

**Meeting on Wednesday, September 10, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
at the Marketplace/Auditorium, L'Amoreaux CI, 2501 Bridletowne Circle**

**Kick-off meeting: Bridlewood Mall Area Study
(Finch & Warden Area Study)
for proposed Bridlewood Mall Development**

The attached notes are not an official recording of minutes of this meeting. It is information provided to Councillor Del Grande's office and is not binding on his office.

Attendees:

- Councillor Mike Del Grande (MDG)
- Staff – Carol, Franco, Jennifer.

- City Planning: Paul Zuliani (PZ), Mike Mestyan (MM), Allen Appleby, Renrick Ashby (RA)
- Malibu: Terry Lustig & 2 other individuals
- Constituents: over 300 attendees

The meeting was organized by City Planning staff. Notices were sent by mail drop (ad mail). The turnout was not as high as the last meeting of June 5, 2007 where we had over 500 people. Part of the reason we speculate is the feeling among people that this is a “done deal”, even though time and time again, it was mentioned that it is not a done deal!

The study notification area per MM was Victoria Park to Birchmount – in other words, areas out of Bridletowne Circle. The 17,000 notices were bound by the area of McNicoll to Birchmount, Huntingwood to Victoria Park on the West. It was suggested to expand the area further West for future meetings.

PZ was the facilitator and introduced the meeting and the attendees. He talked about the Finch/Warden study that was launched. He said that this was an opportunity for residents to bring forward *their* vision for the area. It included a planning study, a vision document, constraints and creating a framework to study the application in the area. He said that the first step to developing a planning framework is committing to doing it. A Working Group needs to be set up, a design needs to be in place and a plan & vision for the framework.

The framework really reflects the value and aspirations of the community. He talked about STAND UP BRIDLETOWNE and commended the members for their dedication. He said that as plans become bigger, they are brought to City Council. Yes, there will be some development, however, not as much is probably what everyone wants.

He mentioned what Area Revitalization is – the answer to the question: what else could be built in the area based on the surrounding structures. For example, if currently, there are 20 storied buildings in the area, it would be difficult to put in 28 stories, however, new 20 storey buildings would be ok given the existing height of other buildings.

MDG talked about the corner of Bridletowne Circle and Finch, just West of Warden where a drive through Tim Hortons' was proposed unsuccessfully. There would be no justification for this given the traffic nightmare it would bring.

Staff read a message from Councillor Norm Kelly since he was unable to attend. There was concurrence that the community would be too dense even though it is a given that there would be some development in the area. The Ward 40 Focus Group was mentioned.

MM took over from here on and talked about conducting a study first before anything else which is the study portion of the application. He too talked about developing a planning framework to guide further development in the Study Area. There are many different aspects of life in the community – schools, water, infrastructure, traffic, social services and there are other existing areas in the neighbourhood, therefore, adequate public transit is a requirement to name just one. MM asked the community for feedback on the application, since there are related issues: flooding, safety, school capacity, etc. which will form part of the Study. There would be discussions with experts at the TTC and school boards to address these concerns.

In terms of the application, people feel that this is a done deal, IT IS NOT. It takes 3-6 months to come up with a study. The purpose of the study is to develop a Planning Framework to guide further development within the Study Area. The area map was shown with details of the Official Plan Designation as well as a zoning map with a layout of the map. This was the map where types of dwellings were identified with a legend: A = apartment, S = Semis, F = Detached, etc. There is currently a large number of 1, 2, 3 storey homes in the neighbourhood. These are stable homes and there is no significant future change to be seen in them. MM talked about The Official Plan and what it is...it provides guidelines on how the City should develop on the zoning level.

The meeting of a formal Working Group of people could be the HRA (Heathwood Ratepayers' Association), STAND UP BRIDLETOWNE (already involved), representatives from apartments, condo buildings, members of Condo Boards, etc.; basically a smaller cross-section of people who could then inform the larger community they represent.

MM talked about indicating on the sign-in sheet if they wanted to have their name given to their respective Councillor since there were residents from wards 39 and 40. He also asked to keep the number of members of the Working Group small enough to make it effective. 100 people, for example, would be too many. 2-4 meetings would be advisable for the next 2-6 months.

Some of the issues raised so far were discussed – per RA, not all the issues identified were on the overhead. The ones listed here were on the overhead and others that kept coming up throughout the meeting:

- ❖ Concerns of height of the buildings (main one)
- ❖ Parking and traffic congestion

- ❖ Availability of transport
- ❖ Adequate water and sewer issues
- ❖ Flooding
- ❖ School Capacity
- ❖ Concerns over safety
- ❖ Scale of development
- ❖ Land use – is this appropriate
- ❖ Solid Waste Management services
- ❖ Existing levels of community services
- ❖ Impact on sewer system
- ❖ Library facility since the current one cannot handle the existing population
- ❖ Daycare

In response to a question directly concerning community safety, RA said that they were talking to people in the Police Services in addition to some other Agencies based on concerns raised.

