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URA Member Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2016

Pan Am Centre

URA Directors:

Peter Miasek, Alick Siu, Gene Genin, Donna Day, Reid McAlpine, Adam Poon, Keing Li, Tom Davies, Kanthini Rajakanthan, Karen Lui

Elected Officials:

Councillors: Don Hamilton (Ward 3)

Regional Councillors: Joe Li, Jim Jones and Nirmala Armstrong

Mayor: Frank Scarpitti

Guests:

Lorenzo Catuzza, Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation

Attendance: Approximately 50 members and guests

1. President's Introduction

The meeting was called to order by URA President, Alick Siu, at 7:05 PM. Alick welcomed members, elected officials and special guests.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Members reviewed the November 2, 2015 meeting minutes. No revisions were requested.

Motion: That the November 2nd meeting report be approved.

Moved by: Tom Davies

Seconded by: Doug Croft

Motion Carried

3. Treasurer's Report

Donna Day advised that the 2015 total revenue from membership fees was \$1,564. Expenses came to \$2,155. The Heritage Fund balance was \$1,884 while the total end of the year balance was \$11,998. This represented a \$665 reduction as compared to 2014. The reduction was attributed to lower membership renewals and higher promotional expenses.

4. Membership Report

Donna informed meeting attendees that 24% of the 280 households on the membership list were in good standing. The 66 households represented a 10% increase over the December 2015 subscriber count. The new brochure and new website were also presented.

5. Committee Reports & Focus Topics

5.1 Main Street Vision Report

Reid confirmed that a new advisory committee was approved by City Council and that recruitment for five community members was underway. Meetings with the TRCA and York Region School Board were scheduled to discuss parking options. However, so far there has been little progress engaging property owners.

A \$400,000 budget request to construct Main St. washrooms came up at City Council, however, the request was deferred since designs were not in place. As a result, \$35,000 for design work was added to the 2016-17 budget.

5.2 Toogood Pond Skating

Reid confirmed that the City was not maintaining the ice, but the public were permitted to skate at their own risk. In an attempt to come up with an ice maintenance solution, Council is establishing a working group.

5.3 Fred Varley Drive Development

Reid advised that demolition of the Fred Varley plaza will be starting in February to make way for a condo. During the 24-month construction period Eureka Street is being considered as an access route for site traffic. A lesson from this brown-field development is the difficulty preserving mature trees. The building setbacks are too small to maintain the mature trees located on the property perimeter. The tree loss will be especially pronounced along Station Lane since it backs onto the development.

5.4 Unionville Festival Planning

As chair of the Unionville Festival Committee, Reid is looking to recruit committee members to participate in festival planning. The first meeting was scheduled for January 27, 2016.

5.5 Zoning By-Law Review

URA President, Alick Siu presented a summary of pending by-law changes. As part of its modernization, the City of Markham is conducting a comprehensive update of zoning by-laws. The Ontario Planning Act requires municipalities to review and update zoning by-laws within three years of a new Official Plan. Unless OMB appeals are required, the City plans to have the updates completed in 2016.

5.6 York University

Alick advised that the Markham York University development was confirming funding status. Once funding is confirmed, Phase 1 design work is expected to start in April 2016. Regional Councillor, Nirmala Armstrong confirmed that she is co-chairing an "open to the public" City committee to work with York University during the project.

5.7 Highway 7 Developments

Peter confirmed that Times Development is requesting a reduction in density for its Village Parkway and Highway 7 property. Markham has approved the request and has sent it to York Region for approval since the changes do not comply with current zoning by-laws. Other developers working on Highway 7 properties are also asking for reduced density adjustments.

In addition to 404 on-ramp at Highway 7 extension, Peter also reviewed the proposed Highway 404 crossings planned for stretch between Highway 7 and Major Makenzie.

5.8 GO Train Anti-Horn

Peter advised that City engineering is scheduled to present a status update on costs and the construction schedule for the GO train crossing pedestrian gate to Council imminently.

5.9 Unionville Home Society Redevelopment

Regarding the UHS redevelopment, Peter confirmed that Minto was aggressively redeveloping the 19-acre property in two phases. The scope of phase 1 is the addition of 100 long term care units by Unionville and a 4 to 12 story building for seniors by Housing York with 250 rent-g geared-to-income apartments. Phase 2 is the construction of 175 – 215 townhomes by Minto. Construction is scheduled to start in 2018. URA members, Keing Li and Adam Poon, will be following the development.

6. Council Updates

Regional Councillor Joe Li advised that the Region is planning to lift all traffic infiltration restrictions across the region. This means that signs typically restricting turns onto side streets will be removed.

In addition to thanking URA members for ongoing feedback, Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong, confirmed that a motion has been filed to have the York Region Chair position be filled by election rather than committee nomination.

Ward 3 Councillor, Don Hamilton advised that after five years of legal dispute the 160 Main St. property owner lost final appeal to maintain the back yard parking pad and is required to restore the back yard by the end of June 2016.

Regional Councillor Jim Jones' update included the pending Buttonville and OMB dispute settlement and PowerStream's feasibility study on burying high voltage lines. The burying of powerlines would free up considerable tracks of land for development.

7. New Business

None.

8. Next Meeting

The next URA meeting is scheduled for 7:00 PM, Monday February 1, 2016 at Stiver Mill.

9. Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM

10. Guest Speakers

Lorenzo Catuzza – Director, York Region, Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation presented a brief update on the recently released Crombie Report – a 10-year review of the Greenbelt. Lorenzo is scheduled to provide a more thorough update at the February or March URA meeting.

In addition to providing an update on Markham's 2016 priorities, Markham City Mayor Frank Scarpitti, addressed URA-specific topics such as Main St Unionville revitalization and the zoning by-law update project.