

**GENERAL BROCK SCHOOL SITE
PUBLIC MEETING
JUNE 10, 2003
CENTENNIAL HALL-CENTRAL LIBRARY**

STAFF: **Tim Commisso, General Manager-Community Services**
 Dennis Sisko, Manager of Facilities & Sport Development
 Charlotte O'Hara-Griffin, Open Space & Park Development Planner
 Ron Steinginga, Manager of Realty Services
 Councillor Jack Dennison
 Marlene Cotton (Minutes)

- Dennis Sisko introduced himself and said the purpose of the evening was to explain the process of the disposal of surplus school sites, how this relates to the General Brock site, possible options and requesting input from the public. He explained that Council encourage the public to participate in school closures and that they understand that it can be a difficult time for communities.
- Charlotte explained that the City has been involved with 3 other school closures. The School Board initially offers the property for sale to other school boards and the local municipality. Burlington has always submitted conditional offers. The City then goes to the public for their input (a step that might not happen through the School Board). In most cases, the City receives 5% of the land and, to date, the City of Burlington has been able to get more than that in each case, as well as some park development.
- In the case of Mountain Gardens School, a partner came on board, who then brought in other partners and the building was retained, as well as the park site. In other situations, housing has been built with parkland set aside.
- The City sends proposals to various types of users that could have an interest in a large building, such as private schools or businesses. We request Expressions of Interest to see what they propose to do with the site and parkland. These are reviewed thoroughly by the City and with the Ward Councillor and Board of Education. Ideas (not specifics) are shared with the public, as we want to find a suitable use that is favourable to the public.
- The next step is a Request for Proposals. There is limited public input after this, as land negotiation issues are confidential legal matters. The proposals are then reviewed for planning and zoning requirements, etc. and then reviewed again by the City and Board of Education for fair market value.
- Finally, agreements are entered into with the City, School Board and Purchaser. The City purchases the land from the School Board and sells to the new buyer. This happens simultaneously and the City garners no profit.
- Dennis invited Councillor Dennison to make a few comments. He said that this site is different from the previous sites, as it is a secondary school and encompasses 26 acres. It is the major park in south Ward 4 and we should try to keep as much of it as possible. The cost is presently too high for the City to purchase on its own, so we will need an outside partner to help out financially. Soccer groups may be interested. The next meeting regarding this site will not be until early 2004 in order for staff to research and see how the capital budget comes together.
- If anyone is interested in speaking to Councillor Dennison, they can call him at 905-632-4800, Ext. 211.

QUESTION & ANSWERS

Question or Comment	Staff Responding	Answer
Has Burlington seriously looked at a post-secondary educational institution?	Tim Commisso Charlotte O-G	Burlington would like this as well; however, funds may be difficult to come by. This will be added to the list of Options to research. As part of the Board of Education's mandate, they must offer it to these institutions.
Would it be of value for residents to lobby such post-secondary educational organizations, Council, the School Board or other government agencies?	Councillor Dennison	Anything we can do towards this end would be helpful.
Would the City consider taking a different stance and using it to generate revenue for the City?	Tim Commisso	This site has not been considered in capital budget planning, but we could look at alternatives. Most of the capital budget is for new facilities, which are partly funded by development charges.
If you secured a Corporate Sponsor and dollars were available, wouldn't this be a good opportunity to use this existing facility?	Tim Commisso	This is an old school building and it would be very costly to change it for other uses. Certainly a partnership is a possibility, but with very limited City funding. The City could take the role of facilitator, with some funding possible.
Suggestion that a neighbourhood group be part of the process so residents concerns are heard. This would be a working group, consisting of City staff, residents, school board staff and development concerns.		Comment only
Will the City entertain putting in a Mall or Power Centre?	Charlotte O-G.	The Official Plan is zoned residential, low density and this is not in the 20-year plan, so would be very difficult to change.
This is a 15- acre sport field and neighbourhood park area. What has been done to other sites to date?	Ron Steinginga	Elizabeth Gardens has new, better-functioning playground equipment, Fairfield has a new park & landscaping and in Mountain Gardens, the partners retained the existing building & park. The park is available for use by public as before.
Why is no School Board Representative present tonight? Do they want what is best for the community or only the highest price?	Ron Steinginga	The School Board is invited to these meetings, but it is not necessary that they attend. The decision to sell has been made. The property is available for purchase by the City of Burlington, which is the only municipality in Ontario that consults with residents on the sale of school sites. We recognize that the public process is good and want to have residents happy with the outcome, as well as getting fair market value for the property.
The City receives 5% of the property for parkland or cash in lieu. There should be no further development in this area, as New Street is very busy and cannot handle further residential development.	Charlotte O-G.	Cash in lieu is used for various purposes. We will look at the need for parkland in this area as well as other needs in the City, as park dedication monies are not specific to any site.

