

**LIVABLE OAKVILLE (OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW)
COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2016

**BRONTE AND PALERMO ROOMS
OAKVILLE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
1225 TRAFALGAR ROAD, OAKVILLE**

A meeting of the Livable Oakville (Official Plan Review) Council Sub-committee was held on Monday, September 6, 2016, in the Bronte and Palermo Rooms of the Oakville Municipal Building, commencing at 1:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Rob Burton, Chair
Councillor Tom Adams
Councillor Cathy Duddeck
Councillor Allan Elgar
Councillor Dave Gittings
Councillor Jeff Knoll
Councillor Sean O'Meara

Staff: J. Clohecy, Commissioner of Community Development
D. Carr, Town Solicitor
M. Simeoni, Director of Planning Services
D. Childs, Manager of Policy Planning
K. Biggar, Senior Planner
L. Gill Woods, Acting Senior Planner
B. Sunderland, Planner
C. Dodds, Planner
D. Wedderburn, Planner
J. Warren, Council and Committee Coordinator

The items in these minutes are not necessarily in the order discussed.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Burton called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. **Regrets**

As noted above.

3. **Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

Meeting of August 22, 2016

Moved by Councillor O'Meara

That the minutes of the Livable Oakville (Official Plan Review) Council Sub-committee meeting of August 22, 2016, be approved.

CARRIED

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. **Discussion Item(s)**

a. **Employment and Commercial Review: Employment Land Demand and Supply Analysis**

Mark Simeoni, Director, Planning Services addressed the committee regarding the Employment and Commercial Review presentation and introduced the representatives of the consulting team: Ron Shishido and Justine Giancola from Dillon Consulting, and Jamie Cook from Watson and Associates.

Mr. Cook provided the first section of the presentation on employment demand.

Mr. Cook discussed a shifting economic trend as seen from 2006-2014, which includes growth in the following areas:

- Health care and social assistance
- Accommodation and food services
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Retail trade
- Public administration

Mr. Cook mentioned that employment has grown by 1.7% or 1,400 jobs, and that the areas that suffered the most significant decrease in employment were manufacturing and wholesale trade. These areas have stabilized, but likely will not increase significantly.

Responding to questions from the committee regarding the Ford plant, Mr. Cook responded that in 2014 Ford had 4,500 employees, and that the 2016 employee number is not known at this time.

The committee inquired as to why so many manufacturing employers left Oakville, and what the cause of the decrease in employment was. Mr. Cook responded that they don't have that data at this time, but that many manufacturing jobs were lost during the financial crisis of 2009-2012 and there hasn't been the recovery of them since.

In response to a question regarding Halton Region's 'Best Planning Estimates' for employment growth, Mr. Cook replied that Oakville and Milton are lagging the most, with Burlington slightly above and Halton Hills on target. Also that Oakville and Milton have the most room for employment lands growth, which should be made up by 2031.

A member also informed that servicing allocation disputes between some landowners and Halton Region also affected the employment growth rate.

Mr. Cook discussed that industrial numbers across the GTA have not materializing as predicted. There are challenges to achieving industrial targets, yet Oakville is doing above average with sectors such as office, institutional and knowledge base, therefore making up for the lack of industrial jobs. It is also noted that business trends have mirrored employment growth trends with real estate, health care, professional and retail jobs at the top of the list. Business growth across Ontario has primarily been through the growth of small businesses.

The committee inquired whether there are any measures of the durability of certain industries, meaning sectors that may be more resistant to recession such as health care, and how Oakville might prioritize those industries in terms of employment land designations. Jane Clohecy, Commissioner of Community Development, responded that this information may be addressed in the update to the Economic Development Strategy coming forward in 2017.

A member explained that it would be helpful to see the inventory and number of businesses in each employment category as opposed to just the change in economic growth and the number of businesses.

Mr. Cook presented information on industry clusters by number of jobs and the committee suggested that they would like to see baseline data, because manufacturing looks bigger than it is.

