

MOHAWK LAKE DISTRICT WORKING GROUP MINUTES

Wednesday October 30, 2020

11:00 a.m. Virtual Zoom Webinar

1. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Davis, Councillor Utley, Councillor VanTilborg, Councillor Antoski, Councillor Carpenter, Councillor Martin (left at 12:03 pm)

ABSENT WITH REGRETS:

ALSO PRESENT: Tara Tran, Planning Staff Liaison
Patrick Vusir, Planning Staff Liaison
Darlene Lombardi, Planning Staff Liaison
Nicole Wilmot, Manager, Long Range Planning
Lucy Hives, Director of Planning
Nahed Ghbn, Senior Project Manager – Water Resource

DELEGATIONS: Rita Marie Hadley, Lansdowne Children’s Center
Jo-Ann Mattina, Constance McKnight, Pat Mandy, De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre
Bob Ion, Julia Jacobson, Canadian Military Heritage Museum

2. ELECTIONS OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

2.1 Election of Chair

Darlene Lombardi opened the election of the Chair of the Mohawk Lake District Working Group.

Nominations for the position of Chair were taken from the working group members. The following person was moved and seconded for the position of Chair – Councillor Van Tilborg.

Hearing no further nominations, Councillor Van Tilborg will assume the role of Chair.

2.2 Election of Vice Chair

Councillor Van Tilborg, Chair opened for the election of the Vice Chair of the Mohawk

Lake District Working Group 2020.

Nominations for the position of Vice Chair were taken from the working group members. The following person was moved and seconded for the position of Vice Chair – Councillor Carpenter. Hearing no further nominations, Councillor Carpenter will assume the role of Vice Chair.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

4. DELEGATIONS

4.1 Re: Item 5.2 Community Groups Expression of Interest Process Update

De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre - Pat Mandy, Jo-Ann Mattina, Constance McKnight

P. Mandy, a member of the De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre Board of Directors, gave an overview of the proposal to re-locate to the Mohawk Lake District. It is noted that the Aboriginal Health Centre Board started this capital project for a new building in 2014. They want to be a model of reconciliation and one that Brantford and indigenous community would be proud of. The Centre has met with members of the Provincial and Federal Government, as well as engaged community members. The Centre is now in the final stage of the business case development and next stage will be building design. The Centre has submitted an expression of interest submission to the City for land. It is noted the Centre is also currently examining a site in Hamilton and are further along in that process. The presentation showed how the conceptual architecture building design for the Hamilton site could be placed within the Mohawk Lake District, specifically the 66 Mohawk Street parcel. In addition to a health care centre, their proposal may include a partnership with McMaster Family Medicine, a childcare centre, and space for mixed commercial such as a pharmacy or physiotherapy office. Housing may also be part of the plan, which may involve a partnership with Brantford Native Housing. Bringing clients and services on one site would benefit everyone.

Councillor Carpenter inquired does the friendship centre, known as BRISC, have a home now or could this be part of this plan, and do they currently rent or own the space at King and Darling Street in Brantford? C. McKnight noted that BRISC has a temporary home right now but they looking for a capital space and this location would be ideal and that the Health Centre owns their currently location at King and Darling Street, and rent other locations. Their intention is to sell their King and Darling Street site, unless they can find another use for it.

Mayor Davis inquired how many acres would be needed and is there a preferred location within the Mohawk Lake District lands, and how with the project be funded. J. Mattina responded they require 3.5 to 5 acres of land, depending on the final design and which

partners are included. They are flexible regarding the location. They are seeking government funding, donations, as well as expect various partners to bring other funding.

4.2 Re: Item 5.2 Community Groups Expression of Interest Process Update

Canadian Military Heritage Museum - Bob Ion and Julia Jacobson

The Canadian Military Heritage Museum would have had a very ambitious year in 2020, but the pandemic put those plans on hold. Instead the Museum has spent more time working on improvements and continuing to build displays and other projects. The Museum is working on partnerships with members within the Galleries and Museum Associations, they have a major proposal for a grant with the Federal Government from Library and Archives Canada for digital archiving of artifacts, and the biggest project was the upgrade to the washroom, which is complete and now completely accessible. The parking lot has been paved. New projects underway include renovations at the rear storage building. The Museum has made upgrades that bring their facility to the next level and will protect artifacts for the benefit of the community. Their current location is logical, a place which has historical significance to Brantford, and with all the significant investments the Museum has made, they are not going anywhere. They see themselves as an anchor in the area, and look forward to other organizations, and other heritage organizations to join them. They believe the future of this District is looking very bright and this is a logical location for a heritage district, a museum district, and a “people place”.

