

Western option seems favoured in Bolton Residential Expansion

By Bill Rea

The Town is still seriously looking at two possible options for the planned expansion of Bolton, and the western alternative seems to have the edge.

Consultants updated Caledon councillors on the latest progress on the Bolton Residential Expansion Study, and while no decisions has been made, they indicated the option, known as Option 3 or Go Station Focus, seems the more attractive of the two on a couple of levels.

This was one of six options considered, and it was the one favoured by the consultants in their recommendation last year. The lands are on Humber Station Road, between the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks and The Gore Road, north of King Street.

At the same time last summer, councillors also voted to continue looking at one of the options on the village's north hill, known as Option 1.

The consultants told councillors there are no significant differences between the two options from an environmental perspective. But in terms of servicing and transportation, Option 3 had advantages.

Jim Dougan of Dougan and Associates addressed the natural heritage issues.

Commenting on Option 1, he said there are no provincially significant wetlands (PSW) in the area, adding there a small wetland in fields west of Highway 50 and other small wetlands in a significant woodlot that is part of the Provincial Greenbelt. He also said these lands are confined a lot by the Greenbelt.

Referring to Option 3, Dougan said the Greenbelt is not as big a factor. He added there are some streams and small wetlands. One of the streams is a tributary that performs a floodplain function.

Nick McDonald of Meridian Planning said more work is required in the creation of a natural heritage system, which is required by Peel Region. But he didn't think there would be any surprises.

'We feel very confident that we're going to be able to meet the Region of Peel's requirement,' he commented.

Dougan told Councillor Rob Mezzapelli they have been looking 120 metres beyond the boundaries of the two options. He added the boundaries of the Greenbelt are fairly conservative.

Chris Hamel of BluePlan Engineering Consultants Limited, spoke on preferred strategies for water and wastewater servicing for the two options.

He said the water servicing costs of installing the infrastructure for Option 1 would be about \$39 million, yet only about \$35 million for Option 3. The wastewater cost for Option 1 would be about \$34 million, and just \$11 million for Option 3.

Councillor Richard Whitehead stressed the need for people to understand these figures are development charge issues, not taxpayer issues. He said it's the development industry that will pay.

Philip Grubb of Paradigm Transportation Solutions, went through the number of road widenings that would likely be deemed necessary from the two options.

For Option 1, he said the northwest portion of the Bolton Arterial Road (BAR) would need to be four lanes. He also said six-lane sections would be indicated for parts of Coleraine Drive and Queen Street south of King Street, and King Street and Mayfield Road would have to be widened to four lanes.

Several councillors wondered how a widening of Queen Street would be accomplished. McDonald said the suggestions were based on the results of traffic studies, and not likely to become reality. Whitehead pointed out the heavy truck traffic will be off that street as soon as the BAR is finished.

For Option 3, Grubb said Mayfield and King would need to be widened to four lanes, and there would be widenings of The Gore Road from King to Mayfield and Humber Station Road from King to Healey Road.

There are also two rail crossings that come into play, across Coleraine and King. Grubb said both options would trigger grade separations (either overpass or underpass) at the King crossing. A grade separation at Coleraine would only be triggered by Option 1.

Grubb said either option would see about 70 per cent of the resulting commuter traffic heading south and west. Since Option 3 is the more southern of the two, he said that would mean less gas consumption, fewer emissions and reduced travel times.

Grubb told Whitehead it wouldn't be necessary to widen Humber Station south of Healey because a lot of the southbound traffic would turn there to get to the nearby employment lands or head toward Mayfield West.

He also told Councillor Nick deBoer that wouldn't result in enough traffic to justify widening Healey.

Mezzapelli said he was surprised there wasn't more call for grade separation on Coleraine. He said one of the things they're looking

for is efficient movement of traffic, and that rail crossing is seen as a problem.