

Hwy 403 & Waterdown Rd Workshop

Monday, May 13th, 2013 | 6:30 – 9:00 pm | Royal Botanical Gardens, Café Annex



Draft Summary Report

Prepared by:

City of Burlington Planning Department

Contact: Rosa Bustamante
Planner II, Policy & Research
Planning & Building Department
The Corporation of the City of Burlington

E: rosa.bustamante@burlington.ca
T: (905) 335-7600 ext. 7811

Meeting Overview

The City of Burlington held a public meeting on May 13, 2013 at the Royal Botanical Gardens in relation to a Council direction to staff to review the “H-RNA1” zoned lands surrounding the interchange as part of the City’s 5-year Official Plan Review. The purpose of the meeting was to explore potential emerging issues and opportunities for the area north of Hwy 403 and west of Waterdown Road. The meeting was attended by 20 people according to the sign-in sheets, but a head count indicated 22 participants were present.

Ward 5 Councillor Rick Craven welcomed the participants and provided opening remarks. City Planning staff Andrea Smith and Rosa Bustamante provided an overview of the Official Plan Review process and the staff direction that initiated this project in addition to the policy framework including the Official Plan land use designations and existing zoning in the area. They explained that this meeting was scheduled to initiate conversation with the community as part of responding to the Council direction. After the presentation, City staff answered questions and then asked the participants to work through a worksheet in groups to answer three questions.

Question 1: Please outline issues that you have experienced to date.

Question 2: Please share concerns about potential emerging problems.

Question 3: What are some potential opportunities that the City should consider?

Next Steps

This summary report includes the verbal and written feedback that was provided at the meeting and key questions for follow-up. During the public meeting and afterwards via email, several questions were raised by participants. City staff have committed to recording these questions and providing responses at a second meeting to be scheduled in Fall 2013. The questions for follow-up can be found on the last page of the document.

This report will be made available to the public for review and comment during the month of June 2013.

Verbal Feedback

The following notes provide a summary of the verbal comments that were presented by the four groups for each question. The comments are reflective of individual comments rather than group consensus. The next section captures the comments that were written on the worksheets.

Question 1: Please outline issues that you have experienced to date.

Group 1

- There are implicit prohibitions around redevelopment due to lot requirements and setbacks
- Additional policies should be provided for virgin land/pristine land -> anything that was previously farmed, but has never been development should require a set of consideration policies for development and the development proposal should offer some validity to justify the development of these lands (i.e. windmills provide an environmental benefit)
- The planning vision and policies for this area are incoherent and piecemeal
- To date, no developer has shown any interest in doing something that would benefit both residents and the surrounding neighbourhood
- Eagle Heights represents overdevelopment and reckless development
- Septic issues have caused concern
- There is more noise today than before, so sound barriers are key for new and future residential development
- Concerns regarding deer, but there is nothing to provide for animal crossings
- Existing public parks have much more people and parks in this area are becoming crowded (i.e. Hidden Valley Park)

Group 2

- Zoning issues should be resolved to permit business uses
- Conservation Halton issues with new development
- More access is required since CAMA Woodlands has only one and emergency vehicle access is a concern
- Zoning for health care offices within RNA1 should be provided

Group 3

- Increase in traffic
- Access to homes off Waterdown Road is difficult from a safety and practicality perspective
- Crime rates have increased
- Air quality has deteriorated
- Truck traffic is increasing
- General traffic is increasing
- Noise pollution is a concern
- Intensification and loss of area character

Group 4

- Density proposals are contrary to NAIR
- With the Provincial Policy Statement, Places 2 Grow and the Region, we still don't have defined intensification numbers for Burlington as they relate to the urban area and the rural area and there are no policies that address the fact that we might experience overdevelopment outside of the urban area nor any specific policies that control where that development is directed. If we reach all of our growth targets within the urban area, then why should we permit growth in the rural area?
- Noise levels increasing
- Air quality decreasing

Question 2: Please share concerns about potential emerging problems.

