

City Presentation

WENTWORTH LODGE SURPLUS PUBLIC LAND

Monday, November 18th, 2019 6:30 - 7:45pm Dundas Council Chambers

Slide presentation by Edward John, Director of Housing, City of Hamilton (former City planner)
Q&A moderated by Arlene VanderBeek, Councillor Ward 13

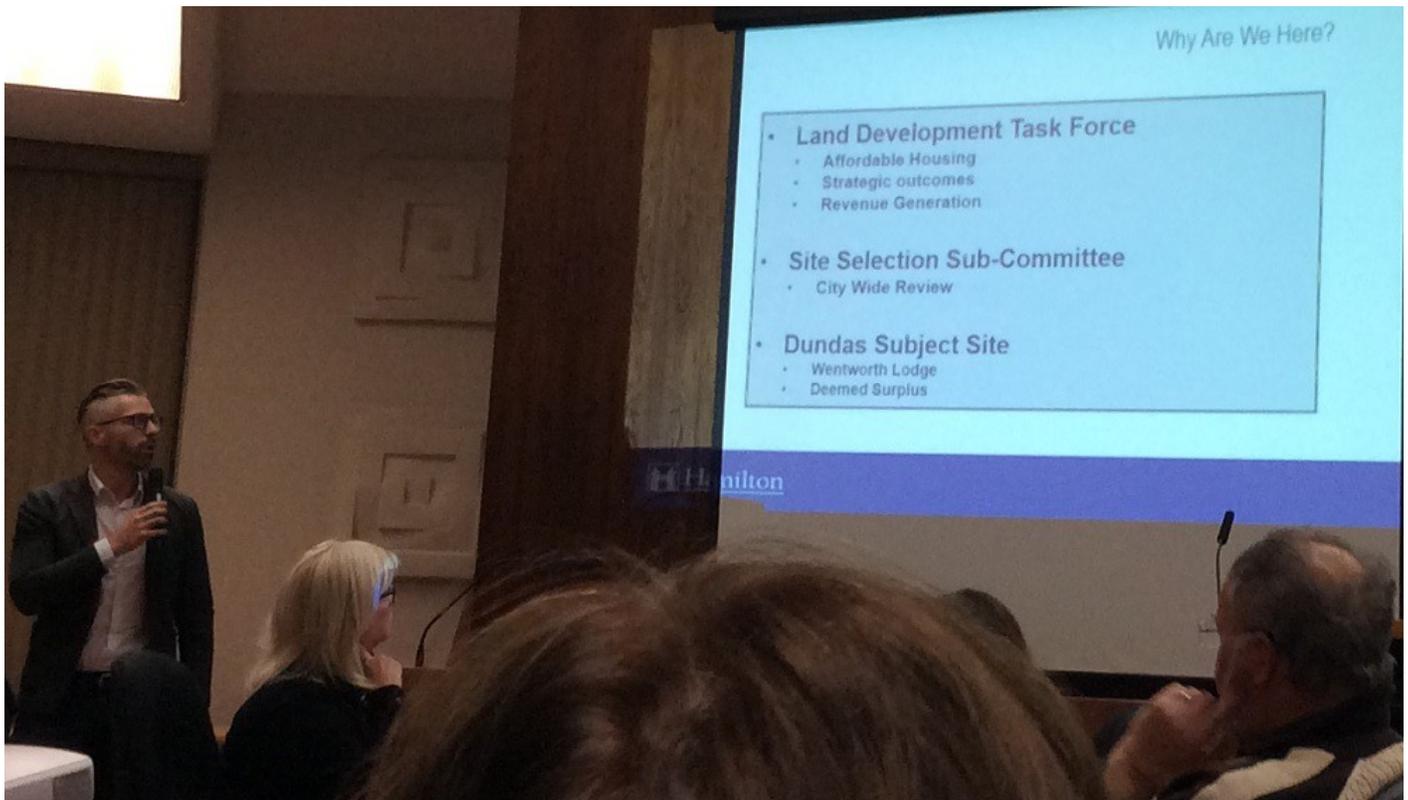
BACKGROUND:

The City has officially declared part of the public land of Wentworth Lodge surplus. Three meetings have been held by the Councillor with neighbours within the 400 ft radius since October 2017. This is the first public meeting held inviting the greater Dundas community.

