

Minutes

340, 352, 360 River Road – Liaison Committee Meeting No. 1

April 18, 2019

Secord Room, Cambridge City Hall

50 Dickson St., Cambridge, On

6:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Councillor Mike Devine, Denis F. Lanno, Tom Hetherinton, Adriana Garcia, Rusty Miller, Patrick Malinski, Marty Green, Dave Aston, MHBC Planning, Kate Wills, MHBC Planning, Jim Dodd, Reid’s Heritage Homes, Jennifer Mondell, Reid’s Heritage Homes, Rebecca Kerr, MTE Engineering

Staff: Elaine Brunn Shaw, Adam Ripper, Jason Leach, and Rachel Greene

Regrets: Bryan Cooper, Jody Palmer

ITEMS

Lead

<p>1. Introductions: Councillor Devine welcomed those in attendance. He thanked everyone for their willingness to work collaboratively to improve the development and the community. He then asked everyone to introduce themselves.</p>	<p>Chair</p>
<p>2. Terms of Reference: Elaine Brunn Shaw, City Planner, gave an overview of the Terms of Reference and set out the purpose of the Committee. She informed the group that this is an informal meeting; therefore, Robert’s Rules will not be in effect, but asked that everyone respect the speakers. E. Brunn Shaw explained that the meeting this evening and in May, are being held to provide open discussion for a small group of area residents so that the developer may refine their proposal before opening it up to a larger neighbourhood meeting to be held in June.</p> <p>Seeing no questions or comments, Councillor Devine moved onto the next item on the agenda.</p>	<p>Staff</p>

3. Presentation - Land Use Planning and Decision Making Context; public input received to date

Staff

E. Brunn Shaw gave a PowerPoint Presentation overviewing the Land Use Planning Process including the provincial, regional, and local planning framework that guides staff in reviewing the application. She gave an overview of who is involved in the review of a Planning Application and when the public has an opportunity to get involved.

E. Brunn Shaw then explained how the proposed 54 townhouse unit development at 340, 352, and 360 River Road fits into the planning framework. The subject lands are designated as Low/Medium Density Residential in the Official Plan and the proposal meets the requirements for a maximum density of 40 units per hectare. The new infill development must meet compatibility requirements of the Official Plan regarding density, height, landscaping, setbacks, and transportation. E. Brunn Shaw noted that the term compatibility does not mean the same as or similar to existing buildings or uses in the vicinity of a site.

The subject lands are zoned R2 Residential in the Zoning By-law which only permits a single detached home per lot and therefore a Zoning Amendment is required for the proposed townhouse development. Following the zoning amendment, if approved, the developer is required to undergo site plan review and approval. The developer enters into a legally binding agreement with the City and would be required to pay securities to the City to ensure they are held accountable to follow through on the approved site plan.

Lastly, E. Brunn Shaw gave an overview of the concerns that were voiced at the initial public meeting including: townhouses as the build form; the grading difference between the site and Melran Drive; traffic impacts; fencing and landscaping; property value impact; bedrock; and ultimate building height.

Councillor Devine then opened up the discussion to the group.

4. Discussion

Group

The discussion began with concerns regarding the density and height of the proposal.

Dave Aston, Planner, MHBC, provided visual examples to illustrate the factors that resulted in the current design of the 54 unit townhouse development. These

factors included consideration for the following:

- Road Improvements: The City requires a road widening, which results in reduced setbacks on the site. The development will have the townhouses fronting onto the internal condominium road.
- Location of Access: The access point is based on maintaining sight lines as well as the required grade to travel up to the internal road.
- Tree Management: Arborists indicated most of the property boundary trees are to be saved unless they are considered a hazard.
- Amenity Space: Amenity area is currently located at the northern end of the site; however, the developer is flexible and is willing to move it.

D. Aston showed several cross sections to illustrate how the development will look from the viewpoint of residents on Melran Drive, Endeavour Drive, and River Road. The proposed townhouse units are three storeys that step down towards the river with the grade. Therefore, the residents who live on Endeavour will have a two storey view from their rear yard but will see three storeys from River Road.

The residents voiced concerns over the presence of bedrock in the area and questioned how this would affect the height of the proposed townhouses. E. Brunn Shaw explained that the zoning by-law amendment will specify the maximum height and if through the building process, the developer is unable to achieve this height, they would have to go through another planning application. The area residents were concerned that this scenario would result in a minor variance which would be subject to the Committee of Adjustment process as opposed to Council who are already familiar with the project.

