

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) JUNE 11 2002

VELLORE DISTRICT CENTRE STUDY

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

1. That the Phase II Work Plan for the Vellore Village District Centre Study be approved;
2. That the City's consultant, Sorensen, Gravely, Lowes Planning Associates, be directed to complete the remaining tasks in the Phase II Work Plan for the Vellore Village District Centre Study;
3. That a budget of \$60,000.00 be approved as a supplement to the proposed Planning Department 2002 operating budget, in order to complete this Study.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline the proposed Phase II Work Plan for the Vellore Village District Centre Study to enable completion of the Study, including Council direction to establish a Stakeholder Consultation Group to assist City Staff and consultants in completing the remaining Study tasks, and approval of the associated budget.

Location

The Vellore Village District Centre is generally located at the intersection of Major Mackenzie Drive and Weston Road in the community of Vellore - Urban Village 1. The community of Vellore is generally bounded by Pine Valley Drive on the west, Teston Road on the north, Highway #400 on the east, and Rutherford Road on the south (see Location Map - Vellore Urban Village 1, from Schedule B, OPA #600). The ultimate population of Vellore Urban Village 1 will be approximately 50,000 people.

Background

On February 26, 2001, Council approved a Terms of Reference for the District Centres Study.

On May 17, 2001, the Province initiated a review of the Oak Ridges Moraine, effectively suspending further planning approvals for a 6-month period for its subject lands, including lands within the Carrville District Centre.

On May 30, 2001, Council directed an expansion of the Terms of Reference for the Vellore Village District Centre Study, "to include the lands on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive extending to Highway #400 for the purpose of establishing a new City Centre..." Council also created a Task Force to undertake a feasibility study of a new civic center, and provided for it to report to Council on a regular basis.

Subsequently, the City retained the services of a consulting team led by Sorensen, Gravely, Lowes Planning Associates. The team also included sub-consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers (market and economic analysis), Markson, Borooah Hodgson Architects Inc. (Urban Design), and Totten, Sims, Hubicki Associates Ltd. (transportation).

On January 14, 2002, Council directed:

- “1. That the City’s consultant, Sorensen, Gravely, Lowes Planning Associates, be directed to complete the remaining tasks in the Vellore Village District Centre Study;
2. That a budget of \$40,000 be approved as a supplement to the proposed Planning Department 2002 operating budget, in order to complete this Study.”

Open House - April 17, 2002

On April 17, 2002, Sorensen, Gravely, Lowes presented the results of their work to a Public Open House at Vellore Hall. The Open House was attended by approximately eighty people, including representatives from eight ratepayer associations. Their presentation included their evaluation of several development scenarios for the Vellore Village District Centre, and a detailed discussion, aided by drawings and computer-generated graphics, of their recommended development scenario.

The recommended scenario provided for the District Centre to be focused on the properties located at the intersection of Weston Road and Major Mackenzie Drive, ultimately in a mixed use commercial/residential development of up to six storeys in the long term. A pedestrian-friendly environment was proposed to be established along the Weston Road frontage with the intention of creating a ‘main street shopping environment’ there to serve the Vellore community. The proposal envisioned that the primary retail commercial area would be surrounded by residential development, with building heights declining outward from the major intersection to typical low density development at the edge of the District Centre as defined by the primary road network.

Public response to the proposal was negative, particularly to the proposed scale and height of development, and the perceived traffic problems which might result. Other associated concerns were expressed concerning possible increased traffic infiltration to surrounding neighbourhoods, and an excessive amount of retail commercial space being provided.

In response to these concerns, Staff have requested the City’s consultants to prepare a modified workplan with extensive consultation with stakeholders affected by the District Centre’s future development, in order to ensure that the District Centre plan will be acceptable to the community.