Group 1

- The future of this area is interconnected to and impacted by the Mobility Hub and GO Station which have been determined by the Province and have embedded an expectation of high density within the notion of a Mobility Hub
- Increase in traffic
- Increase in traffic congestion which negatively impacts travel time
- Lack of consideration for pedestrian traffic
- Approach by the City -> the City is considering areas in isolation and not as a unit
- The yellow square doesn't include the Mobility Hub -> does it consider the implications from the Mobility Hub?
- Future environmental degradation
- Future school locations
- Access for pedestrians and cyclists/bike lanes
- Lack of foresight and closing off of possibilities → what about a cap in number of people in order to manage sewage and traffic problems?
- Lack of public transit
- People are forced to drive because of land uses
- Process issues -> the Mobility Hub will force the north side of Waterdown Rd to become urban
- Look at the area as a system
- Create a framework for decision-making

Group 2

- The expansion of Waterdown Rd will increase traffic flows
- Problem with access because of the left hand turn lane from Waterdown Road onto Craven

Group 3

- Increase in traffic and noise
- Noise pollution
- Safety concerns

- Loss of rural Burlington south of Highway 5
- Loss of property values

Group 4

- Widening of Hwy 403 -> should come with noise mitigation such as sound barriers
- Routes to school are dangerous since there are no barriers for pedestrians/cyclists
- The Committee of Adjustment grants minor variances with no reflection of them in the Zoning By-law so it's hard to follow who has received minor variances and has built outside of the standard Zoning provisions

Question 3: What are some potential opportunities that the City should consider?

Group 1

- Opportunities for citizens to be represented in the process
- Citizen committees should be involved in the process
- High frequency shuttle/corridor with buses for transit should be explored
- Bike route near the creek along Waterdown Rd would be helpful
- Greater integration of employment & residential lands
- Develop a buffer policy that takes into consideration urban and rural area → recognize a strip of land and manage urban areas
- Stewardship of the area is an important opportunity
- Cootes to Escarpment vision / potential buffer area
- The buffer should be located along the west side of Nevarc where the virgin lands exist
- Alternative modes of transportation should be encouraged and promoted
- Some areas should be reverted to greenland/green space
- This area is the gateway to North Aldershot
- Future development should support the character of the area; there are precedents of dangerous styles of development
- The City should take a hard look at the plans Paletta has suggested
- The City needs a new, modern design approach to development; the City should be forward thinking

Group 2

- Regrets were given for this portion of the meeting. Written comments were provided.

Group 3

- Commercial zoning on individual lots for separate small-scale businesses should be permitted
- This area protects the last rural area in Burlington
- Some properties should be gated
- City should compensate for loss of property value by reducing taxes
- Aldershot used to be the melon capital of Ontario

Group 4

- Highly sensitive environmental area
- Estate size lots would result in fewer people and be less destructive to the environment
- The City should allow growth, but on large lots
- The City should co-ordinate walking to the GO station for pedestrians
- The yellow area representing the study boundary on the map should permit medium and high-density buildings and/or commercial uses -> Up to 10 storeys would be acceptable and uses such as a veterinary clinic, chiropractor and townhouses are also appropriate
- Given the existing considerations of that site, high-density intensification should be permitted

Written Feedback

The following notes information includes the written comments that were provided for each question verbatim. The previous section captures a summary of the verbal comments that were heard at the meeting.

Group 1 Worksheet

In blank space above the questions:

Why is the vision so outdated? Boring?

Question 1: Please outline issues that you have experienced to date.

1. Reduction of big commercial footprints (restaurant) – let someone actual large investment
Author's note: The verbal comment that accompanied this written comment described the need to provide more viable commercial properties
2. More control on virgin land – needed is virgin land policy > rigor >
3. City planning for this area is incoherent and piecemeal – confusing
4. No developer has clear interest
5. City has signed Paletta with -> no love -> and made agreements – to develop and nobody knows about it
6. Eagle Heights is an issues – over-intensification
7. Not sufficiently in public attention or interest > reckless
8. North – septic – service – how?
9. What is impact of mobility hub?
10. Noise –
11. Animals need space –

Question 2: Please share concerns about potential emerging problems.

1. Mobility hub (-> defined by Prov. Of On. > embedded high density) -> getting to – emerging traffic concerns > - congestion; - space; - time
2. Lack of consideration for pedestrian traffic. / not just people going to hub but to school
3. Again – considering (continuing to consider) areas in isolation does not let us see how they impact each other – emerging problem in how you ask questions
4. Environmental degradation
5. Future school location -> walking – where?
6. Access for pedestrians + bike lanes -> protect
7. Lack of foresight – closing off possibilities
8. Availability of public transit. (scarcity)
9. Pressure to drive.

Question 3: What are some potential opportunities that the City should consider?

1. (really – accountability. -> check-in -) collaborate with citizens in planning decisions
2. Let citizens sit at the table + be represented

3. Stakeholder committee
4. To get people out of cars – high frequency shuttle / car pool
5. Bike route through / walking corridor
6. Greater integration of employment & residential lands > employment lands already designated
7. Develop a buffer policy for the area
8. Revert to parkland / parks / -> Coutt [sic] to Escarpment vista stewardship

Group 2 Worksheet

Question 1: Please outline issues that you have experienced to date.

