

Alton Village Study Community Workshop – Summary Report

Royal Canadian Legion – Alton Branch 449 | June 25, 2009



Agenda

The Alton Village Study Community Workshop's primary focus was to engage participants on the planning scenarios developed by the Project Team in response to the information gleaned from the previous workshop held in February 2009.

The workshop format included:

- Introductions and a brief overview of the planning process by Ben Roberts, the study's Project Manager.
- A presentation by Christine Hill - on behalf of the Region of Peel - presenting a short list of alternatives for servicing the Village.
- A presentation by Chris Tyrrell, representing MMM Group, detailing key features of the proposed planning scenarios, as well as the draft criteria developed to assess the scenarios.
- Break-out groups and a plenary session to discuss the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the planning scenarios.

Presentation on the Planning Scenarios

Chris' presentation on the planning scenarios included a discussion of their key similarities and distinctions. The planning scenarios included:

Scenario 1 – Emphasis on the Village Core

Scenario 2 – Dispersed Growth

Scenario 3 – Potential Settlement Area Boundary Expansion

Additionally, Chris identified the common elements that each of the planning scenarios would comprise, including:

- Principles of strong community design
- Public spaces, gateway features and opportunities for recreation
- Maintaining and highlighting community assets
- Civic uses as gateway features into the Village
- Improved streetscape features in the Village Core

Chris indicated that the common elements were developed in direct response to the discussion that occurred among participants held at the February 2009 workshop.

Workshop Arrangement

Loren Polonsky (MMM Group) facilitated the workshop portion of the evening. Participants were generally seated in groups of eight-to-ten around several tables set up in the room. Each table included a set of 3x4 foot maps of each of the three planning scenarios that comprised photos and descriptions of their distinguishing features. A 3x4 foot map of the common elements was also provided.

The first half of the workshop was spent in small group discussions – as participants were asked to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of both the common elements and the planning scenarios. Loren asked a volunteer from each table to identify the perceived strengths and weakness on the maps or record comments on a large matrix, which was provided at each table. The matrix was developed as follows:

Conceptual Map	What We Like	What We Don't Like	Other Comments / Preferences
Common Elements			
Scenario 1: Emphasis on the Village Core			
Scenario 2: Dispersed Growth			
Scenario 3: Potential Settlement Area Boundary Expansion			

The second half of the workshop allowed participants to share their findings to the group as a whole. The goal of the exercise was to allow participants to compare and contrast the planning scenarios (and broadly state their preferences). Loren facilitated this portion of the workshop and took flip-chart notes to help summarize the discussion.

Results of the Discussion

Workshop participants diligently discussed their opinions about the three planning scenarios, as well as the elements common to all three options. The results of the discussion are provided below:

Elements Common to Each Planning Scenario

<p>What Participants Liked <i>(multiple responses)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community design (2) • Public access to Shaw's Creek • Green space - pedestrian, cycling trails • Green space gives kids something to do • Watercourses and woodlots • The trail system • Gateways - but move southerly one further south, and add one at north end • Civic squares and gateways • Being on wells and septic • Improved lighting for streets • Continue streetscape improvements farther south to boundaries (sidewalks) • Traffic calming (2) • Traffic calming (136 & Main) • Stop signs • Gateway signs • Village Green • Maintain woodlots • Heritage features • Watercourse • School • Library • Fire hall • Baseball diamond • On-street parking – Queen
<p>What Participants Disliked</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total access to Shaw's Creek (2) • Pollution in Shaw's Creek • Walking estimates are incorrect • Heritage buildings are not included • Doesn't identify Main Street as a no truck zone (during week) • Concerns re: motorcycle traffic on weekends

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't want parking on Victoria Street • Northern parking • Bike lanes • On-street parking - Queen
<p>Other Comments / Preferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravel pit #136 - what's happening? • Truck traffic? Diverted? Is it possible? • Streetscape improvements should continue to the Village boundary • Coordinate signage at the corner of Queen and Main - prominent but attractive • Add creekside trail system - north of Queen, west of Amelia (<i>map</i>) • Need strict adherence to school zone speeds • Needed background in PowerPoint for people who aren't "regulars" • Need for deer crossing sign at Shaw's Creek • Need a turtle crossing sign at the big bend going out of town • Concern with on-street parking • All gateways should be at boundaries • Improve/restore the Alton Mill Pond • Tie in with Credit Valley train • Single family homes - no commercial - Thomas Farm • No cookie cutter homes - with prominent garages as feature • No expansion of Thomas Farm boundary • Relative to heritage value – include the Alton Mill and Millcroft Inn

