Community Conversation Meeting Minutes
Evergreen Community Storefront (294 James St N)
Thursday, September 29, 2016
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Please note that there will not be a Community Conversation meeting in October due to a conflict with a meeting hosted by the North End Neighbours on the topic of the North End Traffic Management Plan.

Welcome and Introduction
Presentation by: Diedre Beintema (Special Advisor Community Engagement, City of Hamilton)
- Key dates:
  o October 3 (8:30 am) – Bayfront Beach Survey closes
  o October 11 (9:30 am) – WH Development Sub-Cmte
  o October 13 (3:30 pm) - Bayfront Beach Study Conversation Couch #1
  o October 20 (6:30 pm), November 3 (3:30 pm) - Engagement Evaluation Conversation Couch Sessions
- Visit https://www.hamilton.ca/city-initiatives/priority-projects/community-engagement-waterfront to find the most up-to-date information on upcoming events and meetings

Community Updates
- The State of Our Neighbourhoods: A conversation with Mayor Fred Eisenberger event will be held on Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm at LIUNA Station’s King George Ballroom. The event is free to attend but online registration is required: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-state-of-our-neighbourhoods-tickets-27778394327?aff=efbneb

City Housing Hamilton West Harbour Community Properties
Presentation by: Matt Bowen (Manager, Tenant Engagement and Support Services, City Housing Hamilton) and Councillor Jason Farr (Ward 2 Councillor and City Housing Hamilton Board Member)
- Several studies on CHH's properties have been completed to date

- Future of the property at 500 Macnab St N
  - 500 MacNab has 146 units (mostly bachelor units) and currently is home to 45 residents
  - City Housing Hamilton intends to retain the property in order to renovate and repair it
  - The estimated cost to renovate and repair is $6.5 million
  - City Housing Hamilton staff will look for potential funding options and resources from the municipal, provincial and federal governments
  - City Housing Hamilton will create a transition plan for the building’s remaining tenants which will help make the transition as easy and smooth as possible for the people who live there
  - Tenants will be informed about the project as plans are made and implemented. Matt and Councillor Farr were on-site September 29 to talk with the residents and pass along updates

- Future of the Jamesville property (townhouse complex by the West Harbour GO Station)
  - There are 96 townhouse units at Jamesville
  - City Housing Hamilton intends to redevelop and intensify Jamesville
  - City Housing staff will create an Expression of Interest (EOI) that will ask potential developers to submit their ideas for a medium density, mixed use, mixed income community on Jamesville

- 10 Brock St
  - There are 10 units on this property
  - A Building Condition Assessment was completed, no decision for the future has been made at this point

- Next steps
  - City Housing Hamilton residents and members of the local community will continue to be engaged and informed as plans are made
  - Staff will continue creating communication and relocation plans for tenants and planning for the future renovations and redevelopments

- Question & Answer:
  - Can you confirm that Jamesville will be redeveloped?
    - Yes, the Jamesville property will be redeveloped and intensified. Tenants will be informed about the future plans for this property on Monday, October 3 when Matt and Councillor Farr will visit the property to make a presentation and answer tenant's questions in person.
  - Can tenants be moved to one section of the property while something is renovated then moved back in?
    - Yes, phasing the tenants' relocation with the renovation schedule is an option that will be included in the RFP.
How long will it take to renovate 500 Macnab?
- Staff are not sure about the timelines for the project at this point.

Will City Housing be maintaining the same amount of subsidized units at Jamesville after its redeveloped?
- Maintaining the same number of subsidized units at the least and increasing the number of total units if possible is the current goal but staff not certain at this time. Staff will be looking into new opportunities as part of the planning for this project.

Is there possibility to intensify the 500 MacNab property and possibly build a second high rise on top of the building’s annex?
- Staff haven't looked at that level of detail yet. The current budget and estimated cost ($6.5 million) is strictly to renovate and does not include the cost to build additional units.

Will tenant relocation costs be covered by residents or by CHH?
- That is a concern that staff are going to take to the Board for discussion. City Housing traditionally covers relocation costs in these type of situations and it is likely that this is the approach that the City Housing Board will approve for this situation as well.

When will relocation happen?
- City Housing will begin a “request for interest” process out to determine which developers are interested in working on the property but the exact timelines for construction and relocation won’t be determined until responses to the request for interest come back in several months from now.

Will families currently living at Jamesville be able to move back into large, family sized units (i.e. 3-4 bedrooms) when construction is complete?
- Current residents are the first priority to be rehoused in the new community at Jamesville in the same capacity they’re living in now. Tenants won’t be asked to move into a new unit that is less adequate than their current unit.
- City Housing is working with local social housing providers to understand the demographic needs of the West Harbour area so the decision as to which unit sizes will be built will be based on evidence of actual need.
- The Residential Tenancy Act lays out rules for supporting residents through this kind of transition that City Housing is required to follow.

