

Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Finch-Warden Revitalization Study Working Group Meetings

Topics:

Community Services and Facilities

Demographics

Schools

Parks

- Approximately 30 to 40 people in attendance

Brief introduction was given by City Planner, Mike Mestyan clarifying some concerns raised at the previous meeting dealing with Urban Design and highlighting why the study is being done (To create a vision for the neighbourhood and how future development may look)

Comments (Feedback from the community)

- Community would like to see a representative from Hydro regarding the recurring blackouts that are happening in the neighbourhood
- No example of a new 30 storey building in the presentation – don't want a 30 storey building right at the street
- Pavers are a nice feature to the streets

Presentation was given by Planner, Susan Bookbinder on Community Services & Facilities, Demographic Information

- Senior population is slightly higher compared to other areas in Toronto

Comments (Feedback from the community)

- Question relating to the amount of high schools and the daycares that service the area.
- Question-What is the point of the Community Service & Facilities study? → Mike will be looking at what is lacking in the community and put it into the Area Revitalization study report.
- How does it compare to other areas in Toronto to the number of services that we have here?
- Should look at who is here and what services we need and provide that service
- How many new resident will be located within Finch Warden area?
- Can the City tell if there is too many people in a specific area?
- Councillor makes statement related to services; in the last 10 years there has been a lot of development going on in the area, almost 20% more people live here now then they did before. We are adding people to the community but nothing else is changing – i.e. the hospital can't service the 1,500 extra people that have come to the community in the past few years
- Concerned with the ability of the Hospital to deal with new development

- Central East Local Integrated Health Networks (LIHN) are aware of the new development that is happening in the area
- Would like to see a representative from the Hospital or LIHN
- There is a shortage of services, community wants to make sure that an increase in service coincides with the proposed new development
- Concerned with not being able to go to the local hospital. Residents don't want to go outside their community for treatment/care.
- Many residents have remained in the area for much of their lives and want to remain in the community in the future.
- Is there a single group that determines how much development can take place based on the level of services in a particular area?
- Comment made that community services should be put in place before development takes place.
- Comment made that the recent development in the former hydro corridor has put schools over capacity. Additionally, some homes have multiple families living in single family homes which further creates a problem.

Presentation was given by Planner, Lora Mazzocca from Parks, Forestry and Recreation

- Swimming program is very well received in this area

Comments (Feedback from the community)

- Why do the study areas vary from department to department?
- Answer: Different departments have different catchment areas
- Comment made that staff should tailor the studies to the specific area, parks and services go hand in hand
- Conclusion made that there must be a shortage of services in the area if people are going outside the community for services.

Presentation was given by Recreationist, Todd Davidson on recreation programs in the community

- There is a need for more space, more money, and for hi-tech rooms (that provide internet access)
- Gym space is needed for daytime and night time use
- Need multi purpose rooms that convert easily from one use to another
- Need small community centres for the community so people can walk to them

Comments (Feedback from the community)

- If TDSB has a deficit, why is PFR not using these schools for programs?
- Area is lacking community space
- Parking is a huge issue at centres, everyone drives to Stephen Leacock C.C.
- If area residents come to L'Amoreaux C. R. C. from other areas of the city, perhaps those services should be offered in those areas as well. This will free up valuable community space for use by local residents.
- Question; whether the City can require new development to provide community centre/space within proposed developments.

- Comment made that the developer has approached the Councillor in regards to providing a centre but they had strings attached to it.
- A new community centre would activate the mall, which would create positive activity, not just a food court surrounded by undesirable stores.
- A centre would bring foot traffic to the mall and make the mall more viable.
- Should focus on the interests of our community first, rather than programs that serve city wide residents

Presentation was given by Planner, Mario Silva, TDDBS

- TDDBS see it as an opportunity to work together with the City
- Secondary schools are optimal- new development would not have negative impact

Comments (Feedback from the community)

- Concern raised area resident will not be able to send their kids to local schools.
- People don't want to bus/drive children to schools further away.
- Concerns of rumours of Timothy Eaton closing down
- Concerned about over capacity at Beverly Glen Jr. PS, with it being closest school to proposed development at 2900 Warden Avenue.
- Mario Silva explained that should there be an issue related to school capacity the developer would be required to issue a notice to all purchaser of new homes/condos that they are not guaranteed a spot at a particular school.
- Mario assured the community that are sites that would be able to accommodate future population growth
- Not happy with the information provided by the school board

Presentation was given by a representative from TCDSB, Linda Thomas

- There are 6 elementary schools and 1 high school (but three service the site)
- Most are near capacity and some are over

Comments (Feedback from the community)

- Since you don't have to be catholic to attend, I guess if there is a shortage in the public schools the children can go to catholic schools.
- Generally not happy with information provided.

Future Meetings

- Next meeting is going to be the walking/driving tour on November 15, 2008 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Councillor suggested that there should be a walking tour of Crescent Town
- Possible drive to Downtown Markham to see the presentation centre of the proposed mixed use area there
- Ask people to sign to keep track of who is coming to these work groups
- Name tags were provided during the meeting
- MP, Jim Karigiannis wants information to be sent to him about all meetings, he wants to know if someone has contacted Transport Canada.