



## ***Dundas Works and Wentworth Lodge Neighbourhood Meeting***

### **WENTWORTH LODGE SURPLUS PUBLIC LAND**

*Tuesday, December 3rd, 2019 Salvation Army*

*Followup to City Presentation on Wentworth Lodge Surplus Public Land held Nov 18th, 2019*

*Draft Rev.3 - Dec 10th, 2019*

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the future of a public parcel of land behind Wentworth Lodge (approx 1.4 hectares), declared surplus by the City of Hamilton. The councillor and director of housing have stated that the land will be developed for affordable housing or to create revenue to support affordable housing elsewhere. There have been several neighbourhood meetings, followed by a community meeting (Nov 18), culminating with a presentation for a possible land use which includes a multi-story affordable housing complex (senior's dormitory style building) by developer Stillbrook on leased public land and a row of single family units sold to homeowners.

The opinions and reactions of the Wentworth Lodge Neighbourhood (WLN) and the community have been quite varied, not only to the land use proposal, but also to the process, or perceived lack of process by our councillor to seek input for the future use of this public parcel of land. There is a fear that the Stillbrook proposal may proceed which is undesirable to most in the community, based on the feedback observed.

A subset of neighbours and Dundas Works representatives met on Dec 3rd to discuss the issues more in depth and understand if there was enough agreement to proceed together.

#### **DETAILS:**

**Present:** Wendie Duque, James Chase, Deborah Boyd, Scott Munro, Jeanne Norris, Michelle Chin, Jim Sweetman, Margot Carnahan, Tim Leslie, Bob James, Regrets: Fred Fuchs.

Those present at this evening's meeting, and others unable to attend, are interested in exploring alternative land use opportunities to seek the best fit for the neighbourhood, for Dundas and the City of Hamilton. The following questions were posed to the group to focus the discussion:

1. Can we support the concept of the land being declared surplus specifically for affordable housing?
  - a) If no to affordable housing, then what are next steps?
  - b) If yes to affordable housing, then what does that look like: sell the land to private developers or keep the land in public hands?

**Some highlights of the IDEAS emerging from discussion include:**

- develop housing, possibly affordable (definition?), or support affordable elsewhere. Does affordable mean subsidized, dense and inexpensive or inherently inexpensive through lease hold?
- land use must fit with neighbourhood character- very important
- opportunity for eco development, in line with City of Hamilton's Climate Emergency Declaration
- reach out to Environment Hamilton for support/ideas
- keeping land public, by land lease or collective ownership, can reduce costs
- concern for management in the long term of if municipally owned development, city's track record is poor, also concern for a new company like Stillbrook which may fail and leave the city with debt, a company like Habitat for Humanity has a better track record for developing affordable homes
- is there a process for obtaining community consensus?
- City of Hamilton is not the same as Hamilton Housing

**Some highlights of AREAS OF AGREEMENT and moving forward together:**

- leasehold to maintain public status
- residential development preferred to institutional
- mixed demographics (age, income, diversity) and inclusive zoning
- RFP (Request for Proposal) may be useful and/or creative design competition at a college or other
- make it as environmentally friendly as possible
- important to consult and include WLN in discussions as much as possible and strive for consensus, Facebook account is useful tool to reach many
- working as a larger group may be beneficial when interacting with city

**Some highlights of the QUESTIONS emerging from discussion include:**

- What is the timeline for this land, could it be as short as one year?
- How can we ensure that we will be heard and that we have adequate time for meaningful consultation and to develop ideas?
- What density targets would be required for a city development? What density targets are we willing to accept?
- What is the definition of affordable housing, especially in this neighbourhood where property values are higher?

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. James C. will inquire with City of Hamilton to obtain date for delegation, possibly Jan 2020 to advocate for greater public input and meaningful consultation. We can continue to work on statement(s) as a group to present to councillor and city.
2. Deborah B. will inquire about meeting with Councillor Arlene VanderBeek and Director of Housing Edward John, possibly end of Jan/early Feb 2020. Important to keep councillor and director in communication loop.
3. Wendie D will seek feedback from WLN. Do they wish to proceed independently or combine with Dundas Works (DW) and other community members?
4. DW will work on ideas where we can find agreement as steps to move forward.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, January 7th, 2020, possibly at the Salvation Army (tbd)