

Meeting Date: Wednesday April 7, 2004

Meeting Location: Aurora Public Library
Magna Room
15145 Yonge Street, Aurora

Public in Attendance: 15

**Staff/Councillors
in Attendance:**

Susan Seibert, Aurora Planning
Chris Giles, York Region Planning
Ben Petch, York Region Planning
Karen Whitney, York Region Planning
Neil Garbe, York Region Planning
John Waller, York Region Planning

Councillor Phyllis Morris

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION Heard at this meeting are as follows:

PARKING -

- Need government incentives for underground parking
- Underground parking needs to be economically viable
- Parking requirements need to be reduced over the long term

DENSITY, DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED -

- Height needs to be regulated at some level of government
- Heritage conservation is very important
- Will density transfers be permitted?
- Core of plan is heart of town
- Will local municipality be forced to develop at high densities if they choose not to?
- If soil can not support development will development go forward?
- Aurora downtown is already a community

- Want to keep the greenbelt between Aurora and Newmarket
- Community has to decide how it wants to grow
- Concern about 2.5 FSI – if we want less, will we be forced to 2.5 FSI?
- Want the ability to control density locally
- How do we monitor density across the Region?
- Need support from Region if a lower density is desired
- Lot coverage question
- If you keep building sewers outward it will encourage sprawl
- Need compact development
- Have there been consideration of putting density on train lines/stations?
- Opportunity for intensification - may be better on rail line

ECONOMY -

- Does the plan promote economic (employment) development?
- How do we monitor residential v. employment balance to ensure it is working?
- Rundown areas need to be revitalized
- Are you looking at development charges?
- Downtown revitalization is a key issue
- Aurora is pursuing an economic development committee for downtown

TRANSPORTATION -

- Need to promote transit
- How will buses get through narrow sections of Yonge Street? e.g. Yonge and Wellington
- Traffic infiltration on local roads could be an issue to avoid traffic and intersections
- With expansions to Bayview and Bathurst can't the bus and development go around (by-pass) the downtown core?
- Hwy 407: what crossings are proposed? Currently difficult to cross on local roads
- Traffic lights need to be timed better on arterials
- Need to encourage pedestrian traffic

- Need to now be planning transportation infrastructure out at 404 – before the sewers and water are implemented
- Really important to catch up on transportation planning
- Why lead growth with sewage and water instead of transportation?
- Transit isn't the transportation solution but it is a part
- Need to do a better job at putting the road system first or at same time as development
- Q: Any plans for extending subway? A: Potentially to Hwy 7
- Look for better ways to get people to the TTC
- If we could capture some of the gas savings of using transit it would be good
- Trains are great but expensive and too infrequent

CENTRES AND CORRIDORS COMMENTS -

- Should be more centres on Yonge St.
- Does this fit into objectives of bill 26 and 27?
- How is affordable housing going to be encouraged?
- Growth management important
- How does this plan fit in with provincial initiatives?
- Aurora needs support from Region for intensification and employment
- Need different development which is more relevant to Aurora
- Need solid leadership at local and Regional levels
- Would like a second representative on Regional council
- How much has the C&C planning cost?

INFRASTRUCTURE –

- How will new development be supplied with water (given the current shortage)?
- If sewers originally planned are not servicing all of the development originally planned or if the costs of construction are higher than anticipated – who pays?
- How does the water and sewer plan anticipate these changes
- Delays and issues with 16th avenue
- Leslie street sewer should be cut if it creates sprawl

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS – WHAT WE HEARD

- Sewer and water issue – who will pay for delays and can it be financed through DC?
- Major planning issued: sewage leads development rather than transportation

PUBLIC MEETINGS –

- Need to focus on unique characteristics of Aurora
- Is it possible to have another meeting?
- Need better advertising
- Can a future meeting be combined with local council?
- Need better publicity – news coverage
- Need to get a better public understanding through continued publicity and consultation

Meeting Date:	Thursday March 4, 2004
Meeting Location:	Markham Town Centre Canada Room 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham
Public in Attendance:	8
Staff in Attendance:	Tim Lambe, Markham Planning Murray Boyce, Markham Planning Chris Giles, York Region Planning Sean Hertel, York Region Planning Ben Petch, York Region Planning Leigh Anne Wiseman, York Region Planning Karen Whitney, York Region Planning John Waller, York Region Planning

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION Heard at this meeting are as follows:

