



*Dundas Works Roundtable #9: Wentworth Lodge Surplus Land
Tuesday October 29, 2019 Salvation Army, Dundas 7-9pm
Meeting Minutes Rev.1 - Nov 7th, 2019 mc*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. What neighbourhood and community needs could be fulfilled on the Wentworth Lodge lands?

- a) Accessible housing, affordable housing, assisted living housing are all needed. Housing needed for young families, as well as seniors.
- b) We must think about environmental needs. This would include the need to consider traffic changes with more living space (seniors would increase traffic less than young families). Traffic changes should be shared among the neighbourhood.
- c) Anything there must fit in with the existing neighbourhood. So nothing more than the 3 levels of Sherwood Rise apartments
- d) Seniors is a big need, as is housing for young families (who will need 1+bedrooms)
- e) Can we support the local school, currently full but may be threatened in the future. We don't want to be a "silver city"
- f) Consider a Co-op model to provide rental and/or ownership housing.
- g) There could/should be an easy link to the rail trail
- h) Possibly a Seniors Centre attached. Or a Daycare?
- i) Alternative: could we have this remain as green space? What about a teaching garden or permaculture like at the McQuesten Farm. Dog park or just plain park? This is a "pocket neighbourhood", already suffering from loss of its grocery store and the new Beverly Tire store. It should not lose its green space as well.
- j) Alternative: maybe offer the land back to the haudenosaunee in the spirit of reconciliation.

2. What can we do as citizens to advance our ideas for how public lands are re-purposed?

- a) Delegations to City Council, perhaps go right to Planning Department?
- b) Connect through social media to others in Dundas (like young mothers)
- c) Could we have a public committee to take charge of the process?
- d) The 400-ft. Radius rule is not adequate: these are issues that affect the wider community.
- e) We could reach out to the rest of the Hamilton Community as well: this issue has parallels other places in the City.
- f) There are some influential people who live in this neighbourhood. Perhaps they would help us.
- g) Finally, we could all step back and take a deep breath. We need more time to arrive at a satisfactory solution, There does not need to be a rush here.

Please see the following notes from each table for additional details.

Introduction by Bob James

Given that we are talking about land uses this evening, it is particularly appropriate to acknowledge our First Nations peoples history. We are now on, and are going to be talking about, territory that is the ancestral lands of the AnishInaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples, and our place here is under the auspices of the Dish with one Spoon wampum.

Welcome to our ninth Roundtable, hosted by Dundas Works. We will be sharing ideas on the future development of one of (if not the) last piece of public land in Dundas available for development: the Wentworth Lodge lands. Historically, this land was part of the allotment for Wentworth Lodge, previously owned and run by the Town of Dundas. It has been used in the past to grow food for Wentworth Lodge, but this hasn't happened in many years. The land remains "fallow". Now the City of Hamilton has declared this 3.2 acre parcel of land surplus, so it will be developed in some form.

Our City Councillor has held four meetings with those neighbours within the mandated 400-foot radius of the land. There are no minutes available publicly for these meetings, so we do not know what transpired. However, I would like to emphasize that this meeting is not in competition with the Councillor's meeting. Hopefully, we will work towards an understanding of what to do with the land, and be able to share it collegially with the City.

So who is Dundas Works, and why do we assume we can influence this process?

-we are five individuals (introduce Margot, Michelle, Jim, Tim, and myself), along with the other interested citizens who attend our meetings. The five of us began working together in early 2017, brought together around the effort to maintain Parkside High School in central Dundas. We have held several roundtables over these 2-½ years, and the outcomes are summarized in our pamphlet as well as being fully recorded on our website.

We assume that Dundas has a democratic governing structure. That suggests that people have a real voice in what happens to them. Our roundtables, we hope, enhance democracy by enhancing discussion of important local issues.

This is one of those issues: the Wentworth Lodge lands. To introduce it further, I would like to again introduce Tim Leslie, who is one of the leads for tonight's meeting.

