

William Baker Neighbourhood

Phase Three Community Consultation

Virtual Meeting via WebEx Meetings

November 10th, 2020 – 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Participants in the meeting included local residents (including residents of Stanley Greene), many of whom are also leaders of resident-serving and community-serving organizations (including the York Centre Seniors Steering Committee, the Downsview Lands Community Voice Association, the Jane-Finch Family Centre, and the Wilson Village Business Improvement Area). Canada Lands Company hosted the meeting, along with its' consultants supporting the development of the William Baker District Plan (The Planning Partnership, Counterpoint Engineering, Dougan & Associates, and BA Group). Participating City of Toronto staff represented Planning and Urban Forestry. Councillor Pasternak delivered opening and closing remarks, supported by members of his office. The meeting was facilitated by Swerhun Inc.

Notice of the meeting was delivered through a variety of mechanisms, including: by mail to residents and businesses within approximately 1km from the site; email to organizations and individuals that signed up for updates and/or participated in previous consultation activities; advertisements in local newspapers (Metroland & L'Express); on the project website; notice in the Downsview Park Newsletter; and through Canada Lands social media channels.

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

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

On Tuesday, November 10th, Canada Lands and members of its consultant team hosted the second of two community consultation meetings as part of Phase Three of the William Baker neighbourhood consultation process. The Canada Lands team presented the Emerging District Plan Land Use Concept for the future neighbourhood and sought feedback on the material presented. The discussion allowed for critical and thoughtful comments on the emerging District Plan. The feedback shared by the participating community members is summarized below. Responses and comments provided by Canada Lands and its consultant team are included in *italics*.

The vast majority of discussion focused on comments and questions related to the presentation made by Canada Lands and their consultant team. Some participants said that they like and support the emerging District Plan, while a few participants expressed concern that it did not reflect their vision for the future of seniors on the site.

Councillor Pasternak's Remarks

Councillor Pasternak opened the meeting with a few remarks, noting that he has been a Councillor for the past ten years and more recently the municipal representative for the William Baker neighbourhood. As the local Councillor, he outlined his various roles as the Chair of the Infrastructure and Environment Committees, as well as being the Chair of the North York Community Council. Councillor Pasternak affirmed his commitment to listening and learning

from the community, as well as advocating on their behalf to the City of Toronto's Planning Department and Canada Lands.

He identified the following items as important for William Baker including:

- building a complete community through essential amenities like the Community Centre (for which he is a strong advocate).
- advocating for a senior village with wrap-around services to support the local senior population; and
- respecting the historic and stable communities that are the heart of Downsview lands, including acknowledging the efforts of resident organizations like the Downsview Lands Community Voice Association who have been active participants of the process.

He concluded by thanking the various community members and organizations for participating in the process of envisioning these lands and helping shape their development. Councillor Pasternak and his team will continue to follow the William Baker process. His office is available to support and listen to any questions and concerns.

Aspects of the emerging William Baker District Plan participants noted they liked included:

- A participating resident noted the emerging plan looked good. They see the connection between concepts 1 and 2 that was shared in Phase 2 William Baker consultation. The resident likes the connections to the woodlot and park, as well as the buildings close to the subway and the intersection of Keele Street and Sheppard Avenue.
- A representative from York Centre Senior Steering Committee was pleased that Canada Lands addressed comments and concerns they had shared last week related to the accessibility of the presentation and her suggestions related to updating photos referring to the woodlot.

Questions, comments, and suggested refinements for Canada Lands to consider:

Affordability

- It was suggested that Canada Lands implement a deliberate retail strategy that attracts affordable retail to the William Baker Neighbourhood. *Through the District Plan there is an effort to have flexibility for these uses. We're also working to ensure we have the right population density to support a small grocery store. Our retail consultants tell us that we need 6,000-8,000 people to support an approximately 30,000 square foot grocery store. That has been the first step, and there will be more retail studies done on what we can do to attract retail that supports new and existing populations.*

Height, density, and phasing

- Does the height restriction of the Downsview airport allow for buildings that are "13 storeys plus"? And if so, what exactly does "13 storey plus" mean? Is it actually a good idea? Does this mean we can expect 40-50 storey buildings here? *The heights proposed for the District Plan are in accordance with the Secondary Plan. The proposed heights conform to City policies and make sense based on how close the development is to transit, offices, and other amenities. We do not expect 40-50 storeys. We understand that this is not Downtown so the number of storeys will be in a more moderate range. While we're still refining the*

proposed Plan, we're contemplating around 16-20 storeys at Keele and Sheppard and 20+ storeys closer to Downsview Park Station.