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND DESIGN –

- Make sure that developers stick to the plan
- Need a minimum greenspace requirement in plans
- Need to achieve a real mix of uses
- Walking between uses is important
- Need to be creative in the way uses are mixed
- Eyes on street
- Mix of incomes – Cornell is a good example
- Planning must account for existing neighbourhoods to ensure fit
- Don't make an existing neighbourhood an island
- New commercial areas need to be sensitive to existing residential
- Address crime issues
- Don't want a whole lot of Toronto
- Streetscapes should be inviting, active, pedestrian oriented, walking environment, attractive

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS – WHAT WE HEARD

- Exciting centres
- Vancouver provides good examples of active streetscapes

TRANSPORTATION –

- How much will Quickstart cost?
- When will Quickstart be implemented?
- Traffic congestion is frustrating

PUBLIC CONSULTATION –

- How are developers being informed so initial proposals are closer to policy goals?
- An increase in transit use needs to be linked with decreased traffic congestion
- Consult with residents on a small, neighbourhood scale to boost awareness (e.g. focus on areas around elementary schools)
- Need to talk to people at the local neighbourhood level to generate ideas and fully engage communities
- Communicate through schools and community centres to get the word out
- What are the Regional Councilors doing to engage residents (e.g. newsletters)?

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES –

- Diverse communities that interact are important
- Healthy communities need to be a key component of the Regional Official Plan
- Are there studies on what creates healthy communities?
- Healthy communities are key – don't just focus on transportation nodes
- Engaging youth in healthy communities is important
- Plan needs integration with human services

<i>Meeting Date:</i>	Monday March 8, 2004
<i>Meeting Location:</i>	York Region Administrative Centre Seminar Room 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket
<i>Public in Attendance:</i>	8
<i>Staff in Attendance:</i>	Cindy Wackett, Newmarket Planning Jason Unger, Newmarket Planning Royce Fu, Newmarket Planning Mark Hanlon, York Region Transportation & Works Sean Hertel, York Region Planning Ben Petch, York Region Planning Leigh Anne Wiseman, York Region Planning Karen Whitney, York Region Planning James Stiver, York Region Planning John Waller, York Region Planning

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION Heard at this meeting are as follows:

TRANSPORTATION COMMENTS –

- Development focused on corridors would impede traffic (e.g. Yonge Street is already congested)
- Move nodes off of corridors with linkages to reduce congestion
- Add more roads adjacent to rail corridors – build new development nodes (e.g. a new “mini” Highway 401)
- Make Better use of existing transportation routes (i.e. GO Rail Line)
- Stop Highway 404 and Bradford By-pass to help curb sprawl
- Extend York Region Transit into Toronto – eliminate need for a transfer
- Change timing of traffic lights to improve flow (Bathurst Street and Carrville Road)
- Add rail lines to 400-Series Highways (i.e. in the right-of-way)

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH COMMENTS –

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS – WHAT WE HEARD

- Why not intensify Newmarket's old core?
- Plan is good but unrealistic - development pressures too great elsewhere (e.g. Queensville)
- Need strong controls to influence development
- Who will use Community Improvement Plans (Section 28 of the Planning Act)?
- Will the Region encroach on local planning?
- Ensure that developers don't use Regional planning policies to counteract local municipal initiatives/plans
- What is the implementation process/timing at the local level? (A: each municipality is at a different stage)
- Who lives in this Region and where do they work? Can we track this?

ENERGY-RELATED COMMENTS –

- Address energy supply (i.e. How will we keep up with development?)
- Energy saving incentives?
- Look to Toronto's Official Plan energy-saving incentives (e.g. green roofs)
- Energy conservation is important
- Population should not be able to grow beyond energy supply

Meeting Date:	Monday March 22, 2004
Meeting Location:	York Region South Services Centre First Floor Training Centre 50 High Tech Boulevard, Richmond Hill
Public in Attendance:	98
Staff/Councillors in Attendance:	Deborah Alexander, Richmond Hill Planning Chris Giles, York Region Planning Sean Hertel, York Region Planning Ben Petch, York Region Planning Barb Jeffrey, York Region Planning Dianne Pomeroy, York Region Planning Neil Garbe, York Region Planning Anna Karasik, York Region Planning Paul Bottomley, York Region Planning Councillor David Cohen

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION Heard at this meeting are as follows:

FUNDING –

- Alternative financing for large public projects is being looked at
- Be careful with privatization
- What type of built form makes a bigger profit?
- Are we going to have financial guarantees from senior levels of government?

