

**Waterfront Community Improvement Plans
South of Eastern Community Meeting**

March 5, 2008

Ralph Thornton Community Centre

765 Queen St. E.

Toronto, Ontario

This report is a compilation of questions and comments received during the South of Eastern community meeting held on March 5, 2008 on the City of Toronto's Waterfront Community Improvement Plans (WCIP).

The following were in attendance:

City of Toronto

Gwen McIntosh, Manager, Community Planning, City Planning

Kathryn Thom, Senior Planner, Community Planning, City Planning

Denise Graham, Senior Planner, Community Planning, City Planning

Peter Moore, Project Manager, Policy and Research, City Planning

Eric Arm, Senior Financial Analyst, City Finance

Rebecca Condon, Economic Development

Leontine Major, City Planning

Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 30

This meeting was facilitated by Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited

Dave Hardy (facilitator), Principal

Melissa Clements, Intermediate Planner

Olav Sibille, Intermediate Planner

Danya Al-Haydari (note-taker), Environmental Planner

There were 34 area residents and other people in attendance.

Introductions

Dave Hardy from Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited (HSAL) introduced himself as the facilitator. *Dave* welcomed the participants and introduced the staff from the City of Toronto and HSAL. He also described the format of the meeting, which included a presentation and workshop.

Purpose of the Meeting and Agenda

Dave Hardy indicated that the purpose of the meeting was for the residents of the South of Eastern Area to learn more about the Waterfront Community Improvement Plans (WCIP) and to comment on the planning process' objectives, project areas and rationale. *Dave* briefly described the questions the residents would be asked and the importance of participants input in the process.

Presentation

City Staff gave a presentation on the Waterfront Community Improvement Plans (WCIP). *Staff* also presented specifics about the Provincial and City approval process for the WCIP, public consultation, other City-wide CIPs, WCIP structure and project areas. The presentation also included information on tax relief for brownfields remediation, Development Grants [Tax Increment Equivalent Grants (TEIGs)], land acquisition and disposal as well as support for other incentives.

City Staff presented specific information regarding the WCIP in the South of Eastern Area. *Staff* emphasized that the South of Eastern area was a good location for business development and that the Secondary Plan stated that the area should be protected for employment uses (screen-based industries, offices, IT, education and industrial).

Comments from the Discussion Period

Dave Hardy asked if clarification on the presentation was required. *Dave* encouraged the participants to share their questions and comments.

A resident stated that industrial uses in South of Eastern seemed 'out of place'. *City Staff* responded that industrial uses were one of the employment uses described in the South of Eastern Secondary Plan and that the City supports industrial development in the area.

A resident asked how land acquisition and disposition would apply in the Eastern Avenue film site. *City Staff* responded that the City had not looked at land acquisition and disposal for a particular property. *Staff* also stated that the land acquisition provisions of a CIP would also allow the City to purchase land and dispose of it at below market value in order to help achieve the City's objectives.

A resident asked if the land acquisition and disposal process in the CIP could be used to prevent development that the community didn't want. *City Staff* responded that if the development proposal does not comply with the Secondary Plan (due to zoning restrictions, etc.), there are other processes to address that, including appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board.

A resident stated that remediating brownfield sites could contaminate the South of Eastern area and the seepage of contaminated groundwater across property boundaries could compromise the CIP. *City Staff* stated that provincial regulations address the spread of contamination and that this issue is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment.

A resident asked how public input would aid in the WCIP decision making process. *Dave Hardy* responded that the purpose of the meeting was to hear public comments to help guide the WCIP planning process.

Break-Out Dynamic:

Dave Hardy invited the participants to form groups to discuss the six questions where input was requested. There were six working groups organized around the same number of tables. Each

group was assigned an initial different question and invited to address all the questions in sequence.

Question 1: Should the City be providing incentives?

A resident stated that criteria should be established and incentives should relate to 'public satisfaction'. The resident also stated that incentives for green initiatives, brownfield remediation and long-term development would be preferable for incentives.

A resident stated that incentives should not only apply to development, but also the design of the space. The resident also stated that more incentive grants should be made available if the landowner provides pedestrian access to the lake and public transit.

Question 2: What areas should the incentives apply to?

A resident stated that incentives should be fair for all property owners.

A resident stated that ecologically, the waterfront areas are connected by groundwater and that a site registry should be maintained by the Public Health Department from the City.

Question 3: What uses should be eligible to receive tax incentives?

A resident stated that all but institutional uses should be eligible because they are publicly owned and that more consideration should be given to green uses. The resident also stated that industrial uses were not preferable.

A resident stated that recreational facilities and energy efficient businesses should be eligible. Incentives could be made for industrial uses to 'go green'.

A resident stated that there should be more incentives for higher standards of remediation that would be eligible for more incentives. Incentives could be augmented with consultation and monitoring. Incentives could also be offered to redevelop old buildings.

Question 4: How much of the property tax should be returned to the owner?

A resident stated that the tax returns should be high at first and could be reduced over the course of several years. Also, funds should be returned over a five-year period and that a ten-year return period is too long.

A resident stated that a checklist could be created for the tax incentives to reflect how much a particular business is helping the community. It would be gauged by green initiatives and employee feedback. Furthermore, the incentives need to continue after development.

A resident stated that the City needed look at other municipalities and see what they are offering in relation to tax incentives in order to compete globally.

A resident stated that there needed to be a five year 'sunset provision' on the tax incentives.

Question 5: How long should the owner be eligible to receive the incentive?

A resident stated that if the window to receive the incentives closed before businesses could apply, it would become problematic. The timeframe should be open-ended. Also, labour tax incentives would encourage new development.

A resident stated that a sliding scale could be created that would allow for a company to apply for funding if they knew they were going to remediate, add green initiatives or other community benefits in the future. In such circumstances, more time could be added for eligibility.

A resident stated that there should be a review period in five years and if the WCIP is doing poorly, the timeframe could be extended.

Question 6: Should other types of financial incentives be considered?

A resident stated that there should be incentives for brownfield redevelopment and carbon taxes for companies that contaminated a site. Also, the City could offer incentives for business to move to the Waterfront.

Once *Dave Hardy* confirmed that there were no more questions and comments, he thanked the participants for their attendance and reminded them that there were comment sheets available for them to submit written questions or comments.

The meeting adjourned at 9.00pm.

---End of meeting notes ---