

Two options still on table for Bolton expansion

By Bill Rea

The Town will be examining two possible options in the next phase of the Bolton Residential Expansion Study.

Town councillors Tuesday unanimously accepted the recommendation of Town staff to consider the option suggested by consultants, as well as one of two options on the north hill of the village.

Bolton has to grow by 190 hectares, with the expansion being part of the Town's compliance with the Province's growth plan. The growth expected in Caledon is going to be aimed mainly at Caledon East, Mayfield West and Bolton, meaning the extra land in Bolton needs to be set aside.

Six options were examined for some months as to where this expansion area could go, and Nick McDonald of Meridian Planning last month recommended an area on Humber Station Road, between the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks and The Gore Road, north of King Street, also known as Go Station Focus option. But there were several comments that one of the two options on the north hill should be considered. In the end, staff also recommended an option that straddles Highway 50, also known as North Hill West. Staff had also recommended the study of two small rounding-out areas; one 18-hectare site on the northwest corner of King Street and Duffy's Lane, and the other on the west side of Highway 50, opposite Columbia Way. Council approved an amendment to the recommendation to also include a piece of land on Chickadee Lane, south of King Street.

Ohi Izerein, a senior policy planner with the Town, told councillors the recommendations were based on careful consideration by staff and the consultants.

There was still some debate about which of the two recommended options is the best.

Councillor Allan Thompson observed the GO Station Focus is better oriented to the nearby industrial area, as well as the sports facility being developed at Johnston Park to the west.

He also suggested there be some form of gateway to Bolton from the west being established, adding that option could be combined is some of the lands from the option directly to the south.

Councillor Richard Whitehead wanted to make sure the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) are involved, pointing out there are a number of watershed issues.

Councillor Gord McClure agreed the GO Station Focus option would be cheaper. He added he believed the community should spread east-west, as opposed to north-south, also pointing out that option would be closer to the proposed GO station, as well as Johnston Park.

Councillor Doug Beffort wondered about the economic impact of the study, asking where people would shop, depending on which option is eventually adopted. He said he didn't want to see a situation in which people shop elsewhere.

Councillor Nick deBoer favoured including the Chickadee lands in the study, arguing it would make sense once the Bolton Arterial Road (BAR) network is completed.

Councillor Rob Mezzapelli observed that the earlier parts of the study didn't look very closely at the rounding-out areas, and he said that should happen in the coming phase. For example, he wondered about infrastructure issues with the Duffy's Lane site being so far away from the north hill.