

William Baker Neighbourhood – Phase Three Consultations

Wilson Village BIA Meeting

Online Meeting Via WebEx

Thursday, November 5, 2020 9:30 – 11:00 am

Participants

Wilson Village BIA (Rina Camarra, Anthony Rossi)

Canada Lands (James Cox)

The Planning Partnership (Donna Hinde), consultants to Canada Lands

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

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 Thursday, November 5th, 2020, Canada Lands and members of its consultant team met virtually with representatives of the Wilson Village BIA 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 feedback shared by the Wilson Village BIA representatives is summarized below; responses and comments provided by Canada Lands and its consultant team are included in *italics*.

1. Overall, the emerging District Plan for William Baker was well received by the BIA representatives. In particular, they said that they liked:
 - the new pedestrian bridge and gateway at the south end of the neighbourhood, including the connection to Downsview Park;
 - protection of the woodlot and the new parks;
 - the Neighbourhood Focus at Keele and Sheppard; and
 - the potential for there to be a new elementary school in the District, with the suggestion that the potential site for the school could be close to the woodlot – replacing the current proposed location of a seniors building, with the seniors building relocated closer to the community centre. *Canada Lands noted that the Toronto Catholic District School Boards is also interested in seeing a new school located close to park space.*
2. Concerns from the BIA focused on:
 - Concern regarding the new internal road running east-west through the William Baker site from Sheppard to Keele, south of the woodlot. The concern is that this road will become a congested, high volume, traffic collector that motorists will take to avoid Keele and Sheppard – and it will take away from the other benefits

being created in this new residential area. They anticipate the road will be difficult to cross and not safe for pedestrians and cyclists travelling north-south through William Baker. They would like to see Canada Lands consider a cross walk, speed limits, and the road designed in a way that breaks up the traffic. *Canada Lands noted that the road is identified in the Secondary Plan as a required internal road. The road would help people move through the neighbourhood in various ways. They committed to making sure that there be a safe and comfortable way to cross the new road.*

- Concern regarding the lack of a seniors' village in the emerging District Plan, which is different than just the seniors' buildings proposed. The BIA identified a number of important elements of a seniors' village, including different amenities, recreation, shopping space, medical offices, and places to walk that are close-by and accessible during winter months. They encouraged Canada Lands to visit the Columbus Centre at Lawrence and Dufferin as a good example of what's possible in William Baker. *Canada Lands explained that the emerging District Plan envisions a mix of uses (e.g. retail, walking trails, medical services, and community spaces in the bottom of seniors buildings, etc.) and land use permissions that create a village-like environment and that it would be used by a range of ages, including seniors. Canada Lands also flagged the importance of understanding what market there is to provide these uses.*
- The Wilson Village BIA also raised concerns around ensuring the location of the two seniors' buildings are in close proximity to the community centre and accessible to seniors during the winter months. They also suggested building the seniors' building on top of the community centre or increasing the density of the seniors' building that is shown closer to the community centre location. *Canada Lands is helping to facilitate the development of the future community centre by offering lands at the Southeast corner. Canada Lands is not looking to put residential development within Downsview Park, where the future community centre could be located. The new seniors' buildings could also potentially include community-serving space.*

3. Specific questions from the BIA focused on:

- What level of involvement has there been from the City's Planning department? *Ben DiRaimo and Al Rezoski have been actively involved over the past 2+ years and participated in community consultation meetings. The process has benefited from having Ben DiRaimo, in part because he grew up in the area and knows the area well.*
- What kind of density will there be in William Baker? *The demonstration plan in the Downsview Area Secondary Plan provides for approximately 3500 units. We're happy with this and not looking for changes. We want to have a range and mix of different building types – not a uniform development. Canada Lands also clarified that 50% of all affordable units will be rental (i.e. there will be approximately 175 affordable rental units) – this would be a minimum, and noted that they're trying to exceed this, where possible.*

- How many acres of the William Baker neighbourhood are dedicated to the seniors village? *All aspects of what is being proposed in the emerging William Baker District Plan can accommodate seniors. Through research we have learned that dedicating the entire 60 acres to seniors is not feasible. We know seniors housing and supporting uses will be a component of the neighbourhood, but we have not identified a certain number of acres for that.*
4. Other connectivity issues related to the Wilson Village BIA:
- Although outside the scope of the William Baker District Plan, the BIA would like to see some consideration given to improving the connectivity of the Wilson Village BIA and Downsview Park and William Baker. *Canada Lands noted that the City is looking at connections to Stanley Greene and improving connections along Keele Street to improve connectivity between Downsview Park and the Wilson Village BIA area. Canada Lands wants William Baker to be accessible to people on Wilson as well.*

NEXT STEPS

Canada Lands wrapped up the meeting by expressing their appreciation for the Wilson Village BIA's participation and feedback through the various phases. In terms of next steps, Canada Lands is looking forward to any additional input that the Wilson Village BIA may have. The Wilson Village BIA will take their time to review the information and share any further comments at the upcoming Community Meetings and/or by contacting James directly.