

Golden Mile Secondary Plan Study

Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 18, 2018

Meeting Overview

On Tuesday, September 18, 2018, City Planning staff hosted a meeting of the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) for the Golden Mile Secondary Plan Study (GMSP). The mandate of the LAC is to provide a forum for feedback, guidance and advice to the Project Team at key points during the public consultation process.

Those in attendance included City staff and consultants from SvN Architects & Planners and HDR (consultants for the Transportation Master Plan). The meeting was attended by 14 members of the LAC, including 5 members who were present at the Community Consultation Meeting on June 26, 2018.

The LAC meeting included a presentation by the consultant, SvN, which included the following topics:

- Review of study process
- Presentation of the three Development Alternatives
- Discussion of the Evaluation Framework, Key Findings and Evaluation Results
- Moving towards a preferred alternative
- Next steps

Following the presentation, there was a discussion which is summarized below.

Summary of Feedback

Questions and comments from LAC members are included in regular font.

Responses and comments from the City and consultant team are included in *italics*.

Please note that this summary is not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

Question: Is there a suggestion of a shift from more office jobs to more retail jobs?

SvN Response: We are suggesting pulling back on the number of taller office buildings and looking at incorporating lower office forms in Employment Areas and within Mixed Use Areas.

Question: Which Development Alternative are you moving forward with – 1, 2, or 3?

SvN Response: A combination of Alternatives 2 and 3, which scored the highest. We are looking at redistributing density as part of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) stage in order to reduce strain on the north-south corridors, and to concentrate density around LRT stations.

Question: Do you have an Alternative 4?

SvN Response: That would be the preferred alternative. We are going to the Design Review Panel (DRP) with that and then bringing it back to this group for the next meeting.

Question: Are you coming back to us before going to the DRP?

SvN Response: No.

Question: Is the alternative likely to change with feedback from the DRP?

SvN Response: Yes.

City Response: The LAC meeting is a little bit later because of the summer, the sequence is a bit out of order but we're trying to catch up. The election has also affected the schedule.

Question: What does the realignment of O'Connor Drive look like?

SvN Response: The idea is to bend it south of the existing mall and then run east through the site to connect to Pharmacy Avenue and beyond.

Question: Will there be any road widening of the existing north-south roads?

HDR Response: It's unlikely. There are already 4 lanes in each direction and it is unlikely that there is room for 6 lanes.

City Response: The network proposed through GMSP will enhance connectivity within the study area. The O'Connor Drive extension, still in the conceptual stage, would still require detailed engineering work in the Environmental Assessment phase.

Question: Will there be anything done on the north-south routes for transportation? Victoria Park Avenue for instance is already very congested. Did you consider people using cars to get to parks and the impacts of that? Ashtonbee Road used to be a service road but now with the college there, it is very congested. What are the impacts of traffic on adjacent uses?

HDR Response: When roads get built, environmental impacts will be considered.

SvN Response: The secondary plan will address ways to encourage people to walk, cycle and use transit instead of cars for some trips to reduce the overall amount of future trips.

Question: If O'Connor Drive is realigned, would all underground infrastructure have to be moved?

SvN Response: The realignment is a major project and realignment would mean new infrastructure.

City Response: The Secondary Plan is looking at Ashtonbee Road as a complete street, as more than just a street for vehicles. It could accommodate growth in a different way than today.

Question: When are you going to the DRP?

City Response: October 4th.

Question: Are you submitting materials two weeks in advance?

City Response: Some materials.

Question: So have you already made the determination of which alternative you want to carry forward?

City Response: Not yet. We will be getting feedback on the preferred alternative and then through the LAC meeting and Community Consultation Meeting.

Question: Do you have a preferred alternative right now?

SvN Response: That work continues to progress.

Question: The preferred alternative is being influenced by transportation, but the TMP is just starting?

SvN Response: We will assess the preferred alternative in a greater level of detail at that point and will have that greater level of detail at the next LAC.

Question: Is the gross floor space index (FSI) across the whole study area, and does the net FSI exclude roads and parks?

SvN Response: Yes.

Comment: You won't attract a lot of office here. It's a good idea to redistribute density and built form. In order for this plan to be embraced by landowners, you need to redistribute density along the LRT to incentivize many landowners to redevelop. We're receptive to the idea of the O'Connor Drive extension, but in order to do that, we need enough critical mass on our lands to justify the disruption. We would have liked to see the preferred alternative before the DRP.

Comment: North-south streets like Victoria Park Avenue are bad today so we need to focus on how to make them better in the future. There's lots of traffic and it's not very safe for pedestrians. There's lots of concern from residents about Eglinton Square Park and how it is accessed. Residents want to be able to get around in the neighbourhood safely by foot. Pharmacy Avenue is not too bad but Victoria Park is very difficult.

HDR Response: The secondary plan will focus on making all streets accommodate all types of users. Victoria Park might have opportunities for better pedestrian space and bike lanes.

Comment: You should consider sequencing signal lights better.

Comment: I like the parks you're putting in, but I'm concerned that the O'Connor Drive extension is just moving the funnel further east. I always avoid Eglinton Avenue between Victoria Park and Warden Avenues by car. I like the idea of many more streets as a pedestrian because it provides more options to walk and also distributes the traffic.

Comment: There is mid-rise built form in some alternatives. There are not a lot of mid-rises being built in Toronto. Banks are pulling back on lending for these types because the numbers don't work. I don't think it's realistic to have a bunch of mid-rise along Eglinton Avenue.

Comment: We echo that comment. On larger blocks there is opportunity to place and locate tall buildings and still provide a mid-rise feel at street-level.

Question: Are angular planes just being applied now?

SvN Response: It's part of all three alternatives and is not applied everywhere.

Question: When do community centres start being considered?

SvN Response: In the preferred alternative, it's based on requirements tied to density distribution and total population.

Comment: I have submitted comments to the City. We own property where Central Park is shown. It is currently a vibrant shopping centre. You should look at existing uses when thinking about parks. It also takes up much more of our property than parkland dedication rates would require.

City Response: For parkland dedication, we will be looking at it by district and there will be contributions from all landowners within the district towards parkland within the district.

Comment: I really like that there are larger parks.

Comment: We are a social service agency but not City-run. Social services do really well in retail environments, like malls and strip malls because they attract people. They also work very well with parks for the same reason.

Comment: Flexibility is very important.

Question: Is the draft report going to Community Council in the fall?

City Response: No, there is only the final report in Q2.

Question: How many more times are you going to Community Council?

City Response: We are going 2 more times, once for the boundary change, and the second time with recommended policy changes.