

351 Wallace Avenue development proposal

Public meeting 21 September 2005

Pauline Ave Junior Public School

7:30 p.m.

Notes

1. Councillor Adam Giambrone

Councillor Giambrone welcomed participants and introduced the agenda, pointing out that this is the second public meeting about this application: the first, held on 25 April 2005 was at his request and provided an opportunity for the developer to present his draft proposal to residents and hear their concerns; the second is to review the responses to those concerns and see the revised plans based on them. He also outlined the application process, from receipt to approval or refusal, emphasizing that the decision of City Council—whatever it may be—can be ultimately appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) by either residents or the applicant.

Resident input during this process is welcome and encouraged.

This is a neighbourhood in transition from industrial to predominantly residential uses. This transition will involve public input and a public meeting, to be held in the fall, to discuss it with residents.

Q: Motion for subsequent public meeting in about 5 weeks' time.

A: Schedules must be consulted before a date can be confirmed, but it will be set up within a couple of weeks' time, and the neighbourhood informed

Comments:

1. Meeting notice is a concern, many residents did not receive notice of this meeting
2. Misinformation is a problem. For instance, rumours abound that the developer has already started work on the site, why did it take 9 months for the public to be informed, how can the public find out more, they need time to review the plans and can they be posted prior to the meeting next time?
3. Portuguese translation at meetings is required at future meetings

2. Linda MacDonald

A re-zoning is required for any residential development on the site and that the applicant is seeking approval of 1.49 times gross floor area coverage of the lot.

The old and new Official Plans must both be considered when reviewing the application. The new OP, in particular, refers to neighbourhood context.

Q: How does Planning determined appropriate densities for the site and the neighbourhood? What is the formula? Is it just a “feel” on the part of the City Planner?

A: The process involves more than just a simple “feel” for the neighbourhood. Neither is it perfectly scientific, but it is a rational process that takes into account many components of neighbourhood and city impact of the application, almost in a “grading process.”

Q: There has been no traffic study or parking study on the potential impact of the application on the neighbourhood. Given that it’s next to 2 schools and a scrapyard with a lot of truck traffic, such a study should be conducted (especially on Saturday.)

A: Councillor Giambrone will request a traffic study in the area.

Q: Why does the City trust the developer’s traffic analysis given the clear conflict of interest involved?

A: The applicant’s traffic study is not simply accepted at face value; it is reviewed thoroughly by Transportation Services.

Q: Why is the Junction Triangle listed as appropriate for low to medium income development?

A: It’s really a city-wide policy intended to ensure that anyone who wants to live in various parts of the city is in fact able to do so.

Q: Is this private or subsidized housing?

A: The proposal is 100% private housing with no subsidies.

Q: Does the low to medium income housing policy apply at places like Yonge and Eglinton?

A: There’s supposed to be a mix of housing types across the city.

Q: Is the final report in? Is Planning supporting the application?

A: The final report is not yet written, partially because community input is still being received, particularly at tonight’s meeting. The City has not yet made a decision on support.

Q: Is the proposed density twice that of the surrounding area?

A: We don’t know, because there’s no count of density in the surrounding area. (This response produced great concern among participants.) Planning does, however, have accurate data about properties in the neighbourhood, including building size and height.

Q: Why let the developer build something more than currently exists in the neighbourhood both in height and density?

A: The City has not yet actually approved the application. The site is large, and the developer has decided to propose this form of stacked townhouses.

Q: Are there environmental, i.e. contamination concerns about the site?

A: Ross McKerron explained that the record of site condition is filed with the Ministry of the Environment and is accessible on their website.

Q: Why would this kind of development be approved for a dead-end street, so that all the traffic will come by Perth and Wallace? Does the City consider this?

A: Re-statement of commitment to a traffic plan.

Q: Are the school resources in the neighbourhood adequate? Both schools have recently added portables. Is there any plan for a new school in the area?

A: Both the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and Toronto Catholic District School Board have been asked for comment. Only the TDSB has responded so far, and they advise that they cannot guarantee capacity for potential additional students from the proposed development. They are nonetheless required to provide schooling to children where they exist.

Q: Elise Hug said she would be happy to approve the currently proposed density, now Linda says otherwise. Elise isn't here—why do we have the resources to send her to the OMB to oppose the Doversquare development, but not this one?

A: Elise is generally okay with the proposal but did not necessarily endorse it. Nonetheless, Linda, as Elise's manager, would have to review Elise's recommendations.

The Doversquare developer would not work or cooperate with the City. Similar conditions with this proposal might have resulted in similar action.

Q: Will the City take the owner to the OMB, considering the majority opposition in the room to the proposal?

A: Ideally, something could be worked out to everyone's benefit without resorting to the OMB, but it nonetheless remains an option for either party.

Q: Residents would like leadership from Councillor Giambrone on the opposition.

A: Tonight's meeting is one means of determining the community's position. Councillor Giambrone recognizes the strong opposition in the room and will consider it along with feedback from residents who may not be present.

Q: Does the City consider policing levels when reviewing an application?