Is there a possibility that an additional family sized units will be built in the West Harbour through this project?
- Anything is possible at this point. The size and number of units built depends what responses come back in response to the formal “request for interest”. City Housing will take community input into consideration when decisions are made regarding unit sizes.
The City has awarded money to an affordable housing project at 500 James St. N. The plan currently includes 45 units and some are 3 bedrooms in size. However, one of the lessons learned from the Regent Park mixed income development is that tension can develop between the different types of tenants (those paying market price and those living in rent geared to income or subsidized units). How is City Housing planning to avoid this type of situation?

- City Housing staff and City Councillors have been on several tours of the Regent Park redevelopment and are very open to learning from their experience.

How similar is this development to the one that was recently proposed in the East End (Roxborough)?

- Roxborough is a pitch from a private developer. They have been in contact with the councillor to create a proposal. They currently own a small piece of land and are proposing to purchase the rest of the land and merge the two.
- Jamesville is much further along because the developer doesn’t own the Roxborough land at this point and is just putting a proposal forward.

Where will the residents of Jamesville and 500 MacNab live during renovation?

- City Housing staff are going to create a tenant relocation plan to carefully think this through. Tenants will likely be moved to currently vacant City Housing units. The tenants from these buildings will get priority over people who are currently on the housing waitlist.

Can you define terms that were mentioned in the presentation such as mixed-use, mixed-income, high-density, etc.?

- Medium density is typically between 4-6 stories, 1600 units per hectare
- Mixed use is whether they are residential, commercial or institutional. Mixed use is typically commercial that can be supported by residential nearby
- Mixed income is when there is a range of tenants from high, medium and low incomes.

HWDSB is about to review the school system in the area and needs to know numbers – if families are being shuffled all over the city, how will the school board know where the future need will be? The school board’s preference is to keep the families within their neighbourhoods so that the school board knows how many kids to plan for.

- Yes, family sized units are important to the regular function of the neighbourhood and ensuring schools thrive.
• City Housing staff have already heard from the tenants clearly that they’d prefer to stay in the neighbourhood and are going to continue to plan to make this possible.
  o Pier 7 & 8 was divided up for sale in blocks, is there a possibility to take the same approach for the Jamesville property as well in order to speed up the development?
    • City Housing staff haven’t discussed the particular approach but, in the “request for interest”, the land is being advertised as an entire parcel. However, the entire Jamesville property is 5 acres large (larger than any of the Pier 8 parcels) so dividing up the parcel is a possibility. Staging the sale of multiple parcels might make it easier to relocate existing tenants within the neighbourhood.
  o What are the chances that this will be eventually become a high rise or high density development?
    • Right now, City Council and City Housing intend to stick to the original plan of Jamesville being redeveloped into a medium density community.
    • A mobility study was completed for the area which sets guidelines in place. Whoever comes forward with a proposal will need to take it into consideration.

Bayfront Park Beach Study
Presentation by: Gavin Norman (Manager, Waterfront Development, City of Hamilton)
- A water quality study on the area at Bayfront Park beach is being conducted by the Waterfront Development Office in partnership with the Hamilton Waterfront Trust
- Bayfront Park beach is a focus right now because of the challenges with water quality at this specific spot. This beach is closed more often than it is open.
- A large team of technical water specialists who are helping with this study. Representatives from BARC, UofT, Parks Canada, etc. are involved.
- The area is very attractive to waterfowl (specifically Canada Geese and seagulls) and, since there is poor water circulation in the sheltered areas close to the shoreline, there are high levels of E. coli contamination. The beach management methods have been more successful at Pier 4 beach than at Bayfront beach.
- Potential solutions for swimmable beach could include:
  o Constructing culverts under the two “arms” of land that currently shelter the beach area
  o Removing large chunks of land to increase water circulation
  o Other options are being considered and modelled by the technical study team
- The study also considers that this area might not be feasible as a swimmable beach and looks at non-swimming solutions for the beach area such as a naturalized wetland area.
Consultation is a key component of this study because the study team wants to make sure that whatever changes that happen to the beach align with the community’s vision for the area.

