

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FEBRUARY 17, 2003

RECENT CHRONOLOGY - EVENTS LEADING TOWARDS A NEW CITY HALL

Recommendation

That this report, summarizing the recent chronology of events leading towards a new City Hall, be RECEIVED

Purpose

This report is to provide Council with a brief summary of the main events and activities that have taken place in recent months towards the selection of a site for a new City Hall for the City of Vaughan.

Background - Analysis and Options

Council has directed that in approximately four to six weeks a progress report be brought forward, outlining the details of the process leading to the establishment of a new City Hall for the City of Vaughan. It is intended that this progress report capture this process from the earliest identifiable point in time.

In the interim, this summary report outlines key recent events and decisions leading towards a new City Hall for the City of Vaughan

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- May 30, 2001 - Council directed an expansion of the Terms of Reference for the Vellore 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 centre and to report to Council on a regular basis;
- Sorensen Gravely Lowes (SGL), Planning Associates Inc. was retained to carry out the Vellore District Centre Study and the City Centre feasibility study. PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP was retained as the sub-consultant to carry out the feasibility study portion of the work;
- January 14, 2002 - Report to Council - City Centre feasibility study findings reviewed the characteristics of nine (9) GTA city halls, categorizing them into three main types: Civic Focus (stand alone); Moderate Mixed-Use Focus (stand alone with some connection to the surrounding mixed use development); and, Comprehensive Mixed Use Focus (City Hall part of a major comprehensive development intended to serve as downtown to the community). Council directed that SGL continue with the Feasibility Study to review six (6) potential locations for a new City Hall. The criteria to be used to assess each site are: civic image, visibility and access, range of uses/functionality and urban structure, built form, financial considerations and investment stimulation. Staff was directed to report in April, 2002 to a Committee of the Whole (Working Session) with the results of the evaluation;
- February 26, 27 and 28, 2002 - public meetings held in Maple, Woodbridge and Thornhill, respectively to obtain comments from the public on the six potential locations. Ratepayers were advised through newspaper ads in the local press, direct mailing to ratepayer associations and direct notice to anyone who had asked to be notified;

- April 30, 2002 - Committee of the Whole (Working Session) received the presentation by Sorensen Gravely Lowes on the report titled, "City Hall Location Study, April 2002". Council endorsed the "Moderate Mixed-Use Focus" centre for a new City Hall and requested a detailed cost-benefit analysis by June 2002, of the two options identified as Moderate Mixed-Use Focus Centres, being Major Mackenzie Drive/Highway#400 and the Vaughan Corporate Centre;
- May 13, 2002 - Council directed the City Manager, in consultation with the Senior Management Team, to retain qualified external assistance to carry out the cost-benefit study by June 2002;
- June 21, 2002 - Memo to Council advising that the detailed cost-benefit analysis required could not be carried out before the end of June;
- June 28, 2002 - Request for Statements of Interest/Terms of Reference issued to candidate firms for the cost-benefit study;
- July 24, 2002 - Council advised that KPMG has been retained to carry out the City Hall cost-benefit study, which will include input through interviews with each City Councillor;
- August 12, 2002 - York Major Holdings submitted a proposal/concept to use their site at Major Mackenzie and (future) McNaughton Rd. for a new City Hall, in combination with a hospital/health care facility;
- September 23, 2002 - Council directed that a third moderate mixed-use site on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive and (future) McNaughton Road be added to the evaluation;
- September 24, 2002 - KPMG interim report provided to Committee of the Whole (Working Session) on study progress. Committee recommended that the presentation (only dealing with initial 2 candidate sites identified on May 13, 2002) be received. This recommendation was ratified by Council on October 15, 2002;
- October 29, 2002 - Committee of the Whole (Working Session) heard the presentation by KPMG and recommended that the report be received and that the matter be referred to staff for a comprehensive report incorporating comments from Members of Council. Ratified by Council on November 11, 2002;
- December 10, 2002 - KPMG presented final report on cost-benefit to Committee of the Whole (Working Session). Committee recommended that only those sites along the Major Mackenzie Drive corridor, between Weston Road and Dufferin Street, be further evaluated for a new City Hall site. Committee recommended that staff explore the opportunities of the various sites, being the present Civic Centre site, the McNaughton Road site, and the Weston Road site. Committee further recommended that staff outline the advantages and disadvantages of each site, meet with the appropriate landowners, and bring forward a report, with appropriate steps to follow, by mid-January 2003. Recommendation was ratified on December 16, 2002;
- January 14, 2003 - Committee of the Whole (Working Session) heard presentations in-camera from the respective landowners on proposals for the use of their sites for a City Hall and surrounding uses, including a consultant's analysis of the existing City Hall site. Prior to going in-camera, Committee heard comments from the public.

- January 27, 2003 - Council directed that staff prepare reports in six weeks respecting the City Hall selection process and a staff evaluation of the merits, pro and con, of the three candidate sites.

Conclusion

Over approximately the past two years, Council has carried out a number of formal steps leading to the establishment of a new City Hall for the City of Vaughan. This process has been summarized to date in this Staff Report.

Attachments

N/A

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Respectfully submitted,

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Commissioner of Planning

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