Work Plan - Phase II

The proposed Work Plan envisions a process wherein City staff and consultants work closely with a Stakeholder Consultation Group(SCG) through four or more working meetings focused on the full range of planning and development issues relevant to the District Centre. Because expanded public and landowner consultation is an essential part of this Phase II work, Phase II will exceed the amount directed by Council on January 14, 2002. Phase II will require an amount of \$60,000.00 to complete the Work Plan. The draft Phase II Work Plan is presented on Attachment 1.

The main product of this process would be a development concept supported by the SCG which would be presented to the community at large at a future public Open House. Provided that a positive response is received at the Open House, the development concept would be incorporated into an Official Plan amendment and zoning bylaw to be brought forward to a Public Hearing in Fall, 2002.

It is anticipated that the SCG would include representatives from ratepayer associations, including:

- Vellore Woods Ratepayers Association
- Vellore Village Ratepayers Association
- Millwood Woodend Ratepayers Association
- Weston Downs Ratepayers Association
- Committee of Vaughan Ratepayer Associations(COVRA)

The SCG would also include representation from landowner groups currently preparing Block Plans in Block 33 West and Block 40, and other individuals owning land within the District Centre area from these blocks, Block 32 West and Block 39. Each interest group would be invited to nominate an individual and an alternate to participate in the SCG meetings. The SCG would meet at least four times over the June through August period, with additional meetings in the Fall to review and discuss the consultant's draft report on the Study, the draft OPA and draft Zoning Bylaw. Its meetings would also be open to anyone wishing to attend and inform themselves of progress on the Study.

Conclusion

Staff anticipate that the Phase II Work Plan will provide ample opportunity for the community and development interests to be directly involved in the process of developing the District Centre plan. This process should help to ensure that the final products of the Study will be completed in a timely manner, and will be supported by the Vellore community.

Attachments

1. Draft Work Plan - Phase II, Vellore Village District Centre Study

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DeANGELIS
Commissioner of Planning

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ATTACHMENT 1

Vellore Village Centre Tertiary Plan

Work Plan Phase II

Late June to Late August: Meetings with a Stakeholder Consultation Group (SCG) of landowners and Community Groups

Task 1: Staff contact and organize a Stakeholder Consultation Group(SCG) consisting of community group representatives and landowners

Task 2: Prepare for and Attend inaugural SCG Meeting with landowners and community groups

- At the meeting we will:
 - outline purpose of the meeting
 - go over policies in OPA 400/ 600
 - describe how we would like to progress with working group
 - Identify Issues to address during the process, i.e.:
 - pedestrian orientation
 - commercial lay-out/ distribution/ uses
 - street pattern
 - on street parking/ street cross-section/ traffic management
 - residential densities/ heights/ long term intensification
 - park space

Tasks 3 to 5: Three subsequent SCG meetings to address the following issues:

Meeting 2 – pedestrian orientation, commercial lay-out/distribution/uses

Meeting 3 – street layout, on-street parking, street cross-section, traffic management

Meeting 4 – residential densities, heights, long term intensification, parkland

Task 6: Staff Meetings

- We anticipate 2 meetings with staff during this step.

Timing: First meeting: late June, with two to three meetings during July and August. Some flexibility will be required to accommodate summer schedules. If scheduling becomes difficult the fourth meeting may have to be held in early September.

DRAFT WORK PLAN

Early to mid-September: Council Working Session

Task 1: Present results of SCG meetings to a working session of Council

Late September: Public Open House

Task 1: Preparation of presentation materials

Task 2: Attend and present results of SCG Sessions to Open House in Vellore Hall

Early to mid-October: Revise and Finalize Reports, OPA and By-law

Task 1: Revise Draft Transportation Study

Task 2: Revise Draft Planning/Urban Design Study Report

Task 3: Revise Draft OPA

Task 4: Prepare Draft Zoning By-law

Task 5: Distribute Draft Reports, OPA and Zoning By-law to SCG for comments

Task 6: Staff Meetings - We anticipate two meetings with staff during this Step to finalize draft reports and documents noted above.

November: Council Public Hearing

December: Council decision