an opportunity for Canada Lands to connect new employees to Downsview Park.

We’re seeing investment, reinvestment, and expansion of institutions and businesses that are bringing a number of highly professional individuals to the Downsview area and contributing to a whole different type of employment node. For example, the existing and new people working at the hospital, the coroner’s office, the ambulance station, the OPP station, the MTO office, medical offices, etc. could all benefit from Downsview Park. This is an important opportunity for Canada Lands to think about connecting these people to Downsview Park.

Yellow arrows on the map below show the route currently used by vehicles to cut-through from Wilson to Keele, and is an example of what the BIA is worried will happen at Willian Baker.

