

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – MARCH 31, 2008

ENVIRONMENTAL MASTER PLAN (EMP) STATUS UPDATE PRESENTATION BY DPRA INC.

Recommendation

The City Manager recommends that:

1. This report and the presentation by DPRA Inc. be received;

Economic Impact

Direction to proceed with the preparation of the Environmental Master Plan has been obtained and was included in the 2007 Capital Budget.

Communications Plan

The communications plan for the Environmental Master Plan is being developed as part of the overall Growth Management Communication Strategy, which will also encompass the Official Plan Review and the Master Plan studies. The public consultation process for the next segment of the Environmental Master Plan study is outlined in this report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update the Environment Committee on the work undertaken on the Environmental Master Plan to-date. The report will focus on the results of the current Council, staff and stakeholder consultations, including input into the definition of sustainability, the environmental ethic and of the principles, which will form part of the Environmental Master Plan. Finally, the public consultation process for the next phase of the study will be described.

Background – Analysis and Options

- a) Update on the Consultation Process
 - i. Staff and Council Consultation

Interviews with City staff from the Commissions have been completed. One interview with members of Council is nearly completed. It is expected that this will be completed in the near future.

- ii. Meeting of the Stakeholder Committee

The Stakeholder Committee is composed of people from a variety of fields or sectors of society that have expertise and/or an interest in environmental/sustainability issues and policies. The first Stakeholder Committee meeting was held on Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at the Vellore Village Community Centre.

The meeting was facilitated DPRA Inc. with the assistance of City staff. The consultants introduced the Environmental Master Plan process and input was sought on the meaning of sustainability, what are the most important environmental issues facing the City and what actions the City can take to address the issues. The discussions were productive and the participants provided valuable insights.

The report from DPRA Inc. on the first Stakeholder Committee meeting forms Attachment 1 to this report. This was the first of three meetings. The second will take place in late

May – early June and focus on policy development. The final meeting will take place in September, at which time the draft EMP will be reviewed for comment.

iii. Meeting with the Project Team

The project team is composed of staff representatives from the City commissions. Its purpose is to provide input and feedback on the development of the Environmental Master Plan. The Project Team met on March 7, 2008. The purpose of this meeting was to update staff on the progress to-date, review the emerging themes from the consultation process and discuss the definition of sustainability in the EMP, the environmental ethic and principles of the plan.

iv. The Public Consultation Process

One of the objectives of the Growth Management Strategy is to optimize public input by coordinating the consultation processes that are being undertaken for the various plans and studies. As such, staff and the consulting teams involved in the preparation of the EMP and the Official Plan Review have been working together to coordinate the respective processes. This will help eliminate the potential for “consultation fatigue” amongst the public and it has the potential to increase the number of contributors and expand and diversify the base of respondents.

Consultation respecting the Environmental Master Plan will be integrated with the OP Review process. The EMP will be providing guidance in the development and implementation of the new Official Plan. The main area of policy convergence will be in respect of sustainable communities. Bringing the public processes together will help strengthen both documents.

The combined process has been established and was identified in the media launch for the *Vaughan Tomorrow* program that took place on Thursday, March 27, 2008. The main elements of the process will be the Public Speaker Series, which will be followed by a series of Visioning Workshops. The Speaker Series will be composed of three events:

Session 1: April 10, 2008, 7-9 pm
Topic: *Defining a Sustainable Future*

Session 2: April 24, 2008, 7-9 pm
Topic: *Improving Vaughan's Quality of Life:
The Importance of City Building and Place
Making Initiatives*

Session 3: May 6, 2008, 7-9 pm
Topic: *Vaughan as a 21st Century City*

Session 1 will focus on sustainability issues, addressing the meaning of sustainable community development and exploring examples of sustainable communities or practices that may be applicable to Vaughan.

This will be followed by five community based Visioning Workshops, which are planned for the following dates:

Maple: May 21, 2008, 7-9 pm
Thornhill: May 27, 2008, 7-9 pm
Vaughan Corporate Centre: May 28, 7-9 pm
Kleinburg: June 4, 2008, 7-9 pm
Woodbridge: June 11, 2008, 7-9 pm

The workshops will allow the public to explore the challenges and opportunities that will shape the future of these areas. A sustainability module will be built into the workshops. This will allow the public to provide its input into the formulation of the Environmental Master Plan.

b) Next Steps

i. Establishing the Defining Terms Forming the Basis for the Environmental Master Plan

The Terms of Reference for the Environmental Master Plan require the preparation of a number of defining terms, which will shape the plan and its implementation. The concepts in question include:

- The City's definition of "Sustainability";
- An "Environmental Ethic" to guide the City's actions; and
- "Principles" to govern the implementation and operation of the plan.