- *How many units are planned in total for the site? How many are specifically planned around Keele and Sheppard and the Downsview Subway? Canada Lands is committed to adhering to the density provided by the Secondary Plan which identifies approximately 3,500 units. Phase One of the development will focus on Keele and Sheppard with about 1,000 units within the Neighbourhood Focus and Hub of Activity portion of the site and 1500 units total for phase one. The north-east section will be around 2,000 to 2,500 units during Phase Two of development.*
- *With the growth of development of employment lands in the DUKE Heights BIA area, it was suggested there be more high-rise and mixed-use development at the north-east section of William Baker and along Sheppard Avenue. Canada Lands is looking to maximize mixed-use opportunities, starting with the southern area because of the existing infrastructure currently in place (i.e. bus services, Downsview Park and amenities, and existing residential and retail uses). There will be an opportunity for intensification at the north-east section of the site, but it will take longer to develop. For the past two years, Canada Lands has been talking to the City Planning Department and DUKE Heights BIA to determine the best transition (land use and connection) to the employment lands to the William Baker neighbourhood.*
- *How far is the north-east building from Downsview subway and why is the intensification of high-rise development not focusing on the north-east section of William Baker? There was concern around the walkability of the Sheppard and Keele high-rise developments to the Downsview Park Subway/GO Station. The north-east buildings are about 250 meters from the Downsview Park Subway/GO Station. The buildings at Keele and Sheppard are around 800 meters from the Downsview Park Subway/GO Station. This is still walkable for a transit-oriented development. City of Toronto representative, Ben DiRaimo reiterated that 250 to 800 meters is still within the limits of a transit-oriented development.*
- *How is Canada Lands planning to build the 1500 units at Keele and Sheppard? How will the phasing occur for development of different units with the affordable housing requirement of 10% and different bedroom sizes? the 1500 units will not be built over night but will occur incrementally. The City of Toronto requires that the 10% affordable units be delivered lockstep with the development. There is a desire to see as much happen concurrently, with affordable and market units that will support mixed-use and retail. In terms of unit sizes, Canada Lands will be encouraging family units (2 to 3 bedrooms).*

Seniors

- *A few participants said they were not satisfied that the vision for seniors at William Baker aligned with their vision, noting that they "had imagined it differently for seniors", and that they want certain things for seniors. It was also suggested that if this vision could not be achieved, then one option is to not include any seniors in the William Baker neighbourhood. They expressed concern that the proposed District Plan would not be safe for seniors.*
- *It was suggested that Canada Lands work with non-profit organizations like Baycrest to support seniors.*

Consultation Process

- *Questions were raised by representatives of the York Centre Seniors Steering Committee regarding how feedback from participants in the community meetings would be considered by Canada Lands. Canada Lands emphasized that the District Plan has benefited from*

engagements with public and stakeholder groups. Canada Lands has heard about a range of ideas about senior populations such as: the differences between non-profit and profit senior living developers; benefits of a small grocery store; the importance of having accessible connections and separating walking path and bike; and mutually benefits from intergenerational spaces. Canada Lands has received fantastic feedback that has provided insight into the District Plan. The District Plan has continued to evolve. Canada Lands is committed to continuing to engage with community stakeholders and refine as needed.

- *Representatives inquired about the elasticity of the District Plan to include refinements and changes based on the conversation with YC SCC? Canada Lands is working to establish a vision that creates opportunities for the market to deliver this vision. Canada Lands looks to do expressions of interest with non-profit and for-profit developers to expose different opportunities to the market. No side deals are being made. Currently, Canada Lands is working to secure the approval for the District Plan and rezoning and vision for different phases. The Swerhun team will be recording meetings and taking notes. These notes are an opportunity for Canada Lands to review and make changes based on comments with the larger Canada Lands team, the City of Toronto and our Technical team. Feedback from these meetings will be reflected in that application. After the District Plan application, there will be other engagement processes that will continue to refine this plan.*

Schools

- *Has a specific site been selected for the potential new location Catholic elementary school? As of yet, no specific site has been selected for a new school. Canada Lands still in talks with representatives of TCDSB.*
- *St. Jerome Catholic Elementary School is relatively close to the William Baker neighbourhood. It is important to consider the impact of building two schools nearby (unless one is French immersion) and the negative impacts on the existing elementary school. The Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) is planning for new and projected population growth – it is not to replace an existing school. TCDSB will be working closely with the City of Toronto to look at the proximity of the new facility which hopefully will not be too close to the existing St. Jerome elementary.*