Introduction by Tim Leslie

Thanks for coming to this Roundtable! I welcome those of you who are new and specifically interested in discussing this issue. We dropped off over 150 flyers to the local community to make sure that you would have an opportunity to participate with the whole of the Dundas community on this important issue.

We are holding this Roundtable because we feel that the residents of Dundas should determine how our Public Land is repurposed. This meeting is hosted by a sub group of Dundas Works, called Dundas Builds, that has been meeting to talk about development issues. We are beginning to work on a Citizens' Master plan for Dundas. It will be focused on a vision for preserving the character of Dundas as well as specific ideas for developing Dundas in the future. If you would be interested in participating in this group come and talk to one of us after

How we develop the Wentworth Lodge Lands will give us insight into some of the principles that we can also apply to our Master Plan.

Some of these principles have already been worked out at the previous roundtables. I have given each of you the “Evolving Vision” pamphlet which summarizes the main principles and values that Dundas citizens have already voiced. As it says in the pamphlet, this is a living/evolving document, and we welcome all citizens of Dundas to help write it.

Some of the principles in the vision apply here.

Public Places -Public places need to stay in Public Hands -Dundas Residents should decide how they are developed

Education -Keep walkable schools in the heart of our neighbourhoods (In order to do that we need young families in the proximity of our schools)

Housing Affordability - A Mix of Home ownership and rental housing is needed for all ages and incomes(including first time home buyers) - The planning definition of affordable housing refers to the proportion of ones’ annual income that goes to housing costs....either renting or buying.(usually 30%). This definition includes people of any age and stage.....from young people who can’t afford to live in Dundas, to seniors who want to live independently but can’t afford to stay in their community.

Democracy -We need regular, ongoing community forums (we need open meetings to discuss the issues that are important to us)

As we work tonight, in smaller groups, about how we want the Wentworth Lodge Lands to be developed, we should be mindful of some of the city’s desires for this property. They have mentioned that this land could be used to develop affordable housing. But who that serves and how it looks should be up to us. We need to think of the proximity of Dundana School and how this site could help support its relevance in the future. The city said that the immediate neighbours concerns are very important, and we have to determine a plan that is in keeping with the character of the existing community and fulfills some of the City’s goals for the property.

We also need to be aware of the broader context of this piece of public land. It would be wonderful for the buildings that we propose to embrace and complement the rail trail that borders the south side of the property; this trail connects residents and us all to a great network of pedestrian and cycling routes in the Dundas Valley.

We are trying to come up with some ideas and principles that we can all consent to. With this in mind, our goal would be to come up with a design that fits in with the character of the local neighbourhood and enhances it...If we can come together around a plan that the community backs, it would be much harder for the City to turn us down.

NOTES FROM TABLES

TABLE 1: Chris, Lynden Ave? resident . Richard, 50 year Dundas resident who used to live in the neighbourhood. Lindsay, Hillside Ave resident. Grew up in Dundas and just moved back. Arlene, long time neighbour. Scott M, Dundas resident. Jeanne N, Dundas resident and notetaker. Michelle C, Dundas resident and moderator.

General:

- about 32 people in attendance - 4 tables
- a mix of direct neighbours and residents from the greater Dundas area. 50/50?
- many passionate neighbours, good moderating enhanced the conversations.

Summary:

1. The focus was on housing that is affordable for young families, retaining greenspace, existing traffic issues on the narrow neighbourhood streets that would be exacerbated by additional development. Emphasis on safe walkable streets, preserving character of the neighbourhood and enhancing it through creative design.
2. Better communication between citizens, City planners, developers and other interest groups is required.

