

Public gets input to next phase of Mayfield West

By Bill Rea

The second phase of Mayfield West will be developed in the next couple of years, and there are already the expected calls for recreation facilities, as well as housing provisions for seniors.

The eventual development will require an amendment to Caledon's Official Plan, and the required public information meeting on that attracted about 50 people last Wednesday night.

The lands in question take up about 207 hectares at Lots 18 to 20, Concessions 1 and 2 in West Chinguacousy. The site has an irregular shape, but is generally between Etobicoke Creek and Mayfield Road, Hurontario Street and Chinguacousy Road.

The purpose of the Official Plan amendment is aimed at establishing goals, objectives and policies to govern development of the lands.

Tim Manley, senior development planner with the Town, said the proposed plan addressed the population and employment growth forecasts that were set out in 2008, resulting in an anticipated 13,800 jobs and residents. As well, he said there are environmental areas on the site that will not be developed.

The Official Plan currently designates the area as mainly prime agricultural land. The proposal calls for a wide variety of uses, including residential, with densities ranging from low to high. There are also provisions for prestige industrial, commercial, live-work units, institutional (school), recreation and open space. The plan is also transit oriented.

Manley said the result will be a "really great new community."

There was some enthusiasm from members of the public at the meeting.

"I love the concept," declared Bolton resident Sherry Brioschi, who added she was please provisions for cyclists had been included. She did say there are still some parking issues, but she was confident they could be sorted out.

Brioschi did observed there are train tracks running through the site.

Manley told her it's a lightly used line, operated by the Orangeville Railway Development Corporation for goods movement. There's maybe one trip per day. He also said the line is used scenic trips.

Barochi also wondered about fire services.

Manley said primary responses will be from the fire hall in Valleywood. Pending the development of more east-west roads, trucks will get there along Mayfield Road, then head north along McLaughlin Road, Chinguacousy or any of the access roads that will head into the community.

Manley had also said there are plans for a transit hub not far from Hurontario Street.

Ken Bokor of SouthFields Village wondered if that area will be linked to the hub.

Manley said the proposal is for the hub to operate on three levels of transit; as a logical extension for Brampton Transit bus service, it's close enough to the highway 410 extension to be serviced by GO Transit operating out of Orangeville, and as a connection with the Metrolinx service running along Highway 10 through Mississauga and Brampton.

He added he can't comment on possible connections with SouthFields, although he said nothing in the plan would rule them out.

Snelgrove resident Brian Smith was concerned about traffic flows to and from the lands to be developed to the north, using Robertson Davies Drive.

Transportation consultant William O'Brien of Paradigm Transportation Solutions Ltd. said that has been studied in some detail. He observed there is always the chance that the road will be used as a short cut, but it will be a two-lane, local collector road, "not a terribly attractive route for flow-through traffic.

Brampton Flying Club Vice-President Sam Meandro wondered how long it will be before shovels are in the ground.

"I get this question a lot," Manley commented.

Realistically, he said they're hoping to have the Official Plan amendment before council this summer. If things go smoothly, there should be some servicing activity going on in either 2016 or '17.

Meandro also asked if there were any provisions in the proposal for a hotel or motel. Manley said the commercial centre west of Hurontario Street would be a great place for such an establishment, assuming the market is there.

Snelgrove resident Karen Kheder was concerned about woodlots to the north. Manley assured her they will be protected.

He added he's walked those woods and seen a lot of garbage and other stuff that shouldn't be there.

"We'll leave those woodlots better than they are today," he promised.

Councillor Annette Groves commented on the desire for housing for seniors.

Manley said that there have been discussions with property owners to set aside land for such use, adding they seem to be amenable

to looking into it. Lands at the northern part of the site could be a good place for a development comparable to River's Edge in Bolton, which might be attractive to seniors. There are also plans for a recreation facility just to the south, and well as a high school, meaning there would be chances for interaction.

"I think you've done an excellent job," Councillor Gord McClure told Manley. "I think we'll all be proud of this."

Councillor Barb Shaughnessy agreed housing for seniors is "desperately needed."

She added developers always say will have something for seniors and aging in place, but those promises always seem to disappear when the final plans are presented. She wondered if such provisions could be made a condition of development.

Manley said staff has asked that land be set aside for aging in place, and if there's a commitment, he said it would be guaranteed. He didn't know if anything could be guaranteed, but there's nothing in the proposal that would prevent it.

"The plan provides the opportunity," he said, adding that all that's needed is a developer to make it happen.

Mayor Allan Thompson couldn't provide many details, but he did say there's been negotiations with a firm that builds seniors' communities.

Groves suggested entering into a memorandum of understanding with developers, which would be a legal document.

Councillor Jennifer Innis observed the residents currently living nearby wonder what the timelines will be for the actual construction.

Manley said construction could be starting in 2017, but exactly how long it will last will depend a lot on the market.

The residential component will include about 3,500 units, and the proposal calls for up to 500 building permits to be issued annually, so that will be completed in 2024 at the earliest. Manley added facilities like schools, recreation and highway commercial will be more governed by the market. When it comes to time lines for recreation facilities, he told Innis the Parks and Recreation department will have to deal with that.

Groves suggested developers be approached to cover the up-front costs for the recreation facilities. She said there are mechanisms in place for them to be reimbursed in Brampton and Mississauga.

McClure asked if any thought had been given to using the rail line for commuting; possibly establishing a GO station there.

Manley told him it had been studied early on, but it's not likely to happen.

Thompson pointed to the need for more parkland on the site. He also had some problems with limiting things to 500 building permits per year. More permits would get parks in place faster, along with the development charge revenue.

Manley commented the draft of the Official Plan amendment takes into account other areas of town seeing development. They are looking at steady, methodical growth throughout the municipality to reach the 2031 growth target levels. He added as other areas grow out over the years, it might be possible to have faster development on these lands.