



Minutes / Meeting Summary

Seaton Advisory Committee

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

2 pm

Pickering City Hall, Main Committee Room

Attendees: Rick Johnson, Regional Councillor, Chair
 Bonnie Littley, Regional Councillor, Vice-Chair
 Doug Dickerson, City Councillor
 Neil Carroll, Director, Planning & Development
 Tom Melymuk, Director, Office of Sustainability
 Catherine Rose, Manager, Policy, Planning & Development
 Steve Gaunt, Senior Planner, Planning & Development
 Kathy Grant, Library
 Graham Martin, ORC
 Ash Kothyal, ORC
 Bryce Jordan, Sernas Associates
 Dorothy Skinner, Region of Durham
 Rodger Miller, Mattamy Development Corporation
 Chris Matson, Matson McConnell Ltd.
 Bruce Fischer, Metrus Development
 Tom Albani, Metrus Development
 Lloyd Cherniak, Lebovic Enterprises
 John Connolly, Transport Canada
 Steve Heuchert, TRCA
 Jim McCafferty, Durham Catholic District School Board
 Gordon Willson, Whitevale Resident
 Gordon Zimmerman, Pickering Heritage
 Peter Rodrigues, Whitevale Resident

Absent: Mayor Ryan
 Tom Quinn, Chief Administrative Officer
 Grant McGregor, Principal Planner, Policy, Planning & Development
 Joan Wideman, Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade
 Reg Webster, Sernas Associates
 Donna McFarlane, UOIT, Durham College
 Kathy McKay, Executive Director, Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade

Item / Ref #	Details & Discussion & Conclusion <i>(summary of discussion)</i>	Action Items / Status <i>(include deadline as appropriate)</i>
1.	Welcome	Councillor Rick Johnson Chair
	Introductions and welcome.	

Item / Ref #	Details & Discussion & Conclusion <i>(summary of discussion)</i>	Action Items / Status <i>(include deadline as appropriate)</i>
2.	Seaton Neighbourhood – Design Competition	Gordon Willson
	<p>Gordon Willson, a long time resident of Whitevale, with an extensive background in urban design submitted a proposal to Mayor Ryan and Members of Council in early May with regards to holding a “Sustainable Seaton Neighbourhood Design Competition”</p> <p>Gordon mentioned that in Seaton, good urban planning and design is essential. He attended the Toronto Design Exchange exhibition a few years ago where a number of examples of sustainable buildings were being shown as part of a design competition. The designs were very interesting and provided exciting ideas for building more sustainable neighborhood.</p> <p>A “made in Pickering” design is necessary as Seaton is unique.</p> <p>Councillor Dickerson enquired if the design competition would apply to all of Seaton or if the idea is to do one neighborhood at a time.</p> <p>Gord indicated that this matter is open for discussion. There are some similarities in the neighbourhoods and design could vary by location.</p> <p>Councillor Dickerson also asked if the Planning & Development Department is considering phasing the neighbourhood plans. Neil advised that staff have considered the possibility that the later phases of Seaton be completed with only a base level of detail. However, the RFP for the neighbourhood planning program is not currently set up that way. It requires all neighbourhood plans to be completed to the full level of detail.</p> <p>Catherine also commented that the landowners stated in an earlier meeting that they were interested in submitting draft plans over most of their holdings as soon as possible. This suggests the need to have the full level of detail completed for all neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Councillor Littley enquired if the design competition would have a theme that would be in keeping with local heritage.</p> <p>Gord mentioned that guidelines dealing with this could be included in the design brief. He also noted that the design competition would also be a great marketing tool for the Seaton project and that landowners would benefit from this.</p> <p>Bruce Fischer enquired how winners would be selected.</p> <p>Gord advised that designs would be reviewed by a panel consisting of landowners, staff and elected officials.</p>	

Item / Ref #	Details & Discussion & Conclusion <i>(summary of discussion)</i>	Action Items / Status <i>(include deadline as appropriate)</i>
	<p>Bruce advised that he does not support the idea. Typically, in design competitions, costs are always an issue. If the City is willing to pick up the cost then they might consider participating.</p> <p>Bruce indicated that they could develop designs for one neighbourhood, but not all over Seaton and noted that most developers already have sales and marketing resources, and thus don't need the additional publicity from a competition.</p> <p>Steve Heuchert suggested the City of Toronto be contacted with regards to the design competition as they just completed a similar process for the waterfront. He noted the process started with an expression of interest, and that a short list of 3 or 4 potential development consortiums were selected. In response to a question, Steve acknowledged that most of the land involved in the Toronto waterfront competition is publicly owned.</p> <p>Councillor Dickerson stated the he would like to see design plans other than the cookie cutter type neighbourhoods and agrees that it can be a very costly exercise. Many residents have expressed an interest in a design competition.</p> <p>Lloyd Cherniak advised that the provincial plan dictates what the developers can do and does not require a design competition. We should rely on the neighbourhood planning program.</p> <p>Rodger Miller agrees that the cost for the design competition can be extensive and feels that similar results can be achieved through the RFP program. It is a very interesting idea but not supported by Mattamy.</p> <p>Chris Matson, representing Sundial Homes, also agrees that the neighbourhood planning process should provide sufficient design guidance and that a competition would only duplicate these efforts.</p> <p>Gord Willson replied that the design competition could be structured to ensure there is no duplication and that the outputs are useful.</p> <p>Councillor Johnson thanked Gordon Willson and committee members for their comments and noted that the cost could be a factor and recognizes that the developers have a bottom line to consider. He also noted that he would prefer not to have Seaton become another cookie cutter development, and that the idea for the design competition would be to stimulate public discussion and interest.</p> <p>Lloyd Cherniak mentioned that Lebovic Homes takes pride in the houses and communities that they build. All houses meet the Ontario building code and he objects to the comment about cookie cutter houses made earlier.</p>	