- Zoning issues – allowing for business use
- Conservation Authority Land issues
- New interchange effects access issues -> Emergency Services have limited access to Nursing Home
- Zoning – I am trying to build a healthcare office in the RNA and need to understand my potential
- Issues related to sewage line being cut / lack of Engineering
- Access for staff due to GO Bus route changes

Question 2: Please share concerns about potential emerging problems.

- Additional traffic flow with the expansion of Waterdown Rd
- Increase of speed of traffic with the widening
- Difficulty accessing nursing home due to increase in traffic – turning left onto Craven

Question 3: What are some potential opportunities that the City should consider?

- Offices in the RNA – on west side of RNA – including within the MTO zone
- Development of business – small business to be attracted to the area
- Another stoplight at Waterdown & Craven
- Engaging MTO re: GO Bus Routes for different access up to Craven and Panin
- Additional North and South Access from Flat Rd.

Group 3 Worksheet

Question 1: Please outline issues that you have experienced to date.

- Increasing traffic / access to homes / crime / truck traffic
- Noise pollution / safety
- Wildlife segregations / air quality
- Increased traffic on Craven
- Lack of privacy
- Deterioration of quality of life
- Intensification equals loss of character

Question 2: Please share concerns about potential emerging problems.

- Even more traffic and noise / crime – increases with proximity to hwy
- More noise pollution / safety
- Problems selling property – values decreasing
- Truck traffic problems already
- Loss of rural Burlington – South of Hwy 5

Question 3: What are some potential opportunities that the City should consider?

- Commercial zoning
- City should buy properties
- Protecting last rural area south of Hwy #5
- Protection of wildlife passages
- Gates for properties in zone
- City should compensate for loss of property values / inability to sell (reduction of taxes)?
- Protection of farmlands -> cost of food rising – (Aldershot used to be melon capital).
- Rich soils.
- Conserving rural character – density (NAIAR)

Group 4 Worksheet

Question 1: Please outline issues that you have experienced to date.

- Density proposals contrary to NAIR recommendations.

Question 2: Please share concerns about potential emerging problems.

- [Provincial Policy Statement] & Places to Grow – Intensification directed to urban areas – intensification numbers approx. 20,000 for all of Burlington by 2031
- Question – who is tracking the growth numbers?
- Hwy 403 widening & increased noise
- Pedestrian walkways are poor – some high school students go early due to band practice, sports, etc.
- Committee of Adjustment granting minor variances contrary to Zoning By-law with no amendments shown to the by-law

Question 3: What are some potential opportunities that the City should consider?

- City must comply with the fact that this (North Aldershot) is a legally sensitive environmental area – town house, apartments, high density with [sic] produce a high population which will definitely cause destruction [sic] to the ravine – high density = destruction – Solution – estate size lots = less people = less destruction
- Integrate planning with Mobility Hub – especially ability to walk to GO

Questions for Follow-up

1. **At what point did the Office designation (ONA) for the office uses on the CUMIS site go into effect?**
2. **What is the vision for North Aldershot?**
3. **Provide more information about the Mobility Hub vision and policies.**

Staff Responses

1. **At what point did the Office designation (ONA) for the office uses on the CUMIS site go into effect?**

The CUMIS site was designated as prestige office in the 1994 North Aldershot Inter-Agency Review Secondary Final Report (NAIAR) and office use has been permitted on this property by the City's Official Plan since 1995. Prestige office uses are permitted on the CUMIS site subject to the land use policies and design criteria of the NAIAR report.

On July 16, 2009, Burlington City Council approved an Official Plan Amendment and Rezoning for the northwest corner of Waterdown Road and North Service Road (known as the CUMIS site). The approval on the subject property included modified regulations to impervious coverage and the landscape buffer abutting the O3 zone. The application was submitted in 1994, but was delayed for approximately 14 years until the design of the Waterdown Road interchange was completed.

2. **What is the vision for North Aldershot?**

The vision for North Aldershot remains as currently outlined in the City's Official Plan policies. The goals, objectives and policies to guide further development of North Aldershot can be found in Part V, Section 2.0 of the City's Official Plan here: <http://cms.burlington.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10258>

3. **Provide more information about the Mobility Hub vision and policies.**

A public session regarding Mobility Hubs will be conducted as part of the Official Plan Review. Please visit the City's website for more information and/or sign up to receive notices about the City's Official Plan Review here: <http://cms.burlington.ca/Page8181.aspx>