Councillor Carpenter asked if the Museum needs any more space than what they have now. B. Ion noted they are content with their current space in their lease, which includes the building and surrounding parking area. There is flexibility to address the need for road allowance or sidewalks, if needed.

Councillor Van Tilborg asked how long has the Museum been at this location, and how are donations collected and are there any fundraising goals? B. Ion responded that 2020 marks 27 years. Funding sources includes grants and estate donations.

4.3 Re: Item 5.2 Community Groups Expression of Interest Process Update

Lansdowne Children’s Center - Rita Marie Hadley and Scott Lyons

S. Lyons, member of the Board of Directors and R. Hadley, Executive Director of the Lansdowne Children Centre has already given a full picture of their proposal at the previous committee meeting on September 9, 2020. They are commenting on the four options outlined in the memo from the City of Brantford’s Legal and Real Estate Department. R. Hadley noted that the approved Mohawk Lake District Plan has removed $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre from the upper western corner of 22 Mohawk Street, a site the Centre is interested in. This makes this parcel 6.5 acres in size, which the Centre can work with, but it will result in a reduction of 20 parking spots, out of a required 360 parking spots, based on projected capacity. The Centre’s space requirements were initially planned for 10 acres, then reduced to 7.2 acres, and now they are willing to accommodate the available

6.5 acres, which demonstrates the Centre's flexibility and willingness to adapt. S. Lyons noted of the four different options outlined by Legal and Real Estate in the memo, that Lansdowne Children Centre would prefer to be able to own land for their potential new facility, and they are aware of the responsibilities associated with owning land. They require a decision on an address to begin a much-needed fundraising campaign, which includes government funding.

Councillor Utley asked if the Lansdowne Children Centre own their current property and do you intend to sell what you own. R. Hadley responded that the Centre owns the building and there are covenants around the lands. The Centre intends to sell what they own.

Councillor Carpenter is very supportive of Lansdowne and asked if the Lansdowne Children Centre would be prepared to present at the Committee of the Whole in November when Council considers approval of the Mohawk Lake District Plan. R. Hadley responded they would be honored to.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Mohawk Lake District Plan Project Update

Presentation

T. Tran, Senior Planner, Long Range Planning

The purpose of this presentation is to show and summarize the final Mohawk District Lake Plan that will be before Committee of the Whole – Community Development for approval on November 10, 2020. Staff are seeking the Working Group's endorsement of this plan. T. Tran gave an overview of the vision statement, community feedback, and the recommended features of the Mohawk Lake District Plan.

Mayor Davis inquired whether the Mohawk Lake District Plan can accommodate the two organizations' proposals. T. Tran responded that the Plan is still conceptual and has flexibility to accommodate specific proposals from community groups that may receive approval moving forward and the Plan can be tweaked, if necessary, for these groups.

Moved by Councillor Carpenter
Seconded by Councillor Utley

- A. THAT the Mohawk Lake District Plan Project Update BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the Mohawk Lake District Plan – Final Plan BE ENDORSED by the members of the Mohawk Lake District Working Group.

The Working Group discussed the recommendation before them.

Councillor Carpenter considers this plan as a re-birth for Eagle Place and East Ward. Mayor Davis noted his excitement for this project. He asked staff for clarification regarding

the Mohawk Lake Working Group, a citizens' group, and this Mohawk Lake District Working Group, a council task force. T. Tran responded that the citizens' group are focused on improving water quality element of Mohawk Canal and Lake, and that they understand that the City completed various studies using Federal Government funding and only a limited amount of funding is left to address water quality improvements. T. Tran noted in her opinion this citizens' group could have a role in advocating for more funding to address water quality improvements.

Mayor Davis noted that there are opportunities that local service groups could assist in funding various components of the Mohawk Lake District Plan, such as the waterfront promenade or Drummond Street bridge. This project also has great potential for partnerships with a variety of groups, including the two neighbourhoods and Six Nations.