Question & Answer:
- Is the entire beach closed (i.e. the sand as well as well as the water) or is only the water section closed for the purpose of swimming?
  - City staff will contact Public Health to confirm this. Currently, Public Health is only required to test for contamination levels in the water. To provide more detail: the sand is almost worse than the water in terms of health. The “water’s edge” itself is probably the worst spot for contamination. (For more information, see note from Public Health below)
- Geese aren’t only a problem in the water; they also spread out and create waste in the rest of the park and on the path. How have other municipalities dealt with this issue?
  - City of Hamilton Parks and Cemeteries staff have tried many approaches to keep them away from public spaces like putting up the owls but the geese generally learn quickly that these don’t pose a real threat so no long-term solution has been identified yet.
- What is being done to also manage dog waste in the park and at the beach?
  - Dog poop is easier to manage because the City of Hamilton has a bylaw for dog owners that require them to pick up waste. Geese are a more difficult problem because it only takes one goose to contaminate the area so even removing a portion of the goose population from the park and beach area won’t solve the issue.
- What about putting a contained pool out in the water so the water for swimming can be filtered?
  - Yes, that’s the type of idea that this study is looking at. However, the cost of the potential solutions will also be used to make the final decision.
- What is the City doing to minimize the public’s contact with E. coli on the beach itself? The signs should say that the sand is also unsafe.
  - Testing the sand isn’t something the Board of Health tests, they only look at the water quality. All beach sand is typically contaminated. There is an ongoing program to manage and groom the beach in order to keep it safe. The project team will talk to the public health staff to ask if there’s more that should be done to protect the public. (For more information, see note from Public Health below)
- How many people can this beach accommodate?
  - Staff are not sure about the beach area’s total capacity. However, Pier 4 beach is typically much busier than Bayfront since this is very
far from the washrooms and parking lot. That might be a consideration when we look at alternatives.

- How far is the team from making a final decision about what to do with the beach?
  - Background studies have been completed. AECOM and Environment Canada are currently looking a modelling of the water to see which impacts the various approaches might have. More public consultation will take place fall 2016 to get feedback on the various options. A series of recommendations will be presented in early 2017, Council will have the responsibility to make a final decision on which approach will be used.

- Will the final option be selected based on cost or on something else like level of public support?
  - There are many factors that will play into the final decision i.e. it has to be something the public will actually use, the modelling must give us some confidence that it will actually work, environmental impacts, etc.

- What are the benefits of turning it into a wetland rather than trying to maintain it as a swimmable area?
  - Right now, we’re looking at many different options and also assessing the cost of the various options

*** Additional Information from Public Health about E. coli testing at Bayfront Park Beach ***

The closure of Bayfront Beach pertains to the microbiological quality of the water, in order to diminish the risk of illness associated with swimming in water with excessive E. coli concentrations. E. coli bacteria can be present in the water at a public beach and the beach will not be posted as unsafe for swimming. In Ontario, the point at which the public are warned that a beach is unsafe for swimming is when the geometric mean of 100 or more E. coli bacteria are present in 100 millilitres of water collected from the beach, where the water is between 1 and 1.5 metres deep. Swimming in recreational water carries the potential of accidental ingestion of the water. A public beach is posted when the standard for E. coli concentration is exceeded in an effort to reduce this risk. This is an evidence-based, standard approach used by all public health departments in Ontario.

Regarding E. coli in sand; there is no limit or standard regarding E. coli in sand, on the ground, or elsewhere in the general environment (aside from drinking water and food) against which to compare or indicate when the public should be warned or notified. Basically, there is no trigger point when E. coli concentrations in beach sand warrant public notification.
When any liquid, solid, gas, animal, condition of a premises, etc, is likely to
adversely affect the health of a person (a “health hazard” under the Health
Protection and Promotion Act) then public health services will take action to
diminish or eliminate the health hazard. There is not a concentration or amount of
E. coli in beach sand that is deemed to meet the definition of a health hazard, nor is
there an evidence based guideline or limit beyond which beach sand E.coli
concentrations should not exceed.

If you have any questions about the above information, please contact:
Andrea Vanderwyk, B.A.Sc., CPHI (C)
Public Health Inspector, Safe Water Program
Health Protection Division
City of Hamilton Public Health Services
Robert Thomson Building
110 King St. W.
Hamilton, ON, L8P 4S6
T 905-546-2424 x5508   F 905-546-2787
E andrea.vanderwyk@hamilton.ca

Subdivision Application and Rezoning Process
Verbal update by: Edward J ohn (Housing and West Harbour Planner, City of Hamilton)
- Questions and comments are still being accepted, please contact Edward
  (Edward.john@hamilton.ca or 905-546-2424 ext. 5803) if you would like to submit
  a question or comment about the Pier 7 & 8 subdivision application and rezoning
  process.

