



*Dundas Works Roundtable #8: **DEVELOPMENT, DEMOCRACY AND CYCLING**
June 11th, 2019 7-9pm, Salvation Army, Dundas. Minutes Rev.0 - June 30th, 2019*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Approximately 25 people of Dundas gathered for a lively discussion of three topics. Bob James acted as moderator.

#1 Development

Bob James and Tim Leslie introduced the new Development Subcommittee of Dundas Works whose focus is on informing Urban Design Guidelines and a Secondary Plan for Dundas, and encourage these interested to attend the subcommittee meetings. A roundtable followed, encouraging discussion of high level concepts and core values specific to development in Dundas.

#2 Democracy

Jim Sweetman summarized "Ten Things We Learned" from a meeting with Councillor VanderBeek and the Community Advisory Group in March 2018. The group then discussed local democracy and positive and proactive ways we as citizens can contribute.

#3 Cycling, Dundas Rides

Michelle Chin updated the group on various cycling infrastructure projects in Dundas that are in the works. Jessie Blake presented two additional projects that require citizens to advocate for them, namely, lanes on Ogilvie from downtown Dundas to the HB Rail Trail and the "Five Schools Project." Other Dundas Rides initiatives were presented. This was followed by a brief Q&A before adjournment.



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DEVELOPMENT

Update by Tim Leslie

An Action Plan, decided in November 2018, "***Develop an Urban Design and Secondary Plan for ALL of Dundas, core and suburbs. - ensure intensification is environmentally and socially sustainable.***"

We formed a subcommittee to begin to look at how we should approach this task. So far we have had two meetings. Anyone who would like to join us would be welcome to come to future meetings. Please let us know and we will add you to our email list.

We began by looking at the scope of the secondary plans that have been done in other areas of the city, it is a guideline that is added to the Hamilton Zoning Bylaw, and concerns additional requirements on building lots that vary depending on where they are. As we have seen with past developer appeals to the province, these "guidelines" can be overturned by applying pressure to the authorities.

We have been told that as of now, the boundaries for the secondary plan will be the areas in the core where they expect "intensification". It will put some additional requirements in place that attempt to maintain the character of the core of Dundas.

We have talked with the city planning office and they have told us that a "secondary plan for Dundas" is a low priority item, and will not be started until Waterdown and Elfrida's are complete. It was felt that this would be at least 2 years or more from now.

The Urban Design Guidelines is an update to a Hatt Street and King Street study that was done a decade ago. Jeanne Norris and myself participated from Dundas Works. The Guideline is an aspirational document and proposes new public squares and improving the infrastructure of streets and trails in the core of Dundas. A public meeting to discuss a draft version of the Urban Design Guidelines that was promised last fall has not been announced yet.

We discussed a number of concerns that neither of these documents would address...

- The influence of the Spencer Creek floodplain is currently hugely restrictive on ground floor uses in new buildings. How should we work with these guidelines?
- How do we continue to intensify while protecting the unique ecosystem of the Dundas Valley and Cootes paradise that we live in and love?
- How do we integrate the needs of cyclists and improve the walkability in Dundas?
- How do we create "complete communities" in our outlying neighbourhoods, moving from the need to drive everywhere, to having essential needs met within walking distance of where we live?
- Where should we intensify in Dundas, and what would that look like?...How do we determine what the character of intensification should be in different areas in Dundas?
- How should we improve our public transit system within Dundas and joining to other communities?



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A number of these concerns have been articulated in our community roundtables in the last two years. The Vision pamphlet that we published last fall summarizes the major values that we have come up with so far. One way to make these values a reality, would be to to apply these principles to a “Citizens Master Plan” for the entirety of Dundas

One suggestion on how to do this was that that we create a series of overlaid maps with layers such as...

1. Public spaces and streets...
2. A network of walking routes and trails ...
3. A network of bike trails and routes... 4) Transit routes...
4. Building zoning requirements in different areas with some areas having specific “Form- Based Zoning” designs...
5. Natural areas and access points...
6. flood plains...
7. Environmentally sensitive and protected areas...
8. Other areas of concern to be determined

The goal of this “Citizen’s Master Plan” would be to have it enshrined in the laws and bylaws governing future growth and development in Dundas. Working with the City, the Province, The Hamilton Conservation Authority, The Niagara Escarpment Commission and other relevant authorities, the Vision would be intended to be reflected in official documents such as...

1. Design Guidelines for Public Spaces (including the Hatt St and King St Design Guidelines)
2. A Secondary Plan (also reflected in Hamilton’s Official Plan)
3. A Flood Plain Management Plan,
4. A Walking and Bike Network Plan
5. A Natural Areas Conservation Plan,
6. A Waste Management Plan, etc.