Councillor Martin asked if district heat from the landfill is still being considered for this area. T. Tran responded that she isn't aware of a plan to use district heat but will inquire further and respond through email. G. Martin left the meeting to attend another meeting at 11:58 a.m.

Councillor Utley noted his excitement for the conceptual design for the Mohawk Lake District Plan. He asked staff about water levels in Mohawk Canal. N. Ghbn responded that the City's water quality assessment has identified options to allow more water into Mohawk Lake and Canal. Councillor Utley noted other similar projects have incorporated waterfalls to add beauty as well as to address water volume and notes that staff could look at other worldwide examples of this type of initiative. Councillor Utley also noted excitement over the potential of future coffee shops or bistros that residents may enjoy while also walking around the neighbourhood.

Councillor Antoski noted how this project could fit into a number of funding programs offered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and would encourage presentations about this project at a FCM conference.

Councillor Van Tilborg inquired whether there will be a presentation for November 10 Committee of the Whole meeting and believes that showing the conceptual designs to the public is important. L. Hives responded that staff can speak to the City's Clerks department to try to include a short presentation at the meeting which already has a full agenda.

Councillor Carpenter commented that the City of Brantford could engage with Six Nations to ask them to consider redevelopment opportunities on the nearby Glebe lands.

Councillor Utley proposed to the working group considered putting up a billboard at the intersection of Mohawk Street and Greenwich Street to share conceptual designs of the Mohawk Lake District.

Moved by Councillor Utley

Seconded by Councillor Carpenter

THAT the recommendation be AMENDED to include an additional

recommendation that Staff be directed to explore the cost of erecting a billboard and report back.

The Working Group members discussed the motion.

Councillor Van Tilborg supported getting images of the Mohawk Lake District Plan everywhere.

Councillor Carpenter noted that the City should consider the clean-up of remaining older industrial sites and expand green space.

(amended recommendation)

- A. THAT the Mohawk Lake District Plan Project Update BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the Mohawk Lake District Plan – Final Plan BE ENDORSED by the members of the Mohawk Lake District Working Group; and
- C. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to explore the cost to erect a billboard to promote the Mohawk Lake District Plan project and report back.

CARRIED.

5.2 Community Groups Expression of Interest Process update

Presentation:

H. DeVries, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Real Estate

R. Gasparetto, Manager of Real Estate

H. De Vries noted that the Legal and Real Estate Staff are addressing this issue through a memorandum to outline a framework for discussion to be considered by the Working Group due to the “chicken and egg” nature of addressing the overall Mohawk Lake District Plan and the community group’s proposals. How City Staff respond to the community group’s proposals will require further direction from the Working Group and Council. It is noted that there isn’t a “one size fits all” approach to address the various community group’s proposals. A recommended option outlined in the memo is to use a grant program to evaluate the community group’s proposal. Or another option is to direct staff to negotiate with any of the parties who have responded to the expression of interest. It is noted that the City’s Purchasing Policy doesn’t apply to the disposition of city-owned lands. It is also noted that this process is moving in conjunction with an upcoming process for an Official Plan amendment that is required to adopt the Mohawk Lake District Plan land uses into policy, and which also requires Council approval. Lastly, it is noted that there is a section in the November 10th Staff Report outlining economic development considerations and the cost and benefits associated with various options to retain or sell all or portions of the city-owned lands. Private-sector development would generate future taxes versus a cultural hub or museum district.

Mayor Davis noted the complexity of choosing between interested parties since there is

not enough lands to satisfy everyone. He stated a decision-making process is needed to assist organizations such as Lansdowne Children Centre and Aboriginal Health Centre to receive a decision so they can have certainty or move on with other options available to them. H. De Vries responded that Staff is seeking more direction from the Working Group and Council with respect to its vision for the site, including whether it wishes to use the lands for tax revenue purposes or if it wishes to establish a cultural and museum district. H. De Vries noted that the Mohawk Lake District Plan attempts to balance a variety of land uses, including those that may generate taxes and revenue and those that may not. The current proposal from Lansdowne Children Centre is requesting 22 Mohawk Street which is recognized as having the most potential for private sector development interest.