1. What neighbourhood and community needs could be fulfilled on the Wentworth Lodge Lands?

- Michelle was asked if anyone attended the Town Hall meeting on Thursday and she showed the group the plan presented by the City - a road connection from Woodward Ave to Rogers Rd, 8 single houses on the west side of Woodward, a 179 bed 4 story retirement residence behind the houses.
- C: housing, recreational space, conservation lands? less than 8 houses on Woodward would be better, higher density = worse traffic
- R: although Dundas is an aging population we need young families, especially so close to Dundana, the 8 houses on Woodward would act as a buffer to a larger complex behind them and keep a more consistent density to the neighbourhood. A high rise changes the character/ nature of the Rail trail behind it. Cannot just look at a map and understand the topography and feel.
- L: safe streets, walkability and small community schools are important, establish green spaces, dog parks, space for families, young family homes. 8 houses on the extension of Woodward does not mimic the neighbourhood. Many are small bungalows, new homes would not look like this. What does lower cost housing do to property values of existing homes. Old pipes on Woodward would need replacement and could not handle additional development.
- A: park, dog park. There are traffic issues now, do not want more or heavier traffic. There are no sidewalks in this neighbourhood and parking on one side of the street. There is a hill crest at Rowanwood and Hillside so drivers approaching the crest cannot see traffic beyond which can be dangerous if people driving too fast, the hill itself creates speed. Many tenants live in existing houses. These are very narrow streets. Garbage trucks have to back up Woodward because they cannot turn around!
- S: do not want Dundas to become a senior's ghetto, need young families. Design proposal needs to improve. Make no new road connections, this will disperse traffic instead of funneling it
- J: we need housing that is more affordable (less than \$1 million), need an integrated design such as a mews. 1 bedroom units do not work for young families. Need a creative architect designing specifically for that space/ topography.
- M: email from William O. suggested the lands be returned to the Haudenosaunee peoples as part of reconciliation, M asked neighbours to clarify existing traffic issues. Post meeting M feels a mix of homes for all ages and incomes as gentle intensification would be suitable for this neighbourhood, also like the idea of a large scale community food gardens.

2. What can we do as citizens to advance our ideas for how public lands are re-purposed?

- R: communication is lacking, better two way communication between councillor and citizens, give citizens an opportunity for comment. 400 ft radius is not enough in this case, most of which encompasses Sherwood Place and Wentworth Lodge but not the true neighbourhood.
- S: talk directly to planning department, speak one on one with councillor. Need to develop real ideas worth advancing. Citizens want to be heard by developers. Connect to other interest groups in Hamilton such as the People's Plan for Hamilton.
- J: better communication. Mandatory notice of all public meeting regarding any development via newspaper, email, etc. Sign up with Councillor.

Group Sharing:

- Common sense will prevail, especially when tied to a compelling vision.
- Wendy Duque said that the proposal by the City is a Stillbrook Retirement Residence.

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TABLE 2: Tim Leslie, moderator. Craig & Ann, John, Gary, Valerie & David.

Q1: What neighbourhood and community needs could be fulfilled on the Wentworth Lodge Lands?

Affordable Housing

- Like Affordable Housing for seniors rentals
- If people move into these from the neighbourhood, then houses will come available for young families
- Seniors housing has less traffic than families
- Building should be in scale with Sherwood Place smaller than what's currently proposed
- 3 storeys not 4
- Some might be open to affordable housing for Young Families as a part of this, but not the "Subsidized Housing" model....maybe a co-op or another model that has home ownership rather than rental

Market Value Houses

- If they need house lots on Woodward, they should be large like the ones opposite
- Half the trees on Woodward have been killed already, only 5 or 6 worth saving
- Single family houses should not be subsidized

Access

- Lynden busy already....should figure out how to avoid tracks backing out with beepers
- Woodward narrow....no sidewalks or streetlights...Should open access to Rail Trail for bikes and walking...could take a few more houses but is it the best access to the property?
- Don't connect Woodward a Lyndon....character will change significantly
- Share traffic on three roads....but limited access from Lynden
- Rogers...Could have access to the main building from here

Rail Trail

- Create Rail Trail quiet zone

TABLE 3: Jim Sweetman - notes. Bob James, moderator. Deborah Boyd, Martin Suichies, James Chase, Brian Baetz and Anne. Deborah and James own houses very close to the property in question.

