

William Baker Neighbourhood – Planning Submission Meeting
Downsview Lands Community Voice Association
Virtual Meeting via WebEx Meetings
Wednesday, February 24th, 2021 – 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Participants

Downsview Lands Community Voice Association (Albert Krivickas, Donald DiProspero Josie Casciato, Marlene DiPasquale, Patrick O’Neill, Rita Delcasale-Cimini, Rosanna Iaboni)
Councillor James Pasternak’s Office (Aytakin Mohammadi, Hector Alonso)
Canada Lands Company (James Cox, Kristal Tanunagara)
City of Toronto, Planning (Ben DiRaimo, Al Rezoski)
The Planning Partnership, Master Planning consultant to Canada Lands (Donna Hinde, Mike Hudson)
Dougan & Associates, Ecological consultant to Canada Lands (Jim Dougan, Heather Schibli)
Swerhun Inc. Facilitation consultant (Nicole Swerhun, Matthew Wheatley)

This summary was written by Swerhun Inc. and was shared with participants for review 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 Wednesday, February 24th, 2021 Canada Lands and members of its consultant team met with representatives of the Downsview Lands Community Voice Association (the Voice) to provide an update and answer questions about their recently submitted District Plan and development applications. The questions and feedback shared by the participating representatives of the Voice are summarized below; responses and comments provided by Canada Lands and its consultant team are included in *italics*. There were also a number of points of interest raised related to greenspace and tree-related details. Canada Lands confirmed its previous commitment to leading a site-walk, abiding by public health measures. This summary uses **green text** to highlight places of interest to consider including on that site walk.

1. Concern that the number of units proposed for William Baker has increased by 400.

- To date, through the District Planning process and the City’s Downsview Secondary Plan process, we have been told the William Baker District Plan area will include 3,550 units. Now the plan submitted to the City for review includes 3,985 units. Where did the additional 435 units come from? This is not fair. This is not consistent with the 2011 Downsview Area Secondary Plan. *The overall density for the site is staying the same and Canada Lands is keeping consistent with the Secondary Plan. The 3,550 unit count came from a previous demonstration plan prepared for the Downsview Area Secondary Plan. Through the District Planning process, we have had the opportunity to complete more detailed technical studies, which has allowed the team to explore where units could be located and the variety of unit sizes that could be provided. Through this work an estimate of 3,985 units has been arrived at. This is an estimate, which will be refined through the City’s review of the District Plan submission. The submission to the City includes a re-zoning and subdivision application for Phase One only, which is estimated*

at 1,400 units. Canada Lands and The Planning Partnership agreed to provide additional information related to the proposed number of units following the meeting.

Note added after the meeting: Canada Lands is proposing development at a density of 2.0 Floor Space Index as regulated by the Secondary Plan – there is no increase in density or a change to the Downsview Area Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan regulates development density through the Floor Space Index, which refers to the relationship between the total amount of usable floor area and the total area of the property (excluding the woodlot). The Secondary Plan does not regulate density through the number of dwelling units.

The William Baker Neighbourhood is a master-planned multi-phase community that will be planned and constructed over many years. The total supply of housing is based on market demand, which will influence the range and mix of dwelling unit sizes that are delivered. The total supply of housing also needs to consider City policies and initiatives such as the City's Growing Up Guidelines which supports households with children and the need to provide affordable housing opportunities.

While we provided an estimate for the total number of units within the District, the specific development applications for William Baker that are part of our submission to the City are for the southern Phase 1 lands at the Keele and Sheppard node, which we estimate to include 1400 units. This Phase 1 application has been developed in consideration of the requirements of the Secondary Plan and other City policies and guidelines.

- There is not an appropriate balance of development and greenspace. It feels like the development is being “shoehorned in” beside the woodlot and greenspace. Outside of the William Baker District Planning process, a representative of Canada Lands previously told us that there would be a 50/50 balance of greenspace and development with about 30 acres of each. This plan shows 35% greenspace which is below 50%. *The William Baker District Planning team has never been working with a 50:50 split between green space and development. Since the beginning we have followed the direction provided in the 2011 Downsview Area Secondary Plan. The proposed development is not being shoehorned in. This is a significant amount, an amount you would be hard pressed to find anywhere else in the City. Canada Lands and The Planning Partnership agreed to provide additional information related to how the 35% greenspace was arrived at. The 35% is a calculation of the total area of the woodlot and parks as a percentage of the total site area of the neighbourhood.*
- The plan for the area is too crowded and busy. It looks like Stanley Greene, but much worse. Nothing has changed since our last meeting. You're trying to put in way too much with residential development, retail, a school, etc. I also believe that you're going to cut the woodlot. We wanted to see high-rise development near the subway and more greenspace; all you have done is add 400 more units. We wanted to see a senior's village but if it is too crowded and not what we want - we will put our senior's village somewhere else. *In response to this, the facilitator acknowledged the distress shared by the participant and confirmed their real belief that even though the presentation from Canada Lands identified the changes and improvements that had been made to the District Plan and reiterated their commitment to protect the woodlot, the participant does not believe this information and strongly disagrees with the proposal.*