From the City side, they have been in contact with:

- Planning
- TCDSB/TDSB
- TTC
- Technical Services
- Toronto Police Services
- Toronto Water
- Urban Forestry

The floor was open to questions. Per information provided, Jim Karygiannis asked a question first, about height issues. RA responded – no concerns with heights per GTAA.

Denis Lanoue asked if Fire was contacted since there were issues with fire and safety given the density of the proposed development. He also talked about the Scarborough Grace hospital being congested and long wait times which will become longer. He talked about TO Hydro power outages. The response from Planning was that all were involved in the process. He also talked about water run-off and sanitary system.

A resident talked about the hospital care in the community for elderly people in particular which is a growing section of the population in this neighbourhood.

The fact that the average family has 2 children was discussed as it brings on a need for more space/services in the school and other social systems. Planning replied by saying that a study was being done of all social services in the area.

A resident talked about the “lousy” booth which was not open every day of the week. This is the booth that Malibu has set up in the mall, lower level, to give people an opportunity to see maps, designs, etc. of the proposed development.

One of the residents said that she feels like she is preaching to the converted. She wanted confirmation that this is not a done deal which was repeated by the Planning team. There is legislation and there are legal processes that all Municipalities have to follow is what Planning confirmed. There will be many public meetings where there will be a report on the study, the application will be reviewed in keeping with the area and the development as well, before it goes to City Council or a full City Council as it was called.

A gentleman talked about the challenges with the Grace hospital; he talked about property values being a concern and about safety issues. He said that future property values will be dictated by the type of housing that will be added on, in the community. He talked about living for 43 years in Jamestown which is now totally different with Public Housing – no where close to what it used to be. He said that people get lured into dense living and then find out that it has disadvantages.

A lady asked about the process, how long it would take and whether with certainty we could say that it would take 2 years or 5 years or 20 years. She said that the process started fairly quickly with the study following shortly after the application was submitted. MM said it takes lot to come to the meetings – it is draining for all especially for the Planning staff since it depends on their work load; it is a lot of information to digest and information needs to be provided for decisions to be made both in Scarborough Community Council and at City Council with results of the finalized study.

There was clarification requested on the Plan and the Design on one of the overheads that was shown. The red areas were mixed use which is basically what we are looking at.

MM talked about the study process and the Terms of Reference which it absolutely must address. The EA must follow a certain direction and must outline direct Planning issues. There is no road map; it is put together as we work with the community. We need to ensure that we prepare a professional document that addresses all related and planning issues because it is a document that Council will rely on.

He mentioned that if a significant group disagrees with the study, they revisit it. In some processes, there has been opposition for appeal, the planning application, etc. In such situations, Planning tries to develop something that is mutually agreed upon before it goes to Scarborough Community Council where differences and oppositions are aired and debated – it is basically a forum for that and to let decision makers eventually make that decision. Through community initiative, there will be a study to provide guidance on the evaluation of the application.

PZ talked about applications from a historical context. There are trade offs on density. Planning has shaped the City at the time, rezoning applications were submitted and plans were changed for development. In this case, the question still remains: what will be done since the developers have made no effort to address or alleviate any of the community's concerns which is upsetting the community. The message being conveyed is: they don't care about community input; they just want to go ahead with the development.

A constituent said he was disappointed with the development and had major concerns about density. Currently, there are many, many rooming houses where 18-20 people live in a single-family home. Living rooms, dining rooms and bedrooms are divided for families, so, already; there is no control over the density. If the proposed development has a building of 38 stories, the density is huge with even 3 people per unit. People will buy blocks of units and then rent them. We do not have the same control for such situations and in 15, 20 or 30 years it will be horrendous. Furthermore, there are many families that chose to have 2 kids so it is not 3 people per unit but 4 in these situations.

Denis Lanoue talked about sharing services outside of the area. He wanted to provide input on the study and asked to be included – MM suggested that Denis give his name to him at the end of the meeting.

MM said that the study will take 3-6 months after which there will be a review of how to build this. Someone from the audience said: 7 days!! It will take about 1-2 years. A lot will depend on the market conditions. Decisions on the transit line will be made sooner than later. If it gets approved, it will take 3 years to build from Don Mills to McNicoll. Where will cars be going? On Finch, which will be even more traveled than it currently is. MM said that there will be a formal plan in place, rezoning of areas and questions asked at City Council – basically a formal process will take place.