DESIGN –

- How do we get better design in our communities
- How do we ensure new development does not negatively affect existing communities?

DENSITY –

- Density in York Region is low and makes a car necessary

- Need a higher density target
- Is 2.5 FSI a good threshold given development's context
- Change the ROPA to give local municipalities final authority over density
- Higher density leads to congestion – Need mixed uses to combat this
- Consider new centres?
- Don't want local municipalities to make everything a Key Development Area
- Concerns over: safety, crime, pollution, lifestyle given higher density development
- Can we prevent developers from changing the zoning?
- Need clause to prohibit density outside designated areas
- Areas should be designed for high growth
- Need to specify building height as well as density
- Standard definition of density: net vs. gross
- Maybe take out 2.5 FSI and replace with height limits
- What are criteria for Key Development Areas – size of land should be consideration
- Look to stable areas and areas in transition

TRANSPORTATION –

- How do you change the auto oriented mindset – the Region needs to do more
- Is York Region working with GO to extend rail services?
- What are the modal splits for the ROPA?
- Needs to be a boundary/limit where the rapid transit corridor begins/ends
- Can transit and built form be put in at the same time?
- Need to build the subway and transit first
- ROPA should only go ahead only with final commitments from senior levels of government for transit funding
- Highway 7 should not be called a highway anymore
- Need transit before development

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION –

- Preserve historical downtowns
- Preserve historical core areas – ROPA 43 supports historical areas
- Preserve and Protect existing residential areas

GENERAL COMMENTS –

- Prevent another North York
- Region has neglected Vaughan/Thornhill
- Need an ongoing forum for information on planning initiatives
- Need to be more specific about functions of corridors
- Examine low or zero growth options
- Need to enforce the ROP policies – “Sticks and Carrots”, enforcement needed
- Balance between the regional OP and local OPs needs to be established – be more prescriptive
- What can ordinary residents do to motivate town to review secondary plans
- Staff and council need to work closer together – let staff make some of the decisions
- Need to quantitatively show regional/local councillors that the public supports a more robust ROPA 43
- What provisions do we have for affordable housing? – need more teeth
- Provisions to use federal initiatives for affordable housing
- What are the initiatives for commercial/employment/industrial development? – mixed use employment targets; employment /population ratios

ROPA 43 SPECIFIC COMMENTS –

- ROPA needs to be more prescriptive
- ROPA needs more teeth
- ROPA should contain more “must”, less “shall”
- Consider referendums for deciding Key Development Areas
- Need to qualify what mixed use is

<i>Meeting Date:</i>	Wednesday March 31, 2004
<i>Meeting Location:</i>	Richmond Hill Municipal Offices OMB Room 225 East Beaver Creek Road, Richmond Hill
<i>Public in Attendance:</i>	26
<i>Staff/Councillors in Attendance:</i>	Chris Giles, York Region Planning Sean Hertel, York Region Planning Ben Petch, York Region Planning Laura Atkins-Paul, York Region Planning Dianne Pomeroy, York Region Planning Karen Whitney, York Region Planning Neil Garbe, York Region Planning Regional Councillor David Barrow

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION Heard at this meeting are as follows:

TRANSIT –

- What is the timing of the Rapid Transit Plan?
- What can be done to discourage numerous retail trips?
- Need Park-N-Rides
- Buses are not good enough:
 - People will not ride them
 - Trains are better
 - Transit must be easy for people
- What transit guidelines does the ROPA 43 follow?
- What are some true transit solutions?
- Need sidewalks on Highway 7

DENSITY (2.5 FSI) AND DEVELOPMENT TYPES –

- 2.5 FSI – Issues
 - Must be an end state
 - Only within Key Development Areas
 - Needs be context sensitive
 - Other criteria must apply
- What would the density in regional centres currently be?
 - Response: Regional centres are focal points. Highest densities would be there
- 2.5 FSI dominates other critical factors in the plan
 - Can be interpreted in many different ways
 - Maybe 2.5 should not be there
 - 2.5 can not be used in isolation from other criteria
 - What does compact development mean?
- Transition/Buffer zones between high and low density developments?
 - Is it site specific?
 - Response: should be implemented through Secondary Plans
- What is the current FSI in RH?
- What is it now along corridors?
 - Response: Varies
- Is 2.5 FSI Site Specific?
 - Response: It is a target that not all sites will reach (some will be over, some under)
- Do not want the development and density to add to congestion

POLICY –

- When will ROPA 43 be in place in a perfect world?
 - Need transit in place
 - Mix of uses is key
- How do you stay ahead of changing retail formats?
 - Balance between policies and market forces

- How do residents ensure that policies are implemented?
- Need to keep policies current
 - How can this be done with limited resources?