These concepts will represent the City's position on sustainability; and they will help establish the philosophical and ethical basis for how the City will address its operational and regulatory responsibilities. They will provide guidance to staff in implementing the plan and give the public a clear understanding of the City's commitment to a sustainable future.

The definition of sustainability is typically the lead element and has the most public prominence. Therefore, it needs to capture the spirit of the entire program. While each of the three elements can stand alone, it is best to consider them as a package. When read sequentially, it is the intention that they provide a comprehensive picture of the City's approach to sustainability.

ii. Process for Developing the Developing the Definitions

It will be important that these definitions reflect a common vision shared by Council, staff and the community. DPRA Inc. is developing working drafts of these terms. They will be shaped through consultation and dialogue, involving Council the public and staff prior to finalization in the fall of 2008 as part of the EMP approval. They will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team and then submitted to the Environment Committee at its next meeting on April 28, 2008. At that time, staff will be seeking direction from the Environment Committee to bring forward the draft definitions of sustainability, the environmental ethic and principles for public consultation through the Stakeholder Committee and through the visioning sessions. Ultimately, the final versions of the definition of sustainability, the environmental ethic and the principles will be approved by Council in the fall of 2008. The immediate objective is to strengthen these elements through public input and begin to build consensus on their content.

c) Consultation – What Has Been Heard To-Date

The presentation by DPRA Inc. will identify the issues that have been raised during the initial consultation processes. The presentation will cover the following:

- The Most Important Environmental Issues;
- The Role for the City of Vaughan;
- The Barriers;
- How is Vaughan a Leader;
- What does Sustainability Mean to Vaughan;
- The Potential Environmental Ethic for the City;
- The Principles for the Environmental Master Plan.

This will provide the Committee with an overview of the issues and allow for further discussion and input on matters that should be added or areas that may require greater emphasis.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved. It supports the objective of Ensuring the City-wide protection of the Environment (S. 4.4); and ensuring that municipal operations are undertaken in an environmentally responsible manner (S 4.4.4).

Regional Impact

N/A

Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to provide the Environment Committee with a status update on the preparation of the Environmental Master Plan. The early stage consultations have been completed and it is now possible to report on the findings to-date. The project consultant will be presenting the results.

Moving forward, the process for the next phase of consultation with the general public has been established. It will be composed of the Speaker Series and five Visioning Workshops, which will be run between April and June. This process will jointly address the Official Plan Review and the Environmental Master Plan.

Prior to the Visioning Workshops it will be necessary to develop drafts of the EMP's definition of sustainability, the environmental ethic and operational principles in order to have them available for public review. The consultant is preparing working definitions of these elements, which will be presented to the Environment Committee on April 28, 2008. At that time direction will be sought to commit the draft versions to public review, subject to Committee comment.

It is recommended that this report and the presentation by DPRA Inc. be received.

Attachments

1. Stakeholder Committee Workshop # 1, Workshop Report, Wednesday, February 20, 2008, Vellore Village Community Centre

Report Prepared by:

Roy McQuillin, Manager of Corporate Policy, ext. 8211

Respectfully submitted,

Michael DeAngelis
City Manager

Stakeholder Committee Workshop #1

Environmental Master Plan for the City of Vaughan

Workshop Report



Wednesday, February 20, 2008, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Vellore Village Community Centre, 1 Villa Royale Ave.

Facilitated by:



7501 Keele Street, Suite 300
Vaughan, ON
L4K 1Y2
www.dpra.ca

March 14, 2008

OVERVIEW

The City of Vaughan is currently in the process of developing the Environmental Master Plan, which will build upon, support and complement existing sustainability measures in Vaughan's current policies and plans. The plan will serve to define and then extend the sustainability ethic to the entire sphere of municipal responsibility, including operational and regulatory functions. The final Environmental Master Plan will identify implementation steps alongside a recommended administrative structure. The EMP will also be an opportunity to demonstrate the City's achievements and show leadership on environmental issues.



The Environmental Master Plan is being developed as a component of the City's larger Consolidated Growth Management Strategy, which includes the Strategic Plan (Vaughan Vision 2020), a review of the City's Official Plan and a number of supportive Master Plans addressing services and infrastructure. The plan will also function as the City's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, a federal requirement for municipalities to access gas tax revenue to fund community sustainability infrastructure projects.

The Environmental Master Plan Stakeholder Committee was established to provide input to the City of Vaughan about the community's sense of local environmental and sustainability issues, including priorities.

The first Stakeholder Committee Workshop was held on Wednesday, February 20th, 2008 at the Vellore Village Community Centre.