Deborah and James provided a brief summary of last Thursday's meeting. Stillbrook want to put a retirement home (mid-price range) on the property. Our Councillor and Edward James stated that the City of Hamilton's wishes for the property are to a) generate revenue and b) to meet a need. The proposal presented last Thursday was to sell of 8 lots to gain revenue and allow Stillbrook to develop what is left for their retirement home.

Q1. What neighbourhood and community needs could be fulfilled on the Wentworth Lodge Lands?

- James has no "pet plan" for the property but wants to see the land "used well" while fitting within the existing neighbourhood
- Brian considers the property part of a "pocket neighbourhood" which is some history to it. The area has taken some hits recently with the closure of the Metro store in University Plaza and the design of the Beverly Tire building. We should look to the future to determine the best use for the property. So a permaculture garden or tree garden/orchard would leverage the rail trail and create a teaching space for kids and provide for intergenerational contact. He is skeptical of Stillbrook's intentions.
- Anne was disappointed in last Thursday's meeting. It is great to consider affordable housing but we need to use the land for the entire community. We need more "nature" education so we could leverage the rail trail and the nearby conservation authority to the benefit of the entire Dundas community.
- Bob has a bias for affordable housing. He feels the property will likely be used for a "built structure". We need to consider that Dundas could be at risk for closure.
- Deborah would love to see the property used for organic food production. Whatever our vision for the property, it should be consistent with the City of Hamilton's vision for all of Hamilton.
- Jim feels that whatever we do must be done through the lens of climate change. Climate change is real and presents us with a crisis. The Dundas Works Vision pamphlet lists affordable housing - rather, housing that people can afford (purchased and rental) - and public assets remaining in public hands as principles for our vision.
- Martin - We need to attract younger families to Dundas. He loves the idea of an orchard on the property. He asked about using the old fruit trees and orchards that already exist on the conservation lands. He would love to see housing that people could afford.
- James asked if Dundas was becoming a "silver city"?
- Brian said he opposed any "built structure" on the property. There are plenty of other properties in Dundas more suitable for housing. He sees an increase in the intergenerational transfer of assets that is enabling
- younger people to afford to live in Dundas via home ownership or renting. Hamilton's vision says that it wants to be the "best place to raise and child and age gracefully". What if we used the property to build an urban farm like they have done on the McQueston property in east Hamilton? Would McMaster consider purchasing the land to use as green space and implement programming that is being advocated by their Department of Gerontology?

Q2. What can we do as citizens to advance our ideas for how public lands are re-purposed?

- Anne feels we need a public committee to take ownership for the process to
- decide what to do with the property.
- Bob feels it should remain in public hands. We need to take our ideas to both our Councillor and Edward James.
- Jim does not feel there is a great sense of urgency to deal with the property. Therefore, we should request the time for us as citizens to organize, develop alternatives and then present them to our

- Councillor and the City as contributions to the decision-making process.
- Martin feels we should use the press to publicize our efforts and gain community support. He supports working with our Councillor and the City.
- James admits to feeling frustrated and cynical and skeptical that our Councillor or the City want our input.
- Brian suggested we conceive of something noteworthy for Dundas and the City to get broad support across Hamilton, not just in Dundas. We should use the Climate Emergency declared by City Council to build support for our plans and pressure our politicians to consider our ideas. He feels we need to use the Dundas Young Mothers (?) facebook group to build support.
- Jim made the point that while the neighbourhood concerns must be considered, the lands are a public asset for the whole of town of Dundas and ultimately Hamilton. We will need to work together to ensure that NIMBY does not dominate the decision-making process.
- Deborah made the comment that common sense will prevail when the alternatives are aligned with a compelling vision.
- It was also noted that some influential people are residents of the neighbourhood. We need to leverage their influence to gain support with our Councillor and City Council.