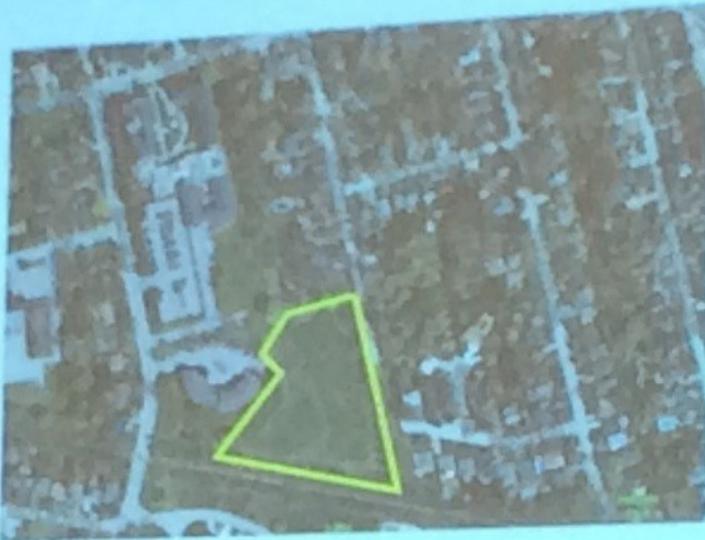
Present: Arlene VanderBeek, Edward John. Some of the Councillor's Advisory Group were present. Greater Dundas Residents including the local neighbours within a 400 ft radius of the property were invited. Craig Campbell of the Dundas Star News. Council Chambers were filled to standing room only.

PRESENTATION SLIDES:

Note Slide 6 was of particularly poor quality so a previous graphic from the City is also attached.



