

memo

Subject: Neighbourhood Infill Design Guidelines and Zoning Regulations – Community Reference Group Meeting - Meeting Notes

A meeting was held with a Community Reference Group organized by the City of Hamilton for the Neighbourhood Infill Design Guidelines and Zoning Regulations project. The meeting was held on November 15, 2022 at the David Braley Health Science Centre in Meeting Room 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Review the purpose of the Infill Design Guidelines and Zoning Regulations.
- Talk about intensification in residential areas in Hamilton.
- Review the City's neighbourhoods where the new Design Guidelines and Zoning Regulations would be tested.
- Review what other communities have done to provide design guidance for infill and intensification.
- Have a conversation to understand what's important to consider in enveloping the Guidelines.

The meeting began with a presentation (see attached), followed by a conversation.

The following members of the community were in attendance:

- Ruth Cooper
- Pauline Prowse
- Terry Mote
- Frances Murray
- Ken Tigchelaar
- Erin Shacklette
- Sean Hurley
- Alissa Denham Robinson
- Susan Chishom

Rafiq Dhanji was unable to attend

The following were in attendance from the City of Hamilton staff and The Planning Partnership

- Ken Coit, Manager of Heritage and Urban Design, City of Hamilton
- Alana Fulford, Senior Planner, City of Hamilton
- Ana Cruceru, Urban Designer, City of Hamilton
- Wai Ying DiGiorgio, The Planning Partnership
- Donna Hinde, The Planning Partnership

The following reflects what we heard during the meeting.

Does this cover commercial uses too?

No, the study focuses on residential uses in residential neighbourhoods. There may be unique situations where there is a corner store, or mixed use building in a neighbourhood that would be included.



Does this study address secondary dwelling units and secondary units – Pleasantview area?

Pleasantview is considered a rural area and planning approvals are under the Niagara Escarpment Commission and is subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

Does this study include student housing?

Student housing is being addressed in a separate study. Although there are no rules around who owns and resides in a residential building

This study will address single detached units, semis, townhouses and walk up apartments. The focus is on four and six plex buildings. The study builds on the permissions already in place. It is expected to be complete by February 2023

The Reference Group members briefly described where they live and why they chose their neighbourhood. We heard the following when asked what they value in their neighbourhoods:

- Not a lot of turnover
- A neighbourhood with young families and retired people
- Value walkability, density and diversity of people
- Value being close to schools
- Mix of housing
- Close to Gage Park
- Large lots in Pleasantview, a rural neighbourhood
- Bike path
- In the centre of the city
- Close to the West Harbour GO station
- Live close to grandparents
- Diversity of housing
- Can walk to work
- Can walk to natural areas, playgrounds, shopping

During the opening discussion, we heard that many Reference Group participants lived in neighbourhoods with a diversity of housing. The Group talked about issues that should be considered when developing the Guidelines:

- Parking:
 - There were concerns expressed about developments where extra parking is provided in rear yards thereby reducing green space, or in front yards, replacing landscaping and street trees.
 - In homes with multi-generational living, a one car driveway cannot accommodate all the vehicles so they are parked on the street.
 - Consider allowing parking on both sides of the street.
- Maintenance concerns:
 - Absentee owners who have little stake in property maintenance; garbage is left out, bins aren't removed from the sidewalk, etc.
 - Multi-unit dwellings may not have sufficient space for garage bins.
- Lack of trees; trees are removed and not replaced.
- A suggestion was made that the City could credit residents for using permeable paving or soft landscape to discourage people from paving over yards.
- City needs a tree by-law for private lands.



- Need to base the Guidelines on assessing whether every person living in a unit needs to have a car.
- There could be incentives to live without parking e.g. incentivize public transit.
- Allow the City to plant a street tree as it helps with infiltration and managing stormwater
- It's ok to allow variation in the height of residential buildings, as long as there is a regular setback among buildings.
- Step-backs on infill buildings may help with compatibility when new developments are of greater height than the existing built form.
- Some noted that a redevelopment that was larger than the existing or of a different appearance e.g. modern character, may not be as significant as neighbourhoods change and new developments have influence of neighbourhood character.
- Others felt that taller residential buildings were incompatible with bungalows or one and half storey houses; also felt that images of contemporary buildings were not necessarily compatible with heritage buildings.
- Height differential among buildings can cause problems for solar panels because height would block off solar access.
- The team discussed the concept of a “zone of influence” when considering the impacts of infill development. The character of the immediate area’s landscape and buildings would be assessed to inform the direction for location, form and massing of new development.
- Studies of heritage neighbourhood look at heritage properties, materials, attributes, character defining elements to determine the context for new development.
- Laneway preservation is important, especially where there are very small backyards.
- The Pleasantview area has acre and a half lots; frustrated that the neighbourhood is not being considered for secondary suites. The City clarified that the intent is to extend the permission for secondary suites to the Rural area.

- The team concluded the meeting by discussing next steps:
 - Preparation of the Draft Urban Design Guidelines and Zoning Regulations.
 - The Planning Partnership team will work with a group of local architects to evaluate the draft guidelines and zoning regulations using test sites (residential properties) across the City. The results of this testing will help inform the final draft guidelines and zoning regulations.
 - The draft urban design guidelines and zoning regulations will be presented to the public for consultation.