Item / Ref #	Details & Discussion & Conclusion <i>(summary of discussion)</i>	Action Items / Status <i>(include deadline as appropriate)</i>
	<p>Councillor Littley advised that Pickering is trying to raise the bar on sustainability beyond the building code. The concept of a design competition is worth considering in the terms of reference.</p> <p>Councillor Johnson agreed that the developers represented here are very reputable builders with a solid history of building complete neighbourhoods, including schools and recreation complexes. They should be given the opportunity to design neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Bruce Fischer stated that we must follow the process outlined in the Seaton Plan before moving on to another idea. He reiterated his concern with holding a design competition.</p>	
3.	<p>Neighbourhood Planning Program - Terms of Reference (update)</p>	Catherine Rose
	<p>Tom Melymuk mentioned that the Special Meeting of Council scheduled for June 9th to brief Council on the revised Terms of Reference for the Seaton Neighbourhood planning process was deferred. The revised Terms of Reference propose a collaborative approach to managing the study between the City and landowners.</p> <p>Catherine Rose summarized the changes to the Terms of Reference and copies were distributed to committee members and other attendees for their review.</p> <p>Catherine advised that a collaborative approach to managing the study is proposed and that the services of a professional consulting team would be engaged with funding provided by the Seaton landowners.</p> <p>Under the revised Terms of Reference the developers would hire the consultant and there would be a joint management group overseeing the study. The joint management group was proposed to be 3 developer representatives and 3 City staff.</p> <p>Other changes to the Terms of Reference included deleting the requirement to undertake the CMHC Fused Grid research project, and the deletion of two peer review tasks.</p> <p>Other changes included:</p> <p>P. 3 - in response to TRCA's suggestion, a requirement that the consultants selected should also have "international" expertise.</p> <p>P. 6 and 7 – updating the status of various studies.</p>	

Item / Ref #	Details & Discussion & Conclusion <i>(summary of discussion)</i>	Action Items / Status <i>(include deadline as appropriate)</i>
	<p>Tom Melymuk indicated that other than the change to the study management structure, most of the other changes were technical or housekeeping matters.</p> <p>Catherine mentioned that copies of the comments on the initial Terms of Reference are available should anyone be interested in reviewing.</p> <p>Dorothy Skinner enquired if there is a requirement for a design competition as suggested by Gord and asked if it should be up to Pickering to decide.</p> <p>Dorothy also questioned whether the design competition would replace the design workshop discussed at earlier meetings, or whether it would be additional input.</p> <p>Catherine Rose advised that the design competition is not required by the current Terms of Reference. She also noted that a design workshop could also be very beneficial and has not been ruled out.</p> <p>Neil Carroll noted that a consulting team could propose a design workshop or set up a “think tank” as part of their approach to the neighbourhood planning exercise.</p> <p>Gord Willson mentioned that there are 200 year old heritage homes on Whitevale Road, and that this should be noted in the Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Lloyd Cherniak indicated that heritage conservation has been raised before and it was noted that the style of houses should not be based on copying existing heritage architecture.</p> <p>Councillor Littley suggested that the cultural aspect could be incorporated with the today’s newer designs.</p> <p>Councillor Dickerson enquired if the expectation is to preserve the homes along Whitevale Road in their current state or to move them to another central area such as the Pickering Museum Village.</p> <p>Tom Melymuk advised that final comments on the Terms of Reference should be submitted to Catherine Rose. Once this is done, staff will report back to Council with a final version of the Terms of Reference and ask for direction to proceed.</p>	
4.	MESP Update	All
	<p>Bryce Jordan provided comments from Reg Webster.</p> <p>The Existing Conditions Report should be completed by the end of June. With respect to storm pond, base flow and water balance, there is not enough baseline data to move forward at this time.</p>	

Item / Ref #	Details & Discussion & Conclusion <i>(summary of discussion)</i>	Action Items / Status <i>(include deadline as appropriate)</i>
	<p>Boreholes and wetland monitoring information is required to supplement the Morrison Wetland Water Balance Study. This work may be delivered in a second report.</p> <p>Energy sustainability – sub-consultant is currently analyzing short list of potential energy options.</p> <p>First Nations consultations are starting in early July with discussions of existing conditions report.</p> <p>An Oversight Committee Meeting is being scheduled for July. The next Public Information Centre will be in the fall</p>	
5.	Update on Other Studies	All
	<p>Natural Heritage System – Bryce Jordan mentioned Sernas has sent comments to the Province on behalf of the developers' group. Comments were copied to City.</p> <p>The City also provided comments on the draft study.</p> <p>The consultant is currently working through extensive revisions to address concerns raised through circulation of draft study.</p>	
6.	Other Business	All
	The next meeting will be held in September.	

Meeting Adjourned: 3:30 pm

Copy: Mayor
Members of Council
Directors
Division Heads