The Subject Lands



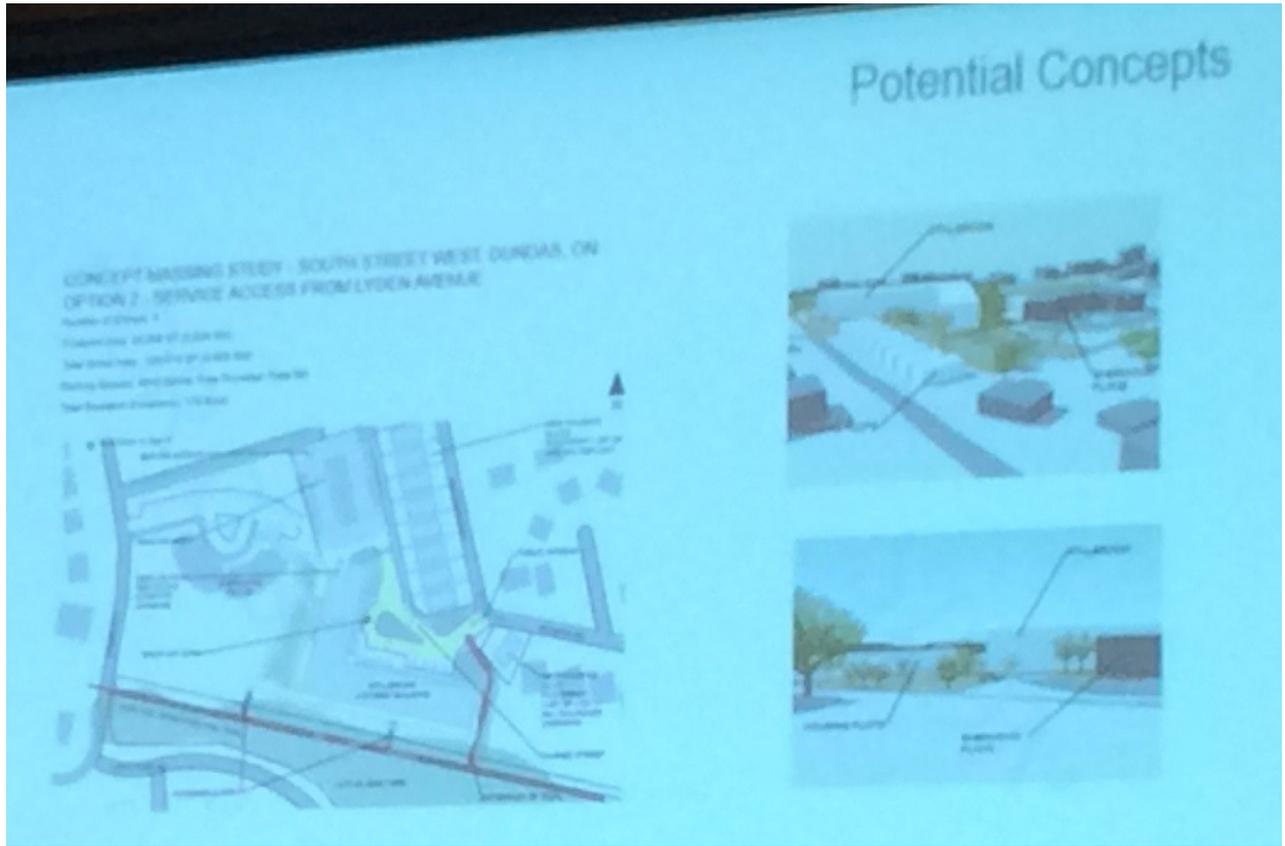
ADDRESS:	41 South Street, Dundas. (Ward 18)
AREA:	3.42 Acres
FRONTAGE:	200 feet
ZONING:	"I3" for Major Institutional

Work To date

- **Local Neighbourhood Discussion**
 - Impacts
 - process
- **Reviewed Potential Ideas and Outcomes**
 - Preferred use
 - Alignment with existing uses
- **Concerns**
 - Transit
 - Traffic/Parking
 - Design
 - Density

- Neighbourhood meetings
 - October 2017
 - March 2018
 - October 2019
- Potential Ideas and Outcomes
 - Not straight market sale
 - Priority on environment
 - Priority affordable housing (particularly seniors)
- Expectations, opportunities
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Scale
 - Character

- Review with the larger Community
 - Combine with any further input
- Determine a potential user
 - Affordable housing geared towards seniors
 - Land disposition process
- Assess planning process
 - Traffic
 - Environmental
 - Design



Summary from Wendie Duque:

We attended a meeting hosted by Arlene Vanderbeek and Edward John at the Dundas Town Hall last evening. Apparently, minutes were not being taken, so I thought I would pass along a summary of what was discussed.

The purpose of last evening's meeting was to gather feedback from the wider community regarding the potential development of the surplus land. It was made clear to us that this is a conceptual plan, there is no application and it is not 'written in stone'.

-Arlene stated that in previous neighbourhood meetings, the neighbours said they would like the vacant public land to be used for affordable housing for seniors. An immediate neighbour spoke to this stating that we were given two choices; affordable housing for seniors or affordable housing for families. We chose the first one, but really we do not like either. We have only been given two choices from the beginning.

-We already have a large institutional building (Wentworth Lodge) and Sherwood Rise (affordable housing for seniors). We do not want more.

-There was a concern about sustainability and the possible failure of this model considering that Stillbrook has zero track record. If it fails (and it very well could), the city would be on the hook since they are leasing the land out. The gain vs the loss needs to be considered.