Pier 8 Solicitation Process Public Consultation
Presentation by: Philbert Kim (Sr. Consultant, West Harbour Disposition Strategy, City
of Hamilton)
- The purpose of public consultation about the Pier 8 land solicitation is to inform
  City Staff of public’s priorities which will factor into recommendations to Council
  about how the sale process should progress. The public consultation results will
  help us (as a community as a whole) come to an agreement on what type of
  community should be built on Pier 8. Everyone’s opinions will contribute to a
  recommended direction that will need be communicated to potential developers
  so they are able to create a design that appeals to us and is innovative. We don't
  want to be too rigid or prescriptive so that potential developers have space to
  come up with creative and innovative design ideas that still include our priorities.
- The three workshops held during the summer were an opportunity for the public
  identify their top priorities for the Pier 8 community are that City staff should
  provide as direction to potential developers.
- The workshop allowed staff to collect honest, quantifiable responses from the
  public
- 37 people participated in total, they were relatively engaged in the issues already, they came from across the city (not just local residents)
- Workshop results can be seen on the Power Point presentation shown on September 29.
- Even though we asked people to only choose one option for many questions, the results show people’s top priorities. We know the questions were challenging for people to answer because both issues were important to them and they don’t have black and white answers. The results aren’t statistically representative but they give staff and Councillors more information to base recommendations and decisions on.
- Next steps:
  o A staff report for Council is currently being prepared. The report will make recommendations about how the lands should be sold and what the parameters and requirements for developers should include.
  o Key dates:
    ▪ Oct 11: WH Development Subcommittee
    ▪ Oct 27: Monthly Community Conversation
    ▪ Nov 2: General Issues Committee
    ▪ Nov 9: Council Meeting
- Questions & Answers:
  o Since the participation rate was relatively low (37 people), are the results significant and representative enough to be used to inform staff recommendations?
    ▪ An online version of this survey wasn’t feasible because the question format was too complex to put into a simple survey format (particularly the question where participants had 15 “votes” to allocate). It also would’ve been so long to complete (in-person version took approximately 30 minutes to complete) so there was a high chance that many participants would have closed the online version before completing all the questions, therefore voiding their responses.
    ▪ The results are still relevant because they align with what staff have heard from the public sessions to date. Staff have a clear idea of where the community’s priorities fall. The additional benefit of this information is that staff have quantifiable results.
    ▪ Community input is one of several pieces of research that inform the report and staff recommendation. We’re not trying to hide the results from these session either.
  o Which organization would be responsible for maintaining for potential rent-gared-to-income units (RGI) on Pier 8 and where would the maintenance funds come from?
Unsure at this point since any potential RGI units would likely be created out of an agreement by the developer and a social housing agency. It would therefore depend on which developer is ultimately selected and the details of their design plan.

City Housing Hamilton recognizes that they have a large backlog of repairs and maintenance that they need to fund on their existing assets.

However, affordable housing on Pier 8 will likely be a mixed income model (not standalone affordable housing buildings). So the housing provider would need to pay condo fees to the building owner on behalf of the RGI tenant which would take care of maintenance of the unit.

Is there a possibility of a co-op building being included on Pier 8?

- A developer might include a co-op model in their proposal if they can make it work based on their financial situation.

Is the City of Hamilton willing to compromise on your sale price in order to get the community assets that you want?

- Price will probably play an important role in the negotiation phase. The City might agree to a lower sale price in order to secure more benefits from the potential developer. Council will ultimately need to make that decision whether getting a higher sale price is more important than securing community benefits.

Why aren’t more members of the public involved in this conversation since it is an important issue that will impact the future of our community? How have City staff been reaching out to people to let them know that this is happening?

- City staff have implemented an engagement strategy based on community recommendations. Engagement and outreach activities include a “one-window” engagement centres at 294 James St N, monthly meetings, mailing lists, centralized contact point (email address and phone number), project website, city-wide outreach at events and festivals, online surveys, newspaper ads, etc.

- Community partners and neighborhood associations have been very supportive in putting out the news within their own local areas.

- Attendance at community meetings and participation in public workshops like the Land Solicitation workshops tends to fluctuate based on individuals own perceptions of how the important or pressing the current issue is so it is difficult to set a benchmark for how many people we’d like to have participate in a single issue.

The engagement strategy is being evaluated at several “Conversation Couch” sessions later this fall at 294 James St N that are open to the public:
Thursday, October 20, 2016, 6:30 to 8:30 pm
Thursday, November 3, 2016, 3:30 to 5:30 pm

- Have staff been approached by local developers that are interested in Pier 8?
  - Yes, but these developers will need to go through the same qualification process as all other interested parties in order to prove that they are able to meet our expectations.

- Will staff include any “non-negotiables” so that developers understand that certain elements are absolutely expected from them to provide in their design?
  - It will likely be a scored ranking system like a scorecard – they need to demonstrate that their design meets a certain benchmark in order to be accepted. Proposals that do not meet the benchmark score will not be accepted.

Exercise: before leaving for the evening, attendees had the chance to provide input on two topics (affordable housing on Pier 8 and potential community benefits) by voting with coloured stickers on poster boards set up in the meeting room. Results of this exercise are available in the Land Solicitation Public Consultation Workshop Results (Final) document.

Please note that there will not be a Community Conversation meeting in October due to a conflict with a meeting hosted by the North End Neighbours on the topic of the North End Traffic Management Plan.