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	Ron Steinginga	Traffic & environmental studies (including creek blocks) are done when planning new developments and this will be done when the use of this site is decided.
We would urge City staff to consider the need for parkland carefully before making a decision. Parkland is very much needed in this area.	Councillor Dennison	Asked that anyone interested in becoming involved in a committee leave their name tonight.
Would it be feasible to get a lawyer and form a ratepayer's group?	Tim Commisso	This is only the start of the process and no advantage to having a lawyer. The City is willing to assist any groups that want to become involved in the process.
People in this area have been here for many years and deserve as much consideration to their needs as those in new communities who are getting new facilities.	Tim Commisso	New areas receive new facilities and development easier due to funding from development charges. Traffic, environment and impact on the community are all considered. Tansley Woods was funded by development charges, but we cannot use them for this area, so must obtain a partner in order to develop.
Do not wish to see a detention centre here.		Comment only
We should be looking at demographics in the area and where children will be living & going to school in future in relation to bussing, portables, etc.		This issue should be addressed by the School Board.
How many homes could go on this site within its present zoning? Would a developer need to purchase additional land to provide access to New Street?	Ron Steinginga	Developers now have 5,6 or 7 lots per acre, which would be 140 single-family homes. Access would be reviewed by the Fire Department, etc. but New Street would provide best access. The entrance from New Street is not a public road but there is public frontage, which would probably allow for a widening. An entrance from the south would probably require the purchase of properties.
We should leave the land as is and upgrade the building in order to get a computer company in (possibly from overseas). This type of company would have 9-5 hours, weekends free and only have to maintain and upgrade the building.		Comment only
The entrance from New Street is not a public road but there is public frontage		Comment only
At the next public meeting, please provide a microphone, as it is difficult to hear all of the questions and answers.		Comment only
Is there any situation where the City would expropriate land in order to allow development? Is there a precedence for this?		The City has the power to do this but not the political will and would not normally do this.
People who live south of the site would like an in-depth study of traffic flow and impact on the community.	Dennis Sisko	This will be provided, including statistics.
Resident that works at Sheridan College is interested in pursuing the idea of a post-secondary educational facility. Based on past experience, what are the timelines for options?	Charlotte O-G.	A report will be going to Council in January 2004. This is usually followed by a Request for Expressions of Interest, which covers approximately 3 weeks but can be

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		extended. This is followed by a Request for Proposals for the next 4-6 weeks. We would like the entire process lined up with the closing of the school in June 2004. We will accept names of interested parties tonight.
Does the City have a preference of what they would like to see? We should all be working towards the same goal, if possible.	Tim Commisso	No, we have no specific vision. This is partly due to the size of the property. We would like to retain it as open space, but financially, we need a partner. The City does provide some funding to reach a proposed option.
Is Affordable Housing an option?	Charlotte O-G.	Not under the current zoning and official plan. It could possibly be done if a developer wanted to request a change of designation.
Community must fight for what they want. Would like to form a community group with interested residents.		Comment only
Has an assessment been done on the building yet to see what condition it is in? We need this information in order to examine all options.	Dennis Sisko	The School Board has had a good accounting of their facilities in the past and have been open to sharing this information with the City. Dennis will get this information for the resident.
Elizabeth Gardens property now has expensive homes-he hopes it won't happen here		Comment
Explain about development charges not being designated to specific parks	Tim Commisso Charlotte O-G.	About 2 years ago, the City mandated that development charges would no longer be collected. Park dedication monies will still continue. Park Dedication funds go into the capital budget and Council decides the priority for spending.
Will our homes be re-assessed to show less value and fewer taxes? If a southerly access is decided upon, would sidewalks be installed?	Ron Steiginga	No answer to these questions yet. Sidewalks would be the responsibility of the developer.
Does this mean that the City supports development?	Tim Commisso	This is premature, as we are only at the discussion stage. Our priority would be to maximize open space.
Green space is absolutely necessary and is used extensively.	Dennis Sisko	Reminder that the City does not own the land and we will do our best to find an appropriate use suitable to all parties, but cost is a necessary factor.
Who does the Traffic Study and who pays for it?	Charlotte O-G.	This would be done by the developer. City staff review. Studies are conducted by qualified Engineers that are acceptable to the City.
Will process be followed for this site?	Charlotte O-G.	Since this site is unique, staff will ask Council if they want the same process. The School Board would like to sell the entire parcel but if they get the amount they want, they may consider a change to this. Our process will lead to the same result.
Does the City's website have updates on this issue?	Charlotte O-G.	When we get further along in the process, this would be a good idea. We will contact

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		our Communications Dept. about this.
Does the City of Burlington have a Business Development Manager? Have they been involved with other school sites?	Tim Commisso	Burlington Economic Development Corporation – not previously involved but, since this site is different, he will get in touch with them.
Feel there is a need to form a committee in order to voice concerns and possibly collect funds.		Comment only
How does the School Board purchase their land?	Charlotte O-G.	It is purchased at fair market value, according to their funding system. They must consider capacity/student ratio and location needs.
Does the City subsidize the purchase of schools?	Ron Steinginga	The City has no involvement in purchasing school sites, but School Boards often plan a school beside a park.
What is the public's opportunity for input before a decision is made?	Charlotte O-G.	You can appear as a delegation to Council at the meeting at which the staff report is presented.
Many people in South Burlington selected this location for the neighbourhood. This issue is serious enough that some may consider moving. Residents will fight hard to keep this sense of community.		Comment only
What about the agreement between the City and School Board regarding the Tree Nursery located on the property?	Charlotte O-G.	This nursery is not being used by the City now. She will follow up with the Roads & Parks Maintenance Dept. to see when it was discontinued. This has helped to beautify other parks as well and we need to speak for environmental issues and protecting the habitat. This will be considered and made part of the process.
What are the specific areas of the floodplain?	Ron Steinginga	Ron outlined the floodplain areas on the map. Any development must define and protect them firstly. The main area for this site is Roseland Creek.

SUMMARY – DENNIS SSKO

No decisions are being made tonight. This is information-gathering and is just the start of the process. Staff will prepare a report to Council around the end of December 2003 to go to Council in January 2004. This report will probably include a recommendation. This recommendation will be shared with everyone here tonight.

Please leave your e-mail or mailing address and we will share our notes from tonight with you. Tim Commisso will leave his card, as he is the person to contact regarding financial issues and possible options.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.