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URA Member Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2016

Pan Am Centre

URA Directors:

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

Elected Officials:

Councillors: Don Hamilton (Ward 3)

Guests:

Tamas Hartel, York Region

Attendance: Approximately 20 members and guests

1. President's Introduction

The meeting was called to order by URA Director, Reid McAlpine, at 7:05 PM. Reid welcomed members, elected officials and special guests.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Members reviewed the February 2, 2016 meeting minutes.

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

Moved by: Wes Rowe

Seconded by: Peter Miasek

Motion Carried

3. Membership Report

Donna reported that since January 2016, two households joined the URA (280 vs 282). However, over the same period, paid memberships grew from 38 to 86.

4. Treasurer's Report

Donna advised that since the August 2015 fiscal year-end the only new expenses incurred were for meeting rooms, advertising and newsletter printing.

5. Committee Reports & Focus Topics

5.1 Hughes/Briarwood Farm Development

Peter confirmed that a 13 single-family home development application, for the 5-acre property (known as Hughes or Briarwood Farm), is working its way through the City approval process. At this time, the developer is planning to clear-cut all the trees and move the original farmhouse to the edge of the property. At the March 3rd, public input meeting the attending residents asked city planners to provide an arborist report on the feasibility of retaining some of the mature trees.

5.2 Main St. Vision Plan

No updates.

5.3 Development Down-Zoning Applications

Reid confirmed that at a recent region-level development meeting, planning staff advised against the applications for down-zoning. A region-level decision is pending.

5.4 GO-Train Horn Cessation

Reid reiterated that pedestrian barriers, needed for GO-train horn cessation, were included in the City budget and that Markham-wide implementation was scheduled for completion in 2018.

5.5 Home Society Redevelopment

Peter confirmed that Minto was assuming full responsibility for the entire development - its own and the Home Society portion. Site plan completion is scheduled for April-May 2016. Because of the resident engagement issues with the Varley Plaza development, Minto is expected to have a more consultative process.

5.6 York Downs Development

Reid advised that an Economist newspaper article designed York Downs as a single-family home development.

6. Council Updates

Councillor Don Hamilton confirmed that one of the main objectives of the By-law Update Project is to address rooming homes and basements apartments. The increasing number of complaints related to this issue and lack of regulations are providing the push for this initiative.

With respect to Markham's stance on OMB reforms, Councillor Hamilton advised that a region-wide Councillor advisory team is working on proposing reforms. To date, the advisory team has decided to endorse Bill 73 - The Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015.

7. New Business

Unionville Festival planning meeting is scheduled for March 23rd. The committee is looking for volunteers and funds.

8. Next Meeting

The next URA meeting is scheduled for 7:00 PM, Monday April 4, 2016. Tentative location is the Pan Am Centre.

9. Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM

10. Guest Speaker

Tamas Hartel – Senior Transportation Planner for the York Region provided an extensive presentation on the recently updated "York Region Transportation Plan". Due changes in population growth forecasts, the 2002 Master Transportation Plan, last updated in 2009, is in the midst of another revision.