In order to ultimately to have this “Citizen’s Master Plan “ implemented, we would need to create a comprehensive marketing strategy that would emphasize certain aspects of the plan. The strategy would also consider the media we should use to be effective, (and how to use it) and the people that we should attract to our side. The message would need to be simplified so that it is irresistible, and would resonate with the wider community and ultimately influence politicians and city staff to implement it.

The foundation for the “Citizens Master Plan” are the values that we should be aiming for. Since we have been meeting together, we have already made a good start in this regard.



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Roundtable discussion for Development: **Building on what we have already discussed in past roundtables, what are some of the principles that should guide us?**

- **Floodplains:** need to get more information as the extent of the Spencer Creek floodplain and what restrictions it puts on development
- **Development could be positive.** Developers want to build too big; that is one of the main problems.
- Suggest we keep an eye on Waterdown and their move to a Secondary Plan and how it affects development
- Apartments can be very isolating. **Mixed use developments build real community**
- **Beautifully designed buildings** that use appropriate aesthetic materials are very important because **we feel more human when we use them.** By contrast, buildings that ignore this, such as the new Beverley Tire in University Plaza are dehumanizing. “A Pattern Language” by Christopher Alexander is a design guide that helps to create buildings and spaces that enhance and support our humanity.
- **Affordability** has to be a consideration.
- Public transit- there need to be **more creative ways to provide public transit** than just large buses
- **Walkability** needs to be a criteria incorporated into future development.
- **Energy self-sustainability** is an important factor
- Look at green spaces and natural areas (eg, Pleasant View)
- How buildings are “massed” contributes to the overall effect.
- Some concerns that no one is pushing the envelope; there **isno inspiration seen in new buildings in Dundas**, they already look dated— Look at the excitement and energy in new buildings that are being built in Toronto with innovative designs- creating amazing communities out of nothing- In Hamilton there difficulties getting building permits for **cutting edge design.**
- There is a question of integrity: We need to preserve heritage, natural spaces, green areas (parks), **if it isn't broken then don't change it!** ...we need to enrich what we do have.
- More minds (community input) are better than one(developer) -We need to stick together to create a collective approach- **only together will we be able to create something great**
- Valley City property could be **a great community hub** if it developed properly
- If we aren't careful Dundas could turn into just a retirement community
- With **intensification**, we need to look at the **underlying principles of development.** Maybe we need to take a stand that we already too full here.
- Need for a Secondary plan to inform the Official Plan
- What works and what doesn't: **historical context matters.** eg since the King St. Shoppers Drug Mart only considered building height and matching street frontage as parameters, we got a building that ignored the detailed context of buildings around it. Who is approving building like this? How do we get better buildings than this?
- we shouldn't have to accept anything we don't choose to accept



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- ***We have to accept that there is going to be intensification*** of existing areas- if we don't then we open up the possibility that development will sprawl onto farmland
- We need to be pro-active and progressive in allowing and promoting new forms of housing: co-living, co-housing, co-ops- these forms of housing could attract young people...what we don't need is more single family suburban development
- ***The original town of Dundas has a three storey limit-*** higher height allowances were meant only for specific sites such as the Creekside/ Amica development- it was not meant to be a precedent for any lot in the town- the pressure is coming from Hamilton- they want a uniform bylaw of 6 storeys-***Re-development*** needs should be considered, and not just new development.
- look at studies by Jack Diamond on how get a ***continuous streetscape***
- Concern about the ***entrance to Dundas*** and how it looks...it ***needs to be thoughtfully designed***

DEMOCRACY

Introduction by Jim Sweetman: At our Roundtable / potluck meeting last November, we used a ranked ballot to identify the top action items towards achieving our Vision. The top items were:

- (1) To develop an Urban Design and Secondary Plan for all of Dundas, its core and its neighbourhoods.
- (2) A desire for increased public involvement in decision making. It was proposed that a democratically chosen Community Council would help facilitate this.

Via letter, we referenced the two top items and requested a meeting with our Councillor to meet “to discuss how we can work together better to contribute to the community we all love so much.”

The five leaders of Dundas Works met with the Councillor and the Community Council on March 18, 2019.

A summary of what we learned:

- What we call the Community Council, our Councillor calls the Community Advisory Group. The members were chosen by the Councillor to provide information and advice to the Councillor.
- The Community Advisory Group is not meant to be a forum for community discussion. There will be no delegations to the Community Advisory Council. Any presentations will be delivered by people or groups invited by the Councillor.
- The Community Advisory Group has 11 members: Joe Gordon, Seniors; Warren Oda, Sports and Recreation; Julie Litzen, Administrative Assistant; Larry Button, Member at Large; Stan Nowak, Heritage; Steve Roblin, Member at Large; Phyllis Kraemer, Business; Nancy Gray, Arts & Culture; Mary Matthews, Member at Large; Keith Sharp, Member at Large; the Councillor.
- Many of the Community Advisory Group meetings are not pre-scheduled. The Councillor schedules the Community Advisory Group when it fits her schedule.
- Not all meetings of the Community Advisory Group are public.