WORKSHOP PURPOSE



Stakeholder Committee Workshop attendees participate in a small group discussion, February 20, 2008

The workshop brought together a range of stakeholders from the social, environmental, economic/business and cultural sectors of the City of Vaughan. The meeting was facilitated by members of the DPRA consulting team. The purpose of the workshop was to ensure a collective understanding of the Environmental Master Plan (EMP) process and anticipated outcomes. As well, stakeholders were asked to provide guidance to the municipality about their understanding of sustainability, priority environmental issues and actions that the City could take in the short and long-term.

PARTICIPANTS

The response to the invitations to the workshop was extremely positive. Overall, there were 21 participants at the workshop representing a wide range of public and private organizations, including:

- Adam Arnold, SMART Commute
- Alex Meadu, Michael Art Gallery
- Arlene Etchen, CMHC
- Brian Shifman, SMART Commute
- Deb Schulte, Friends of Boyd Park
- Frank Carnevale, Bridgepoint Group
- Janice Chu, United Way of York Region
- Jen Atkinson, Windfall Ecology
- Julie Darboh, COSTI
- Larry Brydon, Toronto Chapter, World Green Building Council
- Leslie Atkinson - York Region Environmental Alliance
- Leslie Luxemburger, Sustainable Urban Development Association
- Lois Lindsay, Evergreen Foundation
- Margie Singleton, Vaughan Public Library
- Michael Pozzebon, BILD
- Norm Vezina, York Region Catholic School Board
- Patrick Guran, Powerstream
- Rose Marciano - S.A.V.I
- Robert Selvazzo, York Region District School Board
- Stacey Starkman, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce
- Susan Sang, Clean Air Partnership

Emily Reisman from Urban Strategies Inc., the City's consultant for the Official Plan Review, attended as an observer to ensure that comments and suggestions relevant to the Official Plan Review exercise were noted for consideration.

Roy McQuillin (City of Vaughan's Project Coordinator) and Rebekah McGurran (City of Vaughan - Economic Developer - Environmental Sector) attended the workshop and assisted with workshop logistics. Clement Chong attended from the planning department. DPRA facilitators included Amanda Kennedy, Jim Micak and Christina Bruce.

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN TO YOU?

After a brief summary of the process to develop the Environmental Master Plan and introductions from the groups, participants discussed what phrases come to mind when they think of the term "sustainability".

Participants brainstormed and provided many different terms that come to mind when they think of the term sustainability, including:

- Ability for cultural expression
- Complete community planning - all ages
- Long-term thinking
- Holistic/integrated planning
- Respecting resources
- Balance
- Life-cycle impact/product
- Present vs. future needs
- True progress through limits to growth
- Quality of life
- Social capital/happiness
- Sustain planet and species on it
- Learning from other cultures (First Nations)
- Triple bottom line - social/\$/environment
- Dynamism/change/resilience
- Affordability - 7 generations
- Intergenerational equity

The second question posed to the participants was: What are some of the *common principles* of sustainability? The responses included:

- Responsibility including manufacturing
- Energy efficiency (land-use/materials)
- Recycling
- Respect
- Equity
- Ecological footprint
- Accountability
- Best practices/evidence-based
- Education
- Precautionary principle
- Cultural diversity
- Transparency
- Conservation
- Inclusiveness
- Accessible
- Engagement and buy-in
- Understanding
- Dependence on environment



Many of the principles expressed were similar to the principles or values expressed in the Vaughan Vision 20/20 including equity, accountability, transparency, inclusiveness and respect.

FOCUS ON A SUSTAINABLE VAUGHAN

Breaking out into groups, participants looked ahead forty years and discussed what the groups felt were some of the characteristics of a sustainable Vaughan. The participants provided many responses on what they wanted Vaughan to look like in forty years, including:

- Higher density
- Trees/greenpace/ecological habitats/farmland
- Locally, self-sufficient communities - energy, food, etc.
- Liveable communities that accommodate a broad variety of people
- Accessible transit/alternative means to car
- Healthy living
- Encourage green industry/tools for industry
- Diverse representatives in decision-making
- Distributed generation/waste
- Walkability
- Integrated subway network



Fair and inclusive/open process-open dialogues - drew upon wide variety of experiences, ideas, suggestions of all participants
(Participant Feedback)

It was great to have a say and share ideas for our future in Vaughan
(Participant Feedback)

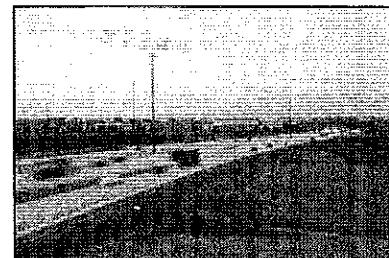
This workshop was far more productive than I expected and it was far more professionally conducted also. I had less expectations and was happily impressed
(Participant Feedback)