Transportation

- *Clarification was requested about the new proposed roads (two new roads connecting with Dovehouse and Grand Ravine) and if there will be bike lanes along these new roads? Grand Ravine Road will connect to Sheppard Avenue West and the road that goes through the middle of the site will connect to Dovehouse Avenue. There will be multi-use paths along these new roads with separate walking and bike routes. Currently, there is no plan for bike lanes along Sheppard, but the City of Toronto may decide to build bike lanes in the future.*
- *How is Canada Lands looking at the integration of the different Downsview lands? Beyond future streets, how will bike paths be integrated with the larger bike network? The District Planning team is looking at how the new bike lanes will connect to the larger bike network. All the new roads in the William Baker Neighbourhood have bicycle facilities that will connect east/west to the id8 Downsview site and the larger area. Also, pedestrians and cyclists will have a dedicated pedestrian/cycling bridge to Downsview Park.*
- *How have senior populations been accounted for in designing pedestrian and bike paths? How is the safety of seniors being considered? The new bike paths will be separated from the walking path. Where the paths are not separated, they will comply with City standards*

and guidelines which have been updated to include wider shared paths for walking and biking.

Woodlot, Parks, and Playgrounds

- How many acres of the woodlot is there currently? *Approximately 11 acres. The emerging District Plan is looking to increase the size and re-naturalize different areas of the approximately 11 acres of woodlot. We have a real opportunity to grow and enhance that woodlot. Canada Lands noted the importance of providing input on how to enhance the woodlot through these consultations and other mechanisms. Councillor Pasternak and Urban Forestry Department are present today to hear these inputs. The community will definitely get a well preserved and enhanced woodlot.*
Note added after the meeting: Following the meeting the team confirmed that the protected and enhanced woodlot will cover over 14 acres of land.
- After the development of William Baker neighbourhood, the City of Toronto will be managing the woodlot. There was some concern around how the area will be managed so senior users are able to benefit from the investment of park infrastructure.
- Where will the playground be located? In addition to the park space adjacent to the woodlot, *there will be a park in the north section of the development and a pedestrian and cyclist bridge built to connect to Downsview Park. Specific locations for playground have not yet been determined but there are opportunities in the greenspaces throughout the neighbourhood.*

Infrastructure

- As part of increasing the density, has an intensification impact or infrastructure study been done? *Canada Lands is not looking to amend the City's Secondary Plan which at the time conducted a transportation plan and functional design study that looked at what the area outlined the capacity. William Baker is in line with the number of units the area can support. In accordance with the Secondary Plan, a small portion of Sheppard will be widened. City of Toronto Representative noted that this project is not looking to add any new density than what was already approved in the Secondary Plan. When the District Plan application is submitted, the review process will revisit and re-review new changes to the area such as the TTC/GO station and any existing concerns.*

Community Centre

- Will the community centre be included in phase one of the development and is there support to finance or support the community centre with Canada Lands and Northcrest? *We want people to live in the area and enjoy amenities like the community centre. Canada Lands is willing to explore front-ending costs and supporting design/planning to see the community centre delivered sooner than later.*
- What is the preferred location for the community centre? The site of the community centre is currently ambiguous but what would be the ideal location? *Canada Lands has offered the lands at the south east corner of Keele and Sheppard for the community centre. It would be for the City to determine the exact or preferred location. Canada Lands will continue to champion the community centre and support the process. Councillor Pasternak noted that the community centre was initially promised at Keele and Sheppard. Councillor Pasternak has pushed to include the community centre on the City of Toronto's capital plan and start the design process for the site. With the community benefits from the William Baker and Id8*

Downsview development, there may enough to finance the community centre. The community centre is an essential piece for creating a complete community.

NEXT STEPS

James Cox thanked both new and longstanding participants for taking the time to provide thoughtful comments and that will help refine the emerging District Plan. He acknowledged and thanked Councillor Pasternak and the City of Toronto staff for their continued commitment and participation. James emphasized that there will be other opportunities to engage on the William Baker project and reminded participants that phase three feedback will be open till December 10th. The phase three consultation materials, including the feedback form, are available on the project website at www.williambakerneighbourhood.ca

Canada Lands will be meeting with representatives from York Centre Senior Steering Committee (YC SSC) in a follow-up meeting to best understand YC SSC's vision for the local seniors' population. This conversation will illuminate a joint understanding of how the YC SSC connects to the emerging District Plan and see if there any refinements and concerns that can be addressed.