-A coordinator from Wentworth Lodge was present at the meeting and she expressed her concerns over parking. Lack of parking is already an issue for Wentworth Lodge staff and visitors. Adding another large building equal in size to Wentworth Lodge will be an added burden. She also spoke out about her concern for the residents who are in the secured section of the lodge. Their only link to the outside world is their view of the conservation (rail trail). She feels that having a view of another large institution is not in their best interest.

-Many people had questions about our climate crisis. How does the city currently address this when dealing with development?

-Some posed their concerns about developing Woodward Ave and are specifically concerned about knocking down beautiful old trees thus changing the streetscape. Arlene stated that Woodward would NOT be used as access, Rogers Rd would be the access.

-Dundas residents would like to see another conceptual plan for something else.

-How much is the land worth?

-Is the surplus land only on the market to developers for affordable housing? Why have no other developers come forward?

-How will the city include us in the planning process going forward? What are the next steps?

-The meeting ended with a statement from a Dundas resident who summed up the feeling of the room. The Stillbrook plan is too dense and the opposition in the room tonight is evident. Nobody likes the plan.

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Notes taken by Michelle Chin on Nov 18th, 2019

Presentation on Wentworth Lodge Surplus Public Lands- Nov 18th, Council Chambers 6:30 - 7:45.

- slide presentation by Edward John, Director of Housing, City of Hamilton (former City planner) - MC took pictures of the slides, to be attached to this document
- Q&A moderated by Arlene VanderBeek, Councillor Ward 13

1. How do you assess community needs for this surplus piece of public land?

- there is a Land Development Task Force working on this.

2. Why is surplus land a problem?

- there are significant needs in greater Hamilton that require lands or money to be generated from this resource
- EJ did not seem to think this was the last piece of green public land when asked, but perhaps it is, within the (sub)urban area, not rural?

3. In what way will the climate change emergency, declared by the City, influence the planning process for this property?

- green construction is not very advanced in Hamilton but the city can put conditions on the title when the land is purchased, but conditions reduce the value of the land.
- the city leasing the land is the best way to retain control. It would be a long term lease for the life expectancy of the building, say 60 years.
- EJ: given the surroundings (Rail Trail) it would be important to retain an element of green/ natural.

4. What are the problems or issues that the City is trying to address with this proposal? EJ presented Slide 01.

- EJ said there were 3 objectives being met. I only heard 2. affordable housing and 3. seniors housing, The other I believe is revenue generation (Slide 01)

5. Is the proposal for a multi-level seniors home firm or are other options still possible?

- Stillbrook was an unsolicited bid, the ideas are very preliminary at this point. EJ conceded that Stillbrook does not have track record of physical buildings but he seemed very sure of their business record...?

6. What is the timing on the decisions for this land? asked by Deborah

- no big time rush which is why there is time for public consultation. No strict timelines.

7. Why does the process seem to be covert? Tim spoke of the success of community consultation at the Driving park.

- not covert, just early stages. Trying to engage the public, 3 neighbourhood meetings so far Oct 2017, March 2018, Oct 2019 and greater public mtg Nov 2019.

8. Do you see a need to consult beyond the 400 ft radius when the land is a public piece of property? asked by Deborah.

- needed to have preliminary meetings with the local neighbourhood first.

9. When will a public meeting be planned to discuss the future for this property?

- there were questions that could not be answered at this time because the process is in its preliminary stages. EJ needs to develop some data first to have another meaningful public discussion.

Possible uses:

- this land has been declared surplus to be used for affordable housing or to raise funds for affordable housing elsewhere.
- the land is zoned I3 or major institutional. If the City sells the land at fair market value, it is the opinion of EJ that the highest and best use would be townhouses.
- AV said if it was used for SFDs there would be an issue with utilities?
- EJ: development needs to pay for the infrastructure that it requires, sometimes the City may also see an opportunity to fix repair or replace nearby infrastructure (sewer line, etc.)
- EJ said ideally mixed income neighbourhoods are the target for the City
- EJ: let's get it right
- AV: we need to come up with a "proposal that we can win at council with"
- many neighbours wanted to keep public green space. "Create a forest."
- A rep from WL said some residents who are locked in have only this one view for engagement.
- more parking for WL which is already deficient.
- expand WL to address need for cc beds, but this is a provincial decision.