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- If a member of the community wants to provide input about any issues – please send the Councillor an email. She reads every email.
- Public meetings open to everyone in Dundas will be scheduled when the Councillor judges such a meeting is necessary
- Meetings to discuss matters pertaining to the Planning Act and zoning will only be open to people who live within 120 meters of the property in question, including public spaces. The Councillor's first priority is always to understand what the neighbourhood wants.

No further meetings between Dundas Works and the Councillor or the Community Advisory Group are planned.

What is your reaction? What do you think? Where should we go from here?

-How can we **get community groups to join together** to strengthen our voice?

-We can go directly to City Hall, but we **need to be well-researched**

-We need to figure out how to get our collective voice heard. We need to **identify the roadblocks**.

-**Improved Democracy in Dundas should be a priority** for Dundas Works

-Suggest that we receive the **minutes of the Community Advisory Group** meetings as one priority.

-We can use social media to **build a movement**

- we need to strategically plan and work on things which are challenge the status quo; events on the streets- at the same time we need to build a **strong civil discussion**

- Ideally, the Community Advisory Group and Dundas Works could work together to achieve better outcomes reflecting broader community input. Many/alternate members of the Dundas Works larger group may wish to approach the Community Advisory Group to increase the channels of communication. Where community sentiment is strong on issues, persistence may benefit.

-**Need to have a process:** have a motion with support of community organizations to put forward: put it to the Community Advisory Group; if not received and acted upon, then go to City Hall. Give the councillor lots of chances to get on board, but we can also appeal directly to the mayor

-**Join with other community groups in Hamilton**, maybe we need to form Neighbourhood Associations.

-create a Community Mobilization Plan- increase our numbers



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CYCLING UPDATE

Michelle Chin spoke on behalf of William Oates and Art Heidebrecht, the leaders of Dundas Rides. Complete streets create safe spaces for the people who live there. There is a growing enthusiasm and need for safe commuter cycling routes in Dundas. We must advocate for cycling infrastructure in Dundas that would connect our neighbourhoods to each other and to major routes across Hamilton.

We're very pleased that several priority projects have full city support in the 2018 budget and are in the works. Craig Campbell has been following up with the City's Daryl Bender. ***An east-west corridor route across Dundas would connect Governors Road to the Cootes Drive Trail and to Hamilton:***

1. Governors Road from Davidson Blvd to Creighton to be complete by August 2019
2. Creighton to Hatt St by end of 2019
3. Hatt Street, as part of urban design guidelines to inform the 2020 city budget for a 3-5 year rollout.
4. Hatt St. to York, York to Baldwin, Baldwin to West, West to Dundas St. to connect with the existing Cootes Drive multi-use trail, within two years. A form of this already exists (signs).

There are two additional bike lane projects not actively underway that are essential to connectivity of Dundas to Hamilton. Write to our Councillor advocating for cycling infrastructure. Connections from the core to the Rail Trail and to the local schools would benefit the school families and the greater community. Jessie Blake, a parent at Dundana Elementary and member of Dundas Rides, presented these projects.

1. **Ogilvie and Old Ancaster Road:** from King Street up to the HB Rail Trail. We need a connection from the downtown core to the east west trails leading into Hamilton. This would serve many families attending Dundana and St. Mary's schools.

2. **The "Five Schools Project":** A commuter link through Sanctuary Park from the Hamilton-Brantford Rail Trail to Highland Park Drive, crossing Spring Creek. A car-free route connecting Pleasant Valley, University Gardens and Ainslie Wood neighbourhoods to their schools. Sir William Osler, Dundas Valley, St. Bernadettes, Montessori (private), Dundana, and St. Mary's schools would benefit.

Other cycling projects: - Bike Rodeo to teach road safety - Wayfinding signage - Air Quality Monitoring - organizing group rides - a Candidate ride for the federal election.

Rich Gelder presented an "**Ontario By Bike**" bike friendly community designation for Dundas. Rich will be working on the application and its requirements and asking BIA to sign a letter for the application.

- **Car Parking may need to be changed or sacrificed**
- **Connectivity**, eg between Hatt Street and Dundas Street, needs to be well-thought out.
- Streets need to be walkable as well as cyclable. We need an **integrated design**.
- Community input is needed to look at Bike Lane placement on Hatt Street and Creighton Road.