General discussion ensued around 'employment demand' and the following points were made:

- Regarding land absorption, there continues to be a rebound on the amount of growth year-by-year since the economic downturn, a steady and gradual increase.
- The committee made a point that it would be interesting to know the job density per hectare.
- Mr. Cook presented *Land Prices of Serviced Industrial Land, 2014*, and mentioned that the cost of land goes up the closer you get to Pearson International Airport, and gets much cheaper towards Burlington and Hamilton. Mr. Cook indicated that the price of land has a significant impact on the types of uses that will locate in a certain area.
- Presenting information on Non-Residential Development Activity on Employment Lands, Mr. Cook advised that since 2010 there has been a much larger share of commercial development on employment lands, which is forecasted to continue. Almost half of this development have been in the office sector and flexible use space.
- Mr. Cook addressed questions from the committee about the *CN Intermodal* facility in Milton and explained that the Town of Milton and Halton Region are waiting for CN to finish its environmental assessment before addressing any associated warehousing or logistics impacts. However, there will likely be little in the way of warehouse development in northwest Oakville due to the very high cost of land.
- Responding to questions from the committee about how the hospital fits in, Mr. Cook noted that the new hospital's employment figures are not included. The exclusion may be due to the timing of when the information was gathered. The committee suggested that they would like to see it captured in the data going forward. Mr. Cook noted that the hospital is very relevant in the sense that it's an influencer of surrounding development, however further consideration of including the hospital figures in the data is necessary. Ms. Clohec noted that going forward it would likely not be included as it may create an anomaly being that it is so large in scale.
- Mr. Cook presented employment growth forecasts, adding that Oakville's draft population forecast is 246,400 for 2031 and 265,000 for 2041. Employment growth has slowed down slightly.
- Two types of employment growth were discussed: population-related employment growth, which is driven by population growth; and, export-based employment growth, which is driven by access to infrastructure and regional competitiveness.

- The committee asked whether a 50% activity rate is an appropriate goal, and Mr. Cook said that it's a good healthy number suitable for an urbanizing municipality in the GTA.
- Halton Region is using 32% as its activity rate number, Oakville is shooting for higher at 50%.
- The committee discussed how the new employment forecasts in the proposed Growth Plan for the year 2041 would affect the activity rate for Halton Region and ultimately, the Town of Oakville. The committee talked about how the numbers are determined and it was determined that the activity rate is jobs divided by the population.
- Mr. Cook discussed incremental employment growth by sector from 2015-2041 with the following distributions: office space - 31%; retail - 19%; industrial - 17%; institutional - 16%; work at home - 8%; and, no fixed place of work - 8%.
- The committee expressed they would like to see warehousing broken out of the industrial category going forward, and also would like it expressed in the Official Plan that there is a preference for manufacturing facilities over warehousing.
- Mr. Cook responded that warehousing has not been broken out as it is very difficult to get accurate.
- The committee would like to know how much warehousing there is currently, so the Official Plan may be adjusted going forward.
- Diane Childs, Manager of Policy Planning, conveyed that we already have some restrictions on warehousing, which can be tightened up in the Official Plan going forward.
- The committee would like to take a more "granular" approach to employment policy, similarly to the approach on residential policy.
- There is a general consensus that warehousing should be limited to certain areas only.
- Mr. Cook advised the committee that while it is a good objective to try and identify empirical data on warehousing, he cautioned that warehousing is often found as part of a mix of uses in integrated facilities.
- There was a discussion about the opportunities to combine office, manufacturing and warehousing all in one location.
- Discussing Employment Growth on Employment Lands, it was addressed that 43% of employment growth from 2015-2041 is anticipated to occur on employment lands. The incremental employment growth on employment lands is broken down by employment sector to: 55% commercial (which includes office); 40% industrial; and, 6% institutional.
- Mr. Cook discussed the different priorities for each employment sector. For example, office uses prefer locations with access to higher order transit and exposure to higher order roads.
- The committee enquired whether, when an employment forecast exercise is done, it is appropriate to say that Oakville is a landlocked community with ongoing demand for employment but only a finite amount of land remaining. If an average amount of employment land is developed each

year, only a certain number of years remain until it's built out. So, it should be used wisely now.

- Mr. Cook responded that this is framing the policy context that will exist when full build-out occurs. He added that we want a well-balanced employment supply, and that development will shift over to intensification as the vacant land supply is reduced.
- General consensus is that Oakville is looking to see steady growth on employment lands, and secure supply into the future.
- Oakville and the Golden Horseshoe is in one of the fastest growing areas in North America.
- The committee enquired about when we can expect to see another economic downturn. Mr. Cook responded that they cannot be predicted, except that they often occur every 6-8 years.
- A member expressed an interest in understanding more about the Proposed Growth Plan's population and employment density targets, as opposed to the existing people and jobs density targets.
- Discussion ensued about the proposed Growth Plan policies and density targets. Mr. Simeoni noted that there can more discussion about how the town manages the land it has, what Council wants, and how we can target things more strategically and provide a certain level of policy protection.
- The committee was advised that a lot of discussion between upper tier and lower tier municipalities and the province will be necessary.

