

New Tecumseth Official Plan Review (OPR)

Community Liaison Committee (CLC) Meeting #1 – June 19th, 2017
Meeting Summary

CLC Members in attendance:

Councillor Norcross

Councillor Whiteside

Ross Reynolds - Resident

Doug Carr - Resident

Susan Iacoucci – Beeton Tottenham Business Improvement Association

Mia Smilsky – Alliston and District Chamber of Commerce

Daniela Fuliere – Tottenham Beeton and District Chamber of Commerce

Mike Jerry – Alliston Business Improvement Association

Regrets:

Leah Emms - Resident

Maria Jawaid - Resident

Town Staff in attendance:

Bruce Hoppe, Director of Planning and Development

Tim Schilling, Senior Planner and OPR Project Manager

Introductions

The first Community Liaison Committee (CLC) meeting started with introductions from Town staff, the Consultant team and Committee members. The CLC members also explained their interest in being involved in the Official Plan Review (OPR) process, including:

- Long-time residents
- Interest in seeing where the Town is going
- Representatives of the BIAs and Chambers of Commerce
- Property owner
- Belief that growth, and associated services, is important but that it must be balanced with the important rural character

In accordance with Town procedure, Councillor Norcross volunteered to act as Chair of the Committee, with Councillor Whiteside acting as Vice-Chair. In answer to questions from the CLC, Town staff and the Consultant team confirmed that meeting notes will be available to the public and that members of the public may attend meetings, but no public deputations would be accepted. Public events are scheduled to immediately follow CLC meetings which will provide an opportunity for members of the public to provide input. The meeting notes and the CLC Terms of Reference will be posted on the Town's project webpage.

Town staff also noted that future public events will be scheduled to occur in New Tecumseth's other communities and that more notice will be provided for future dates. A schedule of future meetings will be prepared and made available to CLC members.

Presentation

The Consultant team provided a presentation outlining the OPR process, role of the CLC, public consultation, planning context and key issues identified so far. Of particular note, the Consultant team provided a brief overview of the newly released 2017 Growth Plan, which includes an extended timeframe (to 2041), increased Simcoe County growth numbers and increased intensification and density targets for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The Consultant team and Town staff explained that they will be working with Simcoe County to obtain permission from the Province to use alternative intensification and density targets, as the new Growth Plan numbers, 60 percent intensification and 80 residents and jobs per hectare for greenfield development, are not appropriate for the New Tecumseth context. These targets are more appropriate for higher density transit corridors. The CLC expressed significant concern with respect to these new Provincial targets, as Town staff explained that the Tree Tops development is only around 45 residents per hectare, and supported seeking alternative targets. In answer to a question from the CLC, the Consultant team explained that the County has not yet allocated the new population forecast numbers and that no timeline for their release is known.

****Note:** Following this CLC meeting, staff reviewed their records for the Tree Tops development and determined that the density is in fact approximately 37.5 residents/job per hectare.*

Visioning Round-Table Discussion

To contribute to generating a community vision for the OPR project, which will help guide future policy development, CLC members were asked to share words or phrases that they believed were important and should be used to describe New Tecumseth's future state.

The CLC's contributions included:

- Balance between growing and maintaining rural character
 - Rural character means a place where people can earn a living in agriculture, enjoy open spaces
 - Existing conditions are currently balanced as new growth is largely happening within already built up areas – there are not a lot of subdivisions out in the countryside
- A plan in which everyone can see themselves
- Everyone coming here likes the rural area, likes to spread out with bungalows and big backyards
- Want to see the towns grow around themselves, shouldn't allow growth on land that can be used for agriculture

- Need to find a balance – to have growth within business, need people to live and work here and use local businesses rather than shopping in Toronto, but also don't want too much sprawl
- Strong, viable, self-sufficient, successful downtowns
- Both rural and urban – “rurban”
- Economically and culturally responsible, but with metrics in place
 - Need a culture, what will we be known for?
 - Better sense of identity
- Need to look into the feeder system to the GO stops/stations, no transit options with the Town
- Concern that new residents won't be attracted here if new development is at higher densities
- Economically responsible
- Maintain existing quality of life (community, people knowing each other, everyone has enough space to live)
- Concerned with ability to attract new employers, can't compete with other municipalities
- Financial sustainability, fiscally responsible – there are significant demands on infrastructure, what growth can we afford?
 - Manage expectations with respect to level of services residents should expect (i.e. not feasible to always have 3 of everything)
- Preserve farmland, need to control growth, any growth needs to be within settlement area boundaries or adjacent, no leap frogging
- Balanced community, cultural, heritage (i.e. Beeton), unification, be proud of New Tecumseth
- Small town feel
- Supporting local businesses, personal touch

Issues Round-Table Discussion

Based on the issues already identified, the CLC was asked to suggest any other issues, or specific examples of the issues that the project team should consider:

- Fiscal responsibility
- Meeting the day-to-day needs of residents (i.e. complete community)
- Considering servicing retrofits/maintenance
- Broader approach for economic development: new economy, agricultural/rural economy, make businesses/people want to come here

The Consultant team and Town staff concluded by suggesting that they would put together a Q&A overview with respect to the new Growth Plan for CLC members to distribute through their networks. Town staff will also brief Council at an upcoming meeting.