Councillor Devine asked MHBC Planning and Reid's Heritage Homes if the development could be reduced by a storey to decrease the impact on the residents on Melran and Endeavour drive. Rebecca Kerr, MTE Engineering, responded that they are not looking to disrupt the bedrock as it would greatly impact the surrounding area. She explained that a geotechnical report would be done for a site plan application if the zoning amendment is approved but they have a relative idea where the elevations are. D. Aston added that they are going to provide for a reasonable height so they do not have to apply for further approvals.

Councillor Devine then asked the consulting team if they would consider bungalow/bungaloft style townhomes to reduce the impact to the residents on Endeavour and Melran Drive. The area residents also inquired whether single detached homes would be more appropriate in the context of the existing neighbourhood.

D. Aston responded that they are proposing townhouses as they fit within the City's Official Plan policies and they provide an attainable option for new family's entering the housing market. They are flexible on design elements and are willing to work with the group. Councillor Devine responded that they are currently in the same position as at the public meeting.

D. Aston said they are willing to discuss certain issues including height, potentially willing to drop a storey on the end units to minimize the impact to property owners on Melran, increasing setbacks to Melran, moving the amenity area towards Melran, and planting more trees for privacy. However, Reid's Heritage Homes are not willing to reconsider townhouses. Jim Dodd, Reid's Heritage Homes, explained that single detached homes could have the same issues surrounding height. Jim wanted to hear from the group regarding how the current townhouse proposal could be improved. He said they can explore bungalofs on end units, increased setbacks, designing end units to limit windows/openings, placement of fencing around the perimeter of the development, and extending the sidewalks on River Road.

The residents requested if the developer could provide a 3D model to get a better understanding of the massing in the context of the existing neighbourhood. The developer's team will work on this.

There was significant discussion surrounding the density not only from the 340, 352, 360 River Road proposal but other developments in the neighbourhood (i.e. the Forbes Estate, Silkknit, Lens Mills). Some residents are concerned with the cumulative impacts from the all new development in the area with respect to traffic impacts, parking, and servicing. Residents explain that they would like to see a plan for the whole area as some residents still have to manage their own wastewater through private grinder pumps.

Prior to the meeting, Jody Palmer asked that his comments be read into the meeting minutes which are attached.

Councillor Devine thanked everyone for their time. He asked that MHBC return to the next meeting with accurate drawings, a 3D model, and multiple options to review, with consideration given to bungalows/bungalofs. Invitations for a follow up meeting will be sent out once a date has been set for May.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm

Opening Statement

I apologize to the members of the committee for being unable to attend this inaugural meeting. Long standing vacation plans could not be reorganized at the last minute.

I would like to make some brief remarks regarding my understanding of each of our goals and the goal of the committee. I will end with procedural questions which I hope can be answered in the minutes or otherwise written down and shared with the members.

I expect that the matters referred to the committee for clarification or resolution will be laid out in the first meeting, but it seems clear that the committee must come to a way forward that satisfies the each of the interested parties. We each come in with our own goals. Profit is the sine qua non of an agreement that the developer can accept. As a citizen member of the committee, my goal is to ensure that I live the next 20 or 30 years in a pleasant and functional community. Other citizen members may be concerned about protecting their property investment. The city representatives are, one hopes, focused on balancing practicality and long term strategic goals for the neighbourhood. They must not take into consideration the developer's profit lest they favour one developer over another or establish corporate welfare sheltering developers from their own poor decisions. Instead, the city should stand for what is best for the municipality in the long term.

I have been living on River Road and abiding to the bylaws of the City for 21 years and hope to continue to do so until I die. I have absolutely no issue with the developer purchasing land and making modifications within the zoning bylaw and building code. However, if they wish to alter, for their own profit, the laws by which the entire community operates, I believe that the onus is on them to prove that the goals of all other parties are also met, and in this way achieve the goals of the committee. Otherwise, they can, like us, live within the law.

Procedural Questions

My procedural questions for the committee are:

- By what rules will the committee meetings operate? Will they be [Robert's rules for special and standing committees](#)?
- Has the chair of the committee been appointed by the planning committee or will the committee select a chair?
- Will the committee be voting on questions before them? Will the votes pass by simple majority? Or is the committee more informal?
- If the committee will be voting, what are the voting rights and/or non-voting obligations of the chair?
- Will minutes be recorded and accepted?
- Are there any standing agenda items which will be covered in each meeting?

Thank you for considering this submission. I look forward to working towards a constructive solution with all of you as soon as I return.

Jody Palmer

