West Harbour Community Conversation
Thursday, September 24th, 2015
294 James St. North, West Harbour Hub

Welcome (Jason Thorne)

- This meeting, along with other new engagement tools, are a result of a workshop in May where the community was asked to identify their engagement needs, ask questions, and suggest new tools to increase awareness and involvement of residents in the future of the West Harbour
- The goal of these monthly meetings is to have group conversations about a number of different topics that have been identified by the community
- In attendance are employees from many different departments of the City of Hamilton, including Public Works, Community & Emergency Services, Planning & Economic Development (PED), City Manager’s Office, City Housing Hamilton, and Public Health
- Other tools include:
  - The travelling PED Conversation Couch, for in-depth discussions with City staff on particular topics which will pop-up in West Harbour locations
  - The West Harbour Hub at 294 James St. North, a free community space for residents, organizations, and City of Hamilton staff to use to increase awareness and engagement on local challenges and solutions
  - Central contact system with an email and phone line for any and all inquiries: WestHarbour@hamilton.ca and 905 546 2424 extension 2085
  - An online West Harbour directory of which staff are responsible for which projects in the West Harbour will be posted online soon. Web address is www.hamilton.ca/westharbour
- Each of these tools are being evaluated by the community with the assistance of Evergreen who will be making a final recommended engagement strategy for the City of Hamilton in December

Agenda Overview (Paul Johnson)

- The agenda has been created based on feedback collected by the community at the storefront, through conversations in the neighbourhoods, and resident inquiries to staff
- Each month, the chalk wall at 294 James North will be populated with topics identified by residents, and we will be documenting, posting, and ensuring the appropriate staff are here to ensure questions are answered as best as possible
- Items on board now are part of the updates heard:
  - LRT
  - Piers 7&8
  - Affordable Housing
  - West Harbour development projects
  - Central Park Master Plan
  - Zoning
  - GO Station Public Art
- City striving to make decisions together with the community and to ensure everyone understands information and why decisions are made
- The format of tonight is quick updates from staff about the issues identified, followed by Q&A and discussion
- Unanswered questions will be taken back to find the best person to respond and do research required

Councillor Report (Ward 2 Councillor, Jason Farr)
- This space goes well above and beyond engagement and came from a passionate and dedicated community voice
- We want to set a precedent to learn and work collectively

Project Updates

West Harbour Redevelopment (Chris Philips)
- The City of Hamilton owns two main parcels of land – Piers 5, 6, 7 8; and the Barton-Tiffany area which was purchased for stadium development
- Everything is connected – transit, affordable housing, parks, recreational amenities, etc. and the City is looking at everything in a holistic approach
  - ‘West Harbour’ refers to an area bounded by the water’s edge to the North, Wellington to the East, Cannon/York to the South, and past Dundurn Castle to the bridge over Cootes Paradise
- Setting Sail Secondary Plan as guiding document for implementation
- We want to get to a state of development ready by 2018, and in the meantime these sites need servicing. Not much major construction until then.
- One of the guiding principles is shoreline protection
- Area around Discovery Drive will be a transient-dock shoreline rehabilitation project
  - Protect and rehabilitate shoreline as it exists now
  - Creates great amenity to open area up for recreational boaters who may not want to have a slip in the yacht club, etc.
  - Currently working to get this area ready with water, sewage, electricity, etc.
- Council has committed to rehabilitating the entire shoreline in the area as well as replacing an aged marina
- Deloitte has been retained to produce a Real Estate Strategy
  - They will be coming back to give recommendations on what lands are ready now, what should wait, servicing requirements, valuation on the lands, and what public elements could be added over time. Affordable housing is a key element and have included it in our expectations
- planningAlliance has been retained to produce a West Harbour Redevelopment Study
They are looking at entire West Harbour neighbourhood to create a document on how intensification can move forward in this area, for small-scale builders and home-owners to intensification on a larger scale.

Piers 7 and 8 (Alan Waterfield)

- Setting Sail Secondary Plan provides direction for urban design study
- Council has made a commitment to have Piers 7 and 8 development-ready by 2018
- Working towards a medium-density residential area with a diversity of services and uses such as retail, commercial, community, and institutional around the piers
- Streets will be in a grid pattern
- Brooks McIlroy were retained to complete an Urban Design Study
  - An Urban Design Study is underway which is required to define the design and character of buildings, streets, parks, etc. in this new mixed-use medium density residential area. Includes specifics such as street location and features (e.g. sidewalk widths, bike lanes), height and location of buildings, types of landscaping, and other concepts which get translated into future development regulations
  - In May of this year, Brooks McIlroy shared findings of the background work with the community, after which there were roundtable discussions
  - Various design precedents were provided to help facilitate discussion and get people talking about what they want and what they don’t like
  - Public and private spaces will be designed with everyone in mind – trails, pathways, sidewalks, etc.
  - We are hearing that there needs to be comfortable and accessible and interesting places for pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy as well; a diversity of services, unit sizes, and businesses for a diversity of residents; and sustainable green design
  - Brooks McIlroy are putting together development concepts for this area
  - At the next community conversation meeting, we will be seeking thoughts and opinions on various development concepts for the area, with more specific details provided than what was presented in May

City Housing Hamilton (Tom Hunter)

- Throughout September, City Housing has been working residents living in the affordable housing properties across the West Harbour, particularly the tower at 500 MacNab and the Jamesville Townhouses between Strachan and Ferrie Streets, to ensure community needs are being met in a sustainable manner
- In the Real Estate Strategy that Deloitte is preparing, they were asked to look specifically at these two properties – people are concerned about losing their homes, affordability, and safety – Deloitte is preparing options and have been asked to focus on a net increase in affordable housing
  - A specific target for increase was not set for Deloitte, but verbal discussions with them talked about a 100-200 unit increase
There are no definitive plans about what will happen with these properties
  - Could be renovations, rebuilding, rebuilding elsewhere in area, or some combination

Vacancy rates in these areas are:
  - Jamesville – 92 townhomes – 16 vacant units
  - 500 McNab – 146 apartments – approx. 50% vacancy currently

Discussion (Appendix A) includes concerns raised over affordable housing for families and seniors, zoning timelines, highest and best use, and the Terms of Reference set for Deloitte

**Light Rail Transit (LRT) (Paul Johnson)**

- In terms of timeline, this is the longest with at least 9 years before implementation
- In August, Council passed report that set into motion work on LRT
- The plan has changed since 2011:
  - The stretch that goes East to West is shortened – from McMaster University to Queenston traffic circle
  - A North-South route has been added that moves from the centre of city to West Harbour
    - Planning for the North-South route will include going to the waterfront. Unclear if budget will allow for this or only to the West Harbour GO Station
- In Hamilton, not solely about removing congestion but bringing new life to various corridors across the City (a City building initiative)
- Aiming for LRT to be operational in 2024 with the shovels in the ground by 2019
- The Interim Control By-Law limits the type of development that will be allowed on the LRT corridor
  - This will be included at the October, 2015 meeting

**Central Park (HT Lam)**

- Central Park is located in the Central Neighbourhood located between Caroline Street and Bay Street, just North of Cannon Street
- It was included in the 2014 Barton-Tiffany Urban Design Study and is undergoing a Master Plan Review to determine what this park will look like
- A design charrette will be hosted with the purpose to identify programming that meets requirements of the neighbourhood
- Updates and announcements regarding this project can be found at: [www.hamilton.ca/parks-recreation/improving-our-parks/central-park](http://www.hamilton.ca/parks-recreation/improving-our-parks/central-park)