A: Planning assesses the plans based on CPTED (Community Planning Through Environmental Design) standards. Councillor Giambrone has committed to requesting additional review by the Police.

Q: Childcare resources in the neighbourhood are strained.

A: A team at City Hall reviews social services.

Q: Will the recently improved smell from the sewers be affected by the proposal?

A: The development's stormwater sewers will plug into the existing pipes, but the development will have its own sanitary sewers (for the "smelly stuff",) built to higher standards.

Q: Has there been an application across the street?

A: Not to the best of Councillor Giambrone's or Linda MacDonald's knowledge.

Q: Will this application not set a precedent for the vacant parcel across the street and throughout the neighbourhood?

A: Councillor Giambrone and Linda MacDonald have suggested that an area review be done to assess the big picture including an assessment of community services and school requirements

3. Ross McKerron

Following the input from the first public meeting, changes have been made to the proposal, including:

- a. Parking will be sold with each unit rather than as a separate item. This practice should discourage new owners from seeking on-street parking
- b. The developer will be selling all units and will not be keeping any units as rental stock
- c. The location of the roadway has been changed from the west side of the project to a more central location that splits the development into two sections and allows for better view corridors
- d. Parking will be below grade in general with some additional surface parking on the west side of the road
- e. Green space has been situated in the centre of the development. This improves view corridors and provides a central spot for owners to congregate
- f. The south and east sides of the development are no longer raised up on a podium—the "wall" that existed before has been eliminated
- g. The building materials have been changed to incorporate largely brick
- h. The built form has been changed from a Victorian look to more of an industrial appearance, more resembling the appearance of the Wallace Station project
- i. Access to the future bicycle pathway has been provided at the west side of the development
- j. Units have been flipped so that there will be no true front and back—some units will be "fronts" and some will be "backs," but all will be facing the same way

- k. The access to the parking has been incorporated into the building blocks
- l. Sight lines have been improved throughout the development
- m. The roadway will resemble a public street—will have the same characteristics. There will be a possibility of extending the roadway through the property to the south at some future time should that property be redeveloped.

This developer is not in the rental business. The owner would open a sales office soon after the permits were issued, and as with most developments, financing and construction would only be triggered after about 60% of the units were sold. There has been no work done on the site yet—the rumours are false. The price of the units would be between \$200 000 and \$300 000. About 16 parking spots will be provided on the west side of the street. Bicycle parking is provided. Removal of the podium has resulted in a lower overall height than originally proposed—it is now roughly the same height as Wallace Station, within about a foot.

Q: How will garbage be picked up?

A: Garbage pickup will be done by a private contractor. No curbside pickup will be required for this site.

Q: Does the developer own the property across the street?

A: No—there is no connection whatsoever between the owners of the two properties.

Q: Who is the developer?

A: Montevallo Developments

4. Attila Burka

Q: Where is the garbage/recycling

A: in the basement

Q: Will some of the “flipped” units be among the ones higher up?

A: Yes

Q: The “eyes on the street” are all behind windows—where can people be outside where they can interact better with the neighbourhood?

Q: Are there any outdoor spaces on the street?

A: There will be some patios due to the flipping of the units. The interior patios will be enlarged to approximately 15' x 15'

Q: How high is the building?

A: It fits into the 15 metre envelope, meaning it will likely be under 15 metres

Q: Why can 15 metres be allowed for this developer but not current homeowners? There are too many units.

A: They have not yet been allowed. Attila explained that in calculating the number of units in a proposal, a developer will always build the least number of units, the cheapest they can, and sell for the most they can.

Q: Why stacked townhouses rather than regular townhouses?

A: Based on market research, this is what the developer has determined that people will buy.

Q: Why not put in fewer units at higher prices? Will the current proposed prices reduce surrounding property values?

Q: Does the proposal include security? Is it gated?

A: It is not a gated community, and it includes an easement over the private road.

Q: Ross stated that the developer is not in the rental business, but does he not own “The Standard” at Dupont Street and Lansdowne Avenue, which is a rental property?

A: This developer, Montevallo Developments, does not own rental properties. (However, Councillor Giambrone interceded to clarify that Tom Falus is the developer of both sites. Later, Ross explained that the distinction particular development companies can involve different partners.

Q: Does the lower price point lower property values?

Q: What’s going on adjacent to the laneway to the east? Will there be a wall?

A: There will be regular side yard conditions. The City is asking for a 2 metre widening, not yet reflected in the drawings.

Q: What else has the developer built in the area?

A: 212 stacked townhouse units at Lansdowne and Davenport.

Q: Can we get a “verandah culture” as well as “eyes on the street”? The public needs more green space, with spaces to congregate on the street.

5. Conclusion

Councillor Giambrone restated that a subsequent public meeting date will be determined and distributed.

Strong opposition to the density of the proposal was noted.

Councillor Giambrone and Planning will request a traffic study from Transportation Services.

Councillor Giambrone and Planning will request comments from police on the potential impact of the development.

Planning will arrange to get new documents for posting on Councillor Giambrone's website.