Participants then worked with facilitators to discuss what they felt were some of the most important environmental issues facing the City of Vaughan. The key environmental issues included:

- Cost of living
- Affordable housing
- Sprawl/low density/separation of land uses
- Loss of natural areas
- Lifestyle of consumption
- Environmental education including businesses
- Transportation options
- Building standards
- Too many cars
- Need for more trees
- Noise
- No identification with 'Vaughan'
- Energy conservation
- Source water protection
- Air quality
- Cost of health services
- Waste management
- Tools for green industry

After participants identified the many important environmental issues facing the City of Vaughan, they were asked to participate in a priority setting exercise to identify which three issues were the most important to them. They most important environmental issues included:

- Transportation options - 14 votes
- Environmental Education (including businesses) - 13 votes
- Sprawl/low density/separation of land uses - 11 votes
- Lifestyles of consumption - 8 votes
- Loss of natural areas - 4 votes
- Energy - 4 votes



WHAT CAN BE DONE

Building on the exercise above, participants worked in small groups with facilitators to discuss what the City of Vaughan could do to help the community take action on the identified priority issues. The key issues and suggested actions are summarized below. Many other ideas were captured through the workshop and will be integrated into the draft Environmental Master Plan.

Transportation options:

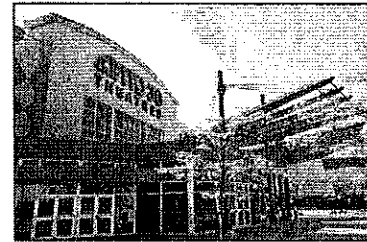
- Development of transit corridors and walkable routes
- Rebates for hybrid cars and car pooling
- Free parking for transit users

Environmental Education (including businesses):

- Strive and be recognized as an environmental leader
- Educate general public/youth in schools about important environmental issues
- Work with Multiple Stakeholders to ensure educational programs and services (e.g. 'Green' Campaigns) and local community group reporting on their environmental initiatives and best practices

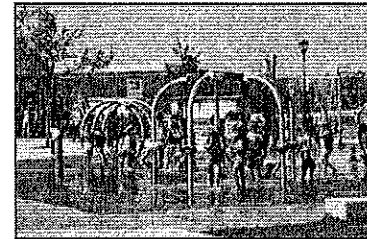
Sprawl/low density/separation of land uses

- Ensure City planning is sustainable (through City scoping initiatives)
- Energy auditing to protect the environment
- Shift of policy: Public consultation/decision-making and green planning
- LEED Standards



Lifestyles of consumption

- Educate residents on more sustainable lifestyles
- Alter lifestyles to practice sustainable consumption
- Use of media (TV, literacy, radio) to get the message out
- Implement green plan policies and encourage community initiatives
- Demonstrate leadership

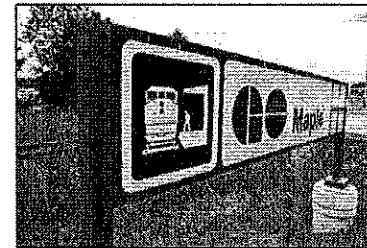


Loss of natural areas

- Educate and programs (school curriculum)
- Presentation and recognition for Green Awards
- Municipal staff education on green technology

Energy

- Changes to by-laws, use of solar roofs
- More economic incentives (geothermal, solar, etc.)
- Attracting green business/energy
- Conserve energy locally
- Show leadership, partnership



CONCLUSION



Stakeholder Committee Workshop attendees participate in a small group discussion, February 20, 2008

The workshop concluded at 4:30 with a brief summary of the afternoon and a discussion of the plans to move forward. The group will meet again in to begin action planning and again in the fall to review the draft Environmental Master Plan.

At the end of the workshop participants were asked to provide comments on the outcome of the workshop and if the workshop met their expectations. Twenty-one participants provided their comments and ninety percent of the participants felt that the proposed workshop process was very useful or useful for discussing their views on the Environmental Master Plan. A similar percentage felt that the workbook prepared for the workshop was a great deal or somewhat helpful. Some felt that more time was required to explore the suggestions for the City to implement environmental changes (i.e. longer workshop). Other suggestions included ensuring that the committee was more culturally diverse and encouraging participation by all participants as some were more reluctant to participate than others.

The groups were a great forum for generating discussion/ideas. I would suggest that this forum be repeated in future meetings.

Overall, all participants felt that the workshop met their expectations and looked forward to future discussions and opportunities to provide input into the EMP process.