Moved by: Councillor Carpenter

Seconded by: Councillor Utley

THAT the Mohawk District Lake Working group receive the memorandum prepared by Legal and Real Estate that will be moving forward to COW on November 10th.

The Working Group discussed the motion.

Councillor Carpenter stated he is not interested in asking developers what needs to be done on this site. He noted that using the city-owned lands for a cultural hub will increase the value of adjacent privately-owned lands and private developers can buy these properties instead. He noted that not all nine community groups' submissions received remain under consideration, such as the Children's Safety Village, which is choosing to remain close to the Brantford Police Station location. Other community groups' submissions may also combine to form partnerships or may not require land. He emphasized the importance of collaboration among these groups. He believes the long-term benefit of the community is an important value, and not necessarily the potential revenue associated with the sale of the lands.

H. De Vries responded that staff have also noted potential synergies, such as shared parking and renting available storage or meeting rooms in new buildings, between the community groups and there could be ways to accommodate various groups through partnerships. She suggested the Working Group could direct staff to continue to work with the nine community groups to update the status of their requests, identify potential synergies, and get an update on their current funding and capacity to move forward, and report back to the Working Group, then City Council.

H. De Vries noted that the Working Group needs to give staff direction on whether members wish to use the "triangular orange property" at 22 Mohawk Street for private-sector mixed use development or add it to the available lands for use by the community groups. The other "blue" parcels are already slated for institutional uses, and are under consideration to accommodate the community groups.

The status of the Children's Safety Village was discussed. Staff need to verify whether

they are still considering a location in Brant County and/or whether they could be accommodated within a new Brantford Police Station Headquarters expansion, currently being planned.

Mayor Davis noted that following community engagement, the public supported a plan that included a mixed use commercial component to the plan. He also agreed that the 6.5 acre “orange” parcel is the most valuable portion for private-sector development which could potentially help to fund the 15.3 acre park that may replace Lion’s Park for hosting large events, or the promenades or main street components. Mayor Davis stated he would be opposed to converting the mixed-use commercial parcel to institutional uses.

Councillor Van Tilborg inquired how the various areas of the District Plan were established and who decided what the land uses would be and where, and whether economic benefits were considered. T. Tran responded that the planning process started with working with the community members to create the vision and to identify what kind of land uses the local and wider community wanted. It is noted that the configuration of land uses on the site is constrained by the Canadian Military Heritage Museum and Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre existing in particular locations. After hearing from the community, there were 3 land use configuration options in the first round. The Project Team combined two options together to achieve a balance between green and open space, honoring the existing museum spaces, and adding commercial, residential and institutional land uses. It is also noted that the main street spine connects the District Plan to the existing neighbourhood, and it is intended to include storefronts and offices to add vibrancy to the District. All of these elements are knitted together in a way that responds to community input, is technically feasible, and economically responsible. Councillor Van Tilborg noted that he believes the Working Group needs to stay on this path (with the plan that was endorsed by Council in 2019 and accepted by the community).

Councillor Carpenter doesn’t agree that the 15 acre park should replace Lion’s Park for hosting large events. He questioned whether the 6.5 acre parcel on 22 Mohawk Street is in fact the most valuable for private-sector development. He put forward that community groups need to fund their own proposals, with some financial support from the City through donations, but not supporting operating expenses. He is in favor of City Staff getting together with the groups to see how they can work collaboratively and report back to the committee and a road map for the Working Group to make a decision should occur after hearing back from the community groups.

Moved by: Carpenter

Seconded by: Councillor Utey

THAT the Mohawk District Lake Working group receive the memorandum prepared by Legal and Real Estate that will be moving forward to COW on November 10th.

AND THAT the Manager of Real Estate be directed to work with Lansdowne Children’s Center for the disposition of approximately 6.5 acres of land within the

District and bring the proposal back to the working group; and

AND THAT the Manager of Real Estate work with the remaining groups to determine if there are synergies that would fit in the remaining area of land.

CARRIED

6. CONSENT ITEMS

6.1 Minutes

Moved by: Councillor Utley
Seconded by: Councillor Carpenter

THAT the Mohawk Lake District Working Group minutes of September 9th BE ADOPTED.

Carried

7. RESOLUTIONS

8. NOTICE OF MOTION

None.

9. NEXT MEETING

To be determined.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned 12:53 pm