Planning Scenario 1 - Emphasis on the Village Core

<p>What Participants Liked <i>(multiple responses)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale, character of development • Need strong economy to maintain village • Mix of lot sizes • General concept of intensification • Mixed density and mixed use concentrated in core • Maintains existing village boundaries • On-street parking (like Unionville) • Growth in core, village Street residential
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic crossroad - pedestrian walkway • Mixed density is okay as long as it is low and medium (no high density) and no townhouses except in core area (need to be high end) • Maintains current settlement boundary • Mixed use is a better use of residents' and town's resources • If stores and restaurants have services, they can reach their potential • Concentrated growth in one area • Improved security • High design standards • Diversity (not boxed style) • Detached mixed density (lot size) • Village street residential • Institutional civic • Pedestrian friendly • Maintain current village boundary
<p>What Participants Disliked</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not limited boundaries - extension to the north (limited) • People don't necessarily buy "local" • Don't like mixed density at Thomas • No mixed use in current residential (don't want to be Orangeville)
<p>Other Comments / Preferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a greenbelt around the village boundaries • Could add additional civic space for expanded seniors residence • Consider a roundabout at city centre • No townhouses • No condos • No more than two storey buildings • All gateways should be at boundaries • Owner operated businesses • Modest growth with village values / designs • "Round out" the northeast boundary (<i>map</i>) • Parking at the northwest corner of Queen and Main has a heritage house on it • Replace village street residential with mixed use on the west side of Main Street opposite the school

Planning Scenario 2 - Dispersed Growth

<p>What Participants Liked <i>(multiple responses)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nodes • Mixed use across from the school • Proposed parkland along the river • Allow for festivals • Mixed residential • Mixed residential (north of Edmond) • If there has to be development, make it estate houses • Mixed use away from core (balances the flow) • Streetscaping • Edmond Street - residential with greenscape beside it • Modest growth
<p>What Participants Disliked <i>(multiple responses)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not limited boundaries - extension to the north (limited) • Don't like commercial nodes outside of the core (2) • Development/community facilities to the west • Shrinkage of downtown core • Lack of mixed density residential in inner block north of Edmond Street • Increased traffic flow throughout whole village area • Too many houses, too many people • Increased crime with more people (<i>left Toronto to get away from development</i>) • Downtown parking needed for tourism • Too many homes at the Thomas Farm
<p>Other Comments / Preferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed use should be non-industrial • We moved here for peace and quiet and the beauty of looking at nature • No traffic lights • Heritage value - need to understand what it means to the homeowners • All gateways should be at the boundaries • Gateways should be N/S/E/W • Ensure the creamery is included in heritage • Ensure heritage behind the mill, sawmill • The mixed use proposed west is not within walking distance

Planning Scenario 3 - Potential Settlement Area Boundary Expansion

<p>What Participants Liked <i>(multiple responses)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed residential • Logical alignment to the north • Existing village boundaries - not expansion
<p>What Participants Disliked <i>(multiple responses)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows population to exceed 1,500 • Don't expand the boundaries (2) • Commercial nodes • Civic area on Queen Street • No ceiling on development, population density • Wildlife? Where does it go? • Concerned about a property tax increase • Putting village designation at risk • The civic gateway to the west of the core is out of character for the Village
<p>Other Comments / Preferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want pedestrian walkways extended • Fill in gaps in existing village boundaries before considering substantial expansion • Expansion would destroy the Village • Keep the size of the Village so it doesn't become a town • Not for consideration - expanding the boundaries • What is the civic gateway to the west of the Legion? • No high density in mixed density residential area west of Agnes Street

Next Steps

Chris provided an overview of study's next steps, including key milestones and future opportunities for public engagement. Chris indicated that the next community workshop would be held July 30, 2009 to identify the draft preferred planning scenario. Ben indicated that the meeting date was selected to ensure the study would stay on schedule. Loren suggested that if residents cannot attend the July meeting, the Project Team will develop additional ways to ensure their continued involvement in the process.

Each participant received a handout that identifies the draft criteria developed by staff to assess the planning options, as well as a general comment sheet. Chris asked participants to review and return the handouts by July 4, identifying those criteria they believe are most important in the assessment of the options.