ROPA 43 –

- What are the exact boundaries of the Regional Centres?
- What is the boundary of the corridor?
 - Response: Depends on local context
- Need to highlight changes in ROPA since last version
- Do we have OMB buy in on the ROPA 43?
- What happens in the interim (time before ROPA 43 is adopted)?
 - Seems to be a basic mistrust in how the Region approaches development applications
- What are ROPA's teeth?
- Need an ongoing planning forum

<i>Meeting Date:</i>	Wednesday March 3, 2004
<i>Meeting Location:</i>	Woodbridge Pool & Memorial Arena Memorial Hall 5020 Highway 7, Vaughan
<i>Public in Attendance:</i>	15
<i>Staff in Attendance:</i>	Rob Gibson, Vaughan Planning Chris Giles, York Region Planning Sean Hertel, York Region Planning Ben Petch, York Region Planning Leigh Anne Wiseman, York Region Planning Karen Whitney, York Region Planning John Waller, York Region Planning

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION Heard at this meeting are as follows:

CENTRES + CORRIDORS –

- Clarification needed on whether same development principles apply to both centres and corridors
- Need to focus intensification on corridors rather than just growing out into farmland
- General concern about implementation along the whole corridor regarding urban design and density – this might not be possible
- Concern that creating pedestrian oriented areas will increase congestion levels (e.g. take away traffic lanes)
- Explanation is needed to address what happens in areas that are not identified as Key Development Areas
- More transit-supportive development is needed in centres and corridors, not less
- Implications on traffic and congestion must be identified (e.g. where will truck traffic be redirected?)
- Clarification needed as to why other centres are not included in emerging areas (e.g. Carrville)

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS – WHAT WE HEARD

- Public needs to be informed about what the City and Region are doing to attract centres and corridors development (e.g. economic development and marketing strategies)

URBAN DESIGN –

- More attention must be given in new development to good design
- Must tailor design policies for specific areas – enhance the character of the community
- Planners need to be vigilant and stick to policies in order to achieve good design
- Design needs to promote safety and be appropriate for all seasons (e.g. shelter from rain)
- Design must recognize winter conditions especially (i.e. icicles and ice)
- Pedestrian supportive design along Highway 7 is needed
- Streetscaping is very important and must incorporate ALL components – trees, boulevards, good building design and pedestrian areas
- Landscaping is a key requirement when buildings are oriented to the street
- Pedestrian safety needs to be incorporated into the design process
- Sun and shadow impacts need to be addressed in design process
- Public greenspace needs to be preserved and enhanced within centers and corridors

POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION –

- Development should promote environmental sustainability
- Maintain greenspaces rather than cash-in-lieu – amenity areas and green areas are important
- Comprehensive planning of greenspace is important – should be able to walk to parks (e.g. provide linkages between buildings and park system)
- Context of local areas needs to be considered – respect and enhance existing character
- Respect historic areas – retaining past is important (e.g. Old Woodbridge)
- Concerned that zero-lot-lines (i.e. building up to the street) will mean no landscaping
- Need to get the message and policies out in new, growing communities

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS – WHAT WE HEARD

- Community sustainability is important – need residential and employment opportunities
– get Vaughan residents on buses
- Prevent less desirable, marginal uses (e.g. under-utilized plazas)
- Density bonusing should be limited
- Principles need to be applied and implemented in other areas, in addition to the Regional Centres
- Need planning policies (i.e. secondary plans) in place before development can occur

NEXT STEPS –

- Get the word out – change in perception is needed in order to get people on board
- Communication and consultation is needed with other stakeholders – approach retailers and office developers about locating in Regional Centres
- Public and private partnerships must be defined – set out roles and responsibilities
- Private sector involvement and consultation is required – need to make centres and corridors pay for themselves and identify financial tools
- Public leadership through investment is key (both carrots and sticks)
- Clarify whether individual Vaughan urban design studies apply to this work