Residents said that the development gives new meaning to “the sky’s the limit” with 1300 cars, 5000 people, etc. Where is the money coming from? Offshore? Terry Lustig’s expression on the face changed when this question was asked.

Water, Hydro and Sewer issues will be major concerns – these kept coming up which is a clear indication that more than one person feels this is a real and valid issue.

Seems to be at first like the “Tower of Babel”. Secondly, the concern is that the City is being shortchanged with Tax Revenue. There is “over density”, “over population”, etc. however; there is a formula to arrive at the number for population. If potentially, people “housed” into these buildings will be what is proposed, we will be exceeding capacity of what the current infrastructure can handle.

The issue of green space was raised – will there be any allocation for this? The City of Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation are protecting green spaces and will look after options to increase public parklands with consideration of different types of parks. MM mentioned that all studies are available to the public for viewing – as to how the City and developers justify the density and development. Subsequently, it will be reviewed by experts and they will provide opinions. People can visit the Scarb. Civic Centre, 3rd floor and review the documents – they are not available to be copied.

The community consultation for the proposed LRT was discussed where during peak times, the LRT transports 4,000 people. There will be feeders from Sheppard. The study is not taking/has not taken this density into account. This is the same planning staff that provides input in community decisions.

Next Steps:

There will be meetings with internal departments. About 3-4 Working Groups – smaller group meetings. approx. 2-4 weeks apart at a minimum. Traffic, transit and other specific issues will be discussed at the meeting. MM talked about a “Design Charette” – vision. It is smaller groups of 4, 5 or 6 people, talking about a specific idea regarding design/styles, etc. He talked about 2-3 additional public meetings. They were targeting completion of the study around Spring 2009. There is a web site for people to visit (I checked it out, it works): http://www.toronto.ca/planning/finch_warden.htm

There is a booth set up in Bridlewood Mall by Malibu for people to have an opportunity to see the plans and comment. There is no sign-in sheet, however, to express concerns about the development. Seems this is an eye wash to make it appear like they are including the public in their decision making.

Stand Up Bridletowne is already working hard on this proposed development. This was an opportunity to ask questions to this Committee or to the applicant’s planners who were present, however, no one asked the latter any questions, and neither did Malibu or their planners take the microphone. Future action on this application:

- City Planning will meet with the applicant to discuss community concerns.
- The applicant then has an opportunity to respond or make revisions to the existing proposal.
- Continue the community consultation process.
- Draft the final report for Community Council

In summary, the proposed development comprises:

- 8 residential buildings;
- heights of buildings vary: 38, 32 and 26 storeys on the south side. 7 – 20 on the north side;
- 1370 residential units;
- 3 people per unit (even though many families have 2 children)
- 1595 parking spaces (1.5 per unit which really makes it 1998 spots)
- 5500 people.

The real plan is to put in 5000 people, probably 2 storeys of commercial on the outside and to complete the project in 3 phases. The land measures about 20-30 acres. It is zoned for mixed use per community bylaw 12466.

April 4th, 2008 is when the application came in officially.

Residents asked where else in the City these developers had put up buildings or houses. They said it was at Sherway Gardens, however, they had nothing to show the community.

A resident talked about the development in relation to the 13 priority neighbourhoods and how our community – Steeles/L’Amoreaux - was one of them. She asked how the City could go against its own study. She talked about concerns relating to parks, library facilities, hospitals, etc. She asked about Section 37 community benefits in terms of

identifying the existing gaps in services. She talked about this turning into another Jamestown where poor planning was the cause of that result. She said that the City should shoulder the responsibility of the consequences of such developments and not the community/people who live there.

MM mentioned that Council generally does not go against staff recommendations. The upcoming development on Birchmount – 3291, 3293 and 3295 – was briefly mentioned.

A lady from one of the committees expressed her disappointment with the development.

In closing Mike – although quite sick – mentioned about an “era” of parking lots being destroyed and high-rises being put up. It is the density that is a concern. In Scarborough Community Council, the application was rejected on a vote of 9-0 due to the density. Even though this is the preliminary round, it did send a strong message to the community and the developers that this is really way too much density. Mike said that we need to bear in mind that this will go to the OMB because the developers are not budging on their initial/original proposal – they have changed the plans by moving the buildings from one location to another.

MDG asked an excellent question – to have City Planners provide historical documents on the plans/engineering and design at the time the mall was built so as to compare with what is being proposed. Obviously, someone made a sound/calculated decision to allow the density at that time so why is the City now allowing this high density given that it was not permitted 30 years later – the infrastructure has not changed so there is a major and valid concern that the City, in approving the present application as is, is going against its own decision of 30 years ago.

PZ agreed to take carriage of this request – Councillor Del Grande’s office to follow-up with him by end October.