Mountain Brow Vista Study & Management Plan

Stakeholder Meeting #1 (Wards 6 & 7)
Agenda

• Welcome & Introductions
• Project Overview
• Discussion Questions
• Group Insights – Key Takeaways
• Next Steps
Project Overview
Project Overview
Project Overview
Scope & Outcomes
Project Overview
Scope & Outcomes

- Review Policy
- Site Analysis
- Sightlines
- Trail Experience
- Natural Environment

- Data Synthesis
- Mapping
- Emerging Opportunities

- Draft Principles

**NOV-DEC 2015**

- Project Start-Up Meeting
- Technical Consultation

**DEC 2015**

- City Staff Team Briefing Meeting #1
- Stakeholder Workshop #1
- Online Survey

**Deliverables**
- Site Conditions Map
- Opportunities & Constraints
- 3D Modelling
- Visual Impact Assessment
Project Overview
Scope & Outcomes
Project Overview
Scope & Outcomes
Policy Review

- Governed by multiple layers of policy
  - UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve Designation
  - Provincial Policy
  - Regional Policy
  - Municipal Policy & By-laws
Provincial Policy: Greenbelt Plan

• Protects natural and agricultural lands from Niagara Region to Northumberland County.
• Identifies where development can and cannot occur.
• States that lands found within the Niagara Escarpment Area are governed by the Niagara Escarpment Plan Policies.
Regional Policy: Niagara Escarpment Plan

- Goal is to protect unique environment of Niagara Escarpment.
- Outlines policies on land use and criteria for development under the plan including Escarpment Natural Areas and Urban Area.
Niagara Escarpment Plan: Escarpment Natural Areas

• Goal is to maintain the natural areas delineated within the Plan including:
  – Stream valleys, wetlands, natural areas, cultural heritage features;
  – Encourage recreation and education;
  – Maintain and enhance landscape quality.

• Permitted uses include:
  – Existing uses, single residential units, non-intensive recreation activities and forest management.
Niagara Escarpment Plan: Urban Areas

• Municipal land which has already encroached on the Niagara Escarpment Plan Boundary.
• Goal is to minimize impact and further encroachment on Escarpment.
• Development should not adversely affect the Escarpment visually or environmentally.
Niagara Escarpment Plan: Development Criteria

- Criteria for development within the Plan including:
  - Protection of steep slopes and ravines (no disturbance or vegetation removal);
  - Setbacks from watercourses;
  - Protection of wildlife habitat;
  - Forest Management through implementing authority.
Municipal Policy:
City of Hamilton Official Plan

• Study area falls within Natural Area in Official Plan, Schedule A
  – Permitted uses include active & passive parks, recreation or community centres or historic sites, pedestrian connections, marinas, cemeteries and/or management areas (forest, fish and wildlife).

• Study area also within the Core Areas, Schedule B
  – Policy sates that vegetation removal and encroachment into Core Areas shall generally not be permitted.
City of Hamilton: By-laws & Policies

• Public Tree Protection By-law (No. 15-125)
  – No person shall injure, destroy or permit the injury or destruction of public trees in any way including: pruning any part of the tree, affecting root structure, working within drip line, fastening items to the tree, altering tree protection etc.

• Tree Preservation and Sustainability Policy
  – Removals should be avoided but, if deemed necessary, require a permit application to be issued by Director.
  – Permit applications should contain the following information: reasons for removal, species of trees to be removed, diameter at breast height measurement and photographs of the trees to be removed. Applicants are required to pay for removals or provide for replacements prior to the permit being issued.
Summary

• Tree removal permit application to be submitted to Director for approval. Permit requires the following information and actions:
  – Reasons for tree removal;
  – Species of trees to be removed;
  – Diameter at breast height measurement for trees to be removed;
  – Prior to Permit issuance, applicant must pay for removal or arrange for replacement of trees of similar species.

• Once approval granted, plan for removals shall be brought before Niagara Escarpment Commission for their final approval as they are the Niagara Escarpment Plan implementing authority.
Policy Framework

Provincial to Municipal
Site Conditions

Niagara Escarpment Plan Designations
- Escarpment Natural Area
- Urban Area
Site Conditions

Natural Heritage, Open Space & Urban Forest
Site Conditions

Urban Footprint
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Site Conditions

Private Access and Vistas
Site Conditions

Connectivity – Trails
Site Conditions

Connectivity - Stairs
Site Conditions

Connectivity - Bike Share
Site Conditions

Public Amenities - Seating

- Benches
- Benches (blocked view)
Site Conditions

Public Amenities – Site Occupation
Site Conditions

Trail Experience
Site Conditions

Trail Experience – Ward 7
Site Conditions

Trail Experience – Ward 6
Site Conditions

Trail Experience
Site Conditions

Slope Analysis
Site Conditions

Slope Analysis

- >33%
- 33%
- 20%
Site Conditions

Slope Analysis

- >33%
- 33%
- 20%
Site Conditions

Vegetation & Slope Analysis
Site Conditions

Existing Vistas
Site Conditions

Existing Vistas
Site Conditions

Potential Vistas
Mountain Brow Vista Study & Management Plan

Potential Vistas – Ward 7

Site Conditions
Site Conditions

Potential Vistas – Ward 6
Constraints

• Steep slopes and erosion of the Escarpment.
• Significant limitations within the policies.
• Safety concerns regarding the maintenance of vistas.
• Financial capacity for capital and ongoing operational costs.
Emerging Opportunities

- Sustainable forest management - strategic ‘one at a time’ removal of invasive species and hazard trees.
- Strengthen the slopes along the brow.
- Maximize urban forest contribution on the brow (private + public lands).
- Minimize visual impacts from the valley.
- Improve trail experience with strategic vistas.
Project Overview

Principles

• Protect and enhance the natural features (slopes, forest, habitats) in the Niagara Escarpment Plan lands.
• Improve the urban forest in the Niagara Escarpment Plan lands.
• Minimize the impact and further encroachment of urban development on the Escarpment environment.
• Ensure that further visual intrusion of the urban area on the Escarpment is minimized.
Discussion Questions

1. What about this area do you value most? What concerns about this project do you have?
Discussion Questions

2. What are the most important elements that should be considered when selecting views along the Mountain Brow right-of-way?
3. What are the most important and impressive views to be protected along the Mountain Brow right-of-way and why?
Discussion Questions

4. Where should new open views along the Mountain Brow right-of-way be located and why?
5. What open spaces should be protected as natural areas along the Mountain Brow and why?
Discussion Questions

6. Other comments?
Group Insights – Key Takeaways
Next Steps
Thank You!

Marcia Monaghan  
Senior Project Manager  
Forestry & Horticulture  
City of Hamilton  
Tel 905-546-2424 x2566  
Email Marcia.Monaghan@hamilton.ca

Eha Naylor  
Project Manager  
Dillon Consulting Limited  
Tel 416-229-4647 x2362  
Email enaylor@dillon.ca

www.hamilton.ca/MountainBrowVistaStudy