Notes taken by Margot Carnahan on Nov 18th, 2019

- intro by Arlene VanderBeek, she said that no minutes will be taken
- presentation by Edward John
- question and answer session by both
- slides presented, see slides in Michelle's e-mail
- drawing showed "option 2" of Stillbrook seniors retirement, a model that would have extra care available

Questions/Comments:

*We did not say we wanted seniors development and were not given a choice i.e. green space, single family

*How do you assess community needs?

EJ (I did not catch answer)

*What are cities expectation for timelines?

EJ None, will bring feedback from meeting back to committee

*Would like affordable seniors, low level singles apts and green space

*Can you give example of a Stillbrook development in another community that we can look at for comparison? There are none built so far (per Wendie Duque)

*How does climate change effect planning for this site?

EJ Climate change regulations are slowly emerging into policy, but city does not have yet

*Why can't we start now with net zero building for this land if developed?

EJ Nothing prevents us from being proactive, but can only use existing policy

*Why has process been closed? Why can't community come up with own ideas?

AV "gone to public 3 X, no decisions have been made, nothing cast in stone, there will be more meetings on

this, there will be more!"

*What about other uses like green space - how do we put this idea forth for proposal?

AV Just tell us

*Is this last piece of surplus land in Dundas?

EJ There are probably others

*Are other communities in Ham at same point in this process as Dundas?

EJ ?

*Create a group to assess needs using 2020 vision and possible other uses. Would like to see forestation on that land

*Appreciate opportunity to provide feedback to maximize money for city, should investigate opportunity for best return for the community. What if this development group folds/fails? What about parking, road work needed for road access, which will be expensive? How are these expenses covered?

EJ Use Woodward...

Several options available: sell land and give money to affordable housing elsewhere, or sell land at nominal level and have affordable developer develop, or land lease where city retains ownership so if development fails the city takes it back

*What is land worth?

EJ It depends on land use i.e. can sell at nominal price if developer agrees to make it affordable

*Family Council Chair for WL said that view from WL will be blocked by development and some seniors on that side of WL, who are locked in will have their view taken away. Also parking is already "the pits" and will get worse with big development

*Dire need for affordable housing in Dundas and also need for seniors. Would also be good for affordable housing for families

*Cost for developers decreases as density increases, what is "sweet spot"

EJ Value engineer can assess this

*Once property sold, can city control what owner does?

EJ Yes with zoning standards

*If city sells and developer wants to build 9 stories, who says he should or shouldn't?

City can overturn it

*There is a wide range of suggestion for this land, councilor is 1 of 17, what is pressure to do something with the land?

AV No need to rush along

*Will other companies, other than Stillbrook, be able to make offers?

EJ This bid from Stillbrook was unsolicited, so it stands alone at this point

*If developer plans for 7 stories, and community at large does not agree, since this is public land, can the

community say "no" to developer?

AV No.

*Are there constraints?

EJ Have to secure goal of affordable housing

*Infrastructure will need expensive upgrades

*What is next after this meeting?

EJ Additional engagement and discussion to seek answers to questions arising

*What's better: sell property or maintain ownership?

EJ Ownership is better for affordable model

*Walkability and bikeability should be part of plan

* Financial concerns and environmental concerns

EJ More info needed to answer cost effectiveness

*Is it off the table that land will remain as green space?

EJ "It is surplus and will be developed."

* Wrt to revenue generation, better to control or sell?

EJ Lease is most advantageous to maintain control

* Based on feedback this evening wrt to drawings presented, the response is "no" (opinion of citizen), need some give and take with City to achieve affordable housing

*A few other clarifying questions

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