- What happens to the units that were initially proposed for the area where Park 3 is now being proposed? *These units have been added to the northern portion of the site, one of the taller buildings will be taller. How much taller will this building be? We don't know the exact heights of the tall buildings as they are not subject to an application; They will be 13 storeys or taller and follow the directions in the 2011 Downsview Area Secondary Plan.*

2. Concern about whether the infrastructure can support the proposed new development.

- Infrastructure in the area (roads, schools, sewers, etc.) is at or over capacity. I'm concerned that there is not adequate infrastructure to support the additional 400+ units being proposed. Have you completed new studies and do these studies show there is adequate infrastructure to support the number of units proposed? *Yes, Canada Lands was required to complete a number of infrastructure studies (e.g., Transportation Impact Study, Servicing Study) as part of the District Plan submission. We are currently focused on approvals from the City for the first phase, which would include approximately 1400 units in the southern portion of the site. The studies completed show that there is adequate infrastructure to support the level of development being proposed. These studies will be reviewed in detail by the City. The development of the site will be a phased approach over many years.*
- There are other developments being planned in the area (e.g., 3374 Keele Street across the street with a proposed 158 units). Is there a requirement to look holistically at the development occurring in the area (i.e., take into account the impacts of surrounding development)? *Yes, the studies take into account surrounding development. When reviewing development applications, the City takes a holistic approach, considering the existing and planned development in an area.*
- Do the technical studies consider the infrastructure that will be required to support institutional uses, like a new school? *Yes, the studies consider proposed institutional uses.*

3. Interest in details about the greenspace.

- Hector Alonso, from Councillor Pasternak's office, asked if the proposed parkland would be transferred to the City or if Canada Lands would retain ownership. *James Cox confirmed that the parkland and the Woodlot will be transferred to the City through the development approval process. Hector commented that this good because it ensures the land will remain parkland and open space, not sold to a developer.*
- How large is the smallest park, park #3? How far south does it extend? Does it include the area where the sumac is? *This park would be less than an acre. This proposed park would replace a previously proposed low-rise residential block. The smaller park proposed here would provide a connection/access to the woodlot to lands east of Sheppard Ave W. There will not be a barrier between this park and the woodlot. The park does not extend to include the sumac thicket. **We can review the location of park #3, including how far south it extends** during the future site walk that Canada Lands is committed to leading with members of the Voice and others that are interested, when public health guidelines support this type of activity.*

4. Discussion about the proposed internal streets, especially Street A (the southernmost east-west street).

- You've said that Street A will only have two-lanes of traffic. How will access for deliveries and service vehicles be provided to condos and/or stacked townhomes on this street? Delivery vehicles typically park on the street; with only two lanes this would stop traffic. *Each of the buildings on Street A would have their own access to driveways and parking, which would allow delivery and service vehicles to park off the street.*
- Will the western portion of Street A be built over the existing asphalt or will it be built further north? There are a number of older trees (probably 100+ years old) in this area? *The western portion of Street A is proposed to be constructed between the two development blocks shown in the proposed District Plan. **A visit to the western portion of Street A is something we can include in the site walk.***
- I'm concerned that Street A is located very close to the Sheppard Keele intersection and will cause backups on Keele Street. *Our traffic engineers have confirmed there is appropriate spacing between Street A and Sheppard Avenue.*
- Will the roads leading in and out of the development have traffic lights? Yes.

5. Other questions raised and comments shared.

- Will all the units built in Phase 1 be built by one developer? *The proposed 1,400 units are dispersed among 4 or 5 development blocks. This creates an opportunity for more than one developer / builder to be involved, including the potential for a seniors specific developer.*
- With all the development occurring in the area, including 40,000 + people on the west side Keele Street, there is need for a large grocery store. *Canada Lands' target is to provide a small food store. Our market economists have said they do not see the market for a large grocery store in William Baker but do see the market for a small food store which needs to be supported by population.*

WRAP-UP AND NEXT STEPS

James Cox thanked everyone for their continued participation. He explained that Canada Lands will continue to work with the City to engage the local community as the review process takes place. James also explained that Canada is interested in holding a site-walk to continue discussions and answer site-specific questions asked at the meeting (e.g., western location of Street A, Park 3, etc.). Canada Lands anticipates the walk taking place in the spring once the stay-at-home orders have been lifted.

James also explained that details on how to access the District Plan and development applications submitted to the City for review will be made available on the project website. The materials are now publicly available and can be accessed on the City's Application Information Centre through the following link:

<http://app.toronto.ca/AIC/index.do?folderRsn=9zx7PQAdnp5KxeSXFdsXXg%3D%3D>

Ben DiRaimo (City Planning) explained, now that Canada Lands has submitted the District Plan it is now in the City's domain to review and that all the studies submitted will be circulated to the various City departments for review. He encouraged members of the Voice (and others) to send their questions and comments to him and Councillor Pasternak's office so they can become part of the record and be considered in the City's review process. Contact details for Ben and Councillor's Pasternak's office are available below.

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