Summary

We came up with two proposals that one could say are extremes: 1) if it is a built structure, it should be for housing that people can afford; 2) no built structure and use it for food production and nature teaching. Our alternatives should be developed considering principles and values. At this stage we need to avoid being drawn into discussions about the two alternatives presented at last Thursday's meetings. We need to "stay out of the weeds" at this stage - don't get drawn in to discussions about parking and road closures etc. Basically we need to request a "delay" to enable us as citizens to organize, develop support and propose alternatives. We believe common sense will prevail if we work together cooperatively and respectfully.

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TABLE 4: Gerri - enjoys walking on WL surplus land. Ruth Pickering - Cross St resident, interested in intensification discussions. John - lives in Sherwood Place. Marie - lives in Sherwood Place. Wendi Duque - lives on Woodward. Gordana - lives on Hatfield. Susan - lives on Hatfield, notekeeper. Margot - DW, moderator.

Note: Sherwood Place is 3-storey and 40 units

1. **What neighbourhood and community needs could be fulfilled on the Wentworth Lodge Lands?**

- M-before group roundtable, shared with others that councilor has said at previous meetings that this surplus land "will" be developed and that Dundas does not require more parks, we have enough. Also, DW plans to share summary of RT feedback with councilor and City planners
- G-sheep would be nice! Why wouldn't they just expand WL if there is need for more senior space?
- R-it's good to bring kids and seniors together so perhaps a day care
- J-would prefer seniors bldg - keeping things quiet
- M-kids play in area and use hill for tobogganing - Sherwood residents enjoy having kids around
- W-Dundana School is full (wait list for Fr. Immersion), so bringing in family homes will add to overcrowded school (portables), would prefer it used for seniors and assisted living - big need
- G-gripe: seems decisions are made and we have no say, knows that there is already a plan involving seniors which in principle is good use of property. Make a seniors hub - they will have access to park and trail, but it would be nice if we could really have a say
- S-must include social housing

- M-agree with social housing and assisted living units
- G-cooperative/creative design i.e. porches facing green space, residents sharing common space
- R-seniors, and affordable (forget daycare), assisted care would be interesting
- J-note that HSR bus service on South Street is an asset
- M-Sherwood has 2 out of 40 units that are accessible. There is 10 year wait list to get in there. Problem with process is citywide.
- W-mixed units should be subtle, not obvious, don't make them a ghetto. Current proposal is not bad, but too big
- G/W-current plan is 4 stories by Stillbrook, concern there won't be enough parking for staff, also extra traffic. Multi-generational affordable living: combo of students/young people and seniors
- S-yes, to creative solutions
- G-community gardens would be wonderful
- R-agrees that parking could be a concern but we need to start thinking of alternative transport to more cars/car parking
- J-keep it moderate, not too high or too many units, 179 too much, should be similar to Sherwood Pl
- M-maybe add a seniors centre, also Sherwood has community gardens already
- W-179 units is too big, maybe 100? Assisted living = in between independent and nursing. Would like to see small building, not institutional, parklike, pathways
- G-likes the idea of city leasing land rather than selling it off. Need to be aware that a developer needs to be able to make money
- S-agree with seniors' centre, must be modest and fit in with environment

2. What can we do as citizens to advance our ideas for how public lands are re-purposed?

- R-we could present delegations to city council
- M-use the media
- W-attend meetings like this one
- G-our politicians not serving us well, top-down system, they pay lip service and then go ahead with back room plan. We need to demand that our councilor attends meetings like this one. Maybe go straight to planning dept and bypass politicians
- S-discouraged by system

1. Summary of Comments:

- -senior oriented development
- -affordable
- -creative - multi-generational could work, shared common space
- -in scale with neighbourhood, similar to Sherwood Place density, not institutional
- -include a community centre, possibly a seniors centre

2. Summary of Comments:

- -delegations to City of Ham
- -use media to reach more citizens, newspaper, social media
- -by-pass politicians and go to committee/planners
- -demand councilor attend meetings
- -encourage attendance at meetings like this one