Justine Giancola, Dillon Consulting, presented a map of Oakville's designated employment lands showing that the primary employment lands in the North Oakville Secondary Plan are predominantly along the 407, and a few around Dundas Street. The majority of employment lands in the Livable Oakville Official Plan is along the QEW and Highway 403, and are primarily designated Business Employment and Industrial.

Ms. Giancola explained the following methodology:

- a) Identify Town's Employment Lands - 1,615 parcels (2,150 ha)
- b) Identify Current Use- 201 Vacant Parcels (853 ha) and 1,267 non-vacant parcels (1,652 ha)
- c) Refine the Vacant Supply- Net Supply, 168 Net Vacant Parcels (727 ha)
- d) Characterize the Supply

The vacant employment land supply represents 34% of the town's overall employment land supply, while non-vacant employment lands make up 60%. Oakville has a good supply of employment lands available, however vacant land is primarily located in the north. The majority of the employment sites available in north Oakville are larger in size at 6-10 hectares, but they have no servicing or access to amenities.

Ms. Giancola discussed typical amenities that people will require such as transit, rail access or even places like fitness studios and that they are not in place yet.

Discussion around the Winston Park West employment area ensued:

- A committee member asked if height should be considered as a compatibility issue.
- A committee member asked if there are opportunities to add amenities on the lands designated Business Commercial.
- A committee member was concerned about the potential conversion of true employment land into retail and service commercial space that is intended more to support nearby residential areas than the employment area.
- It was noted that Business Commercial lands allow for minor retail development to support businesses in the area.
- A committee member was concerned about potential non-employment uses on the Infrastructure Ontario lands adjacent to Joshua's Creek.
- A committee member asked whether there should be a Winston Park West employment plan, detailing servicing issues. The committee was advised that the south end of Winston Park West has been addressed in large part through existing draft plan conditions.

Ms. Giancola informed the committee that the Town's employment land supply is approximately 727 vacant net hectares, but a 10% vacancy adjustment needs to be taken into account, leaving 654 vacant net hectares. She also expressed that the Town's estimated 2041 employment land demand is 408 net hectares and there is a sufficient supply of employment land to meet long term demand beyond 2041.

It is important to note that North Oakville is a huge game changer in terms of employment development, and it is suggested that the Town resist large scale conversion of employment lands. In Oakville there is increasing pressure to convert designated employment lands to non-employment uses, including commercial, retail and residential uses.

Ms. Giancola informed the committee that September 9, 2016 was the new deadline for requests for conversions. There are currently nineteen requests submitted to the Town as part of the municipal comprehensive review (MCR) process. Fifteen requests are to convert employment uses to non-employment uses, two requests are for employment lands to be redesignated from Business Employment to Business Commercial, and two requests are to address irregularities related to the Regional Employment Area overlay. All 19 sites were shown to the committee on a map.

Ms. Giancola presented the *Key Issues, Opportunities and Preliminary Directions* and the committee had the following points regarding the policy directions presented:

- Regarding Policy Direction #3, minor site-specific conversions may be appropriate: The committee would like planning staff to prepare a report outlining the process that Council would need to follow to legalize a pet grooming facility at 1380 Speers Road.
- The committee would like to consider the Bingo Hall and the very mixed range of land uses and designations on Speers Road.
- The committee would also like Urban Design guidelines for Speers Road, and to look for opportunities for alternate access routes and easements.
- A community improvement plan should also be considered.
- In regards to Winston Park West, there needs to be consideration respecting height so that high quality jobs are attracted to the area.
- Regarding Policy Direction #6, comprehensively plan for an innovation district surrounding the new hospital: Could the Town consider more than one innovation district within the Town's urban structure?

Moved by Councillor Knoll

That the presentation entitled, 'Employment and Commercial Review: Employment Land Demand and Supply Analysis', be received.

CARRIED

6. Information Item(s)

There were no information items.

7. Items to be Discussed at Next/Future Meetings

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, October 3, 2016
Oakville Municipal Building
Bronte and Palermo Rooms - 1:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.