



BMAHC Gateway Project Designs Task Force

Meeting No. 2 Minutes/Action Items – November 17, 2020

- **Call to Order**

- Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Nadia Galati of Process
- Attendees: Sharon McCormick, Olwen Bennett, Shawn Everitt, Steve Diamond, Jim Torrance, Garth Armour, Tovah Socha, Barry Tatchell, Stacy Manning, Nadia Galati, Sara Udow, Chiyi Tam, Lyn Logan, Kim Harris, Steve Simon, Melri Wright, and Anne Marie Shaw
- Land Acknowledgement verbally stated by Nadia Galati
- Design guidelines are sets of recommendations on how to apply design principles to provide a positive user experience – these are ideas that guide the design process, rather than rules that allow important stakeholders to provide input

- **Height and Massing**

- Key takeaways from first meeting:
 - height, massing, density are important considerations based on input from the Task Force

- **Public Survey Findings**

- Conducted in May 2020 – market sounding on 3 concept plans
- feedback on site features, design, sustainability, and other priorities was requested, particularly to identify any potential community priorities tradeoffs with respect to Gateway Site design
- Concept 1 – Two, 3-storey buildings, preservation of woodlot along (S) property perimeter, consideration of setback from Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Concept 2 – Two, 4-storey buildings facing King Street, tiered and separate Townhouse units, less preservation of woodlot along (S) property perimeter
- Concept 3 – One, 5-storey building facing King Street and Grey Street, tiered, less preservation of woodlot along (S) property perimeter
- Feedback from Public
 - move building to back of site for noise and visual buffer from King Street, positive visual, parking for commercial needed at front
 - preservation of trees are important, parking reduction supported to optimize site
 - Respondents who prefer Concept 1 preference: adheres to Official Plan

-Respondents who prefer Concept 2 preference: good balance of density and fit with the area, height not impacting surroundings, allows more space for tenants

-Respondents who prefer Concept 3: maximizes ability to meet housing demands, tighter footprint, intensification seemed appropriate at the 5-storey height, and reduces potential for sprawl

-concept designs fit the community

-sustainability: low maintenance construction, emphasis on green space, sustainable features, alternative transportation

-other priorities for attainable housing: playground, outdoor common space, day care, accessibility features, storage, onsite laundry, consideration for pedestrian safety

- **Financial Considerations**

-Based on scenarios where Attainable Housing Corporation will not need to put in cash equity (preliminary, high-level financial modelling) and ground-level commercial units are included

-3-storey

-18 attainable housing units could be achieved, the remaining units would need to be market rate

-4-storey

-40 attainable housing units could be achieved, the remaining units would need to be market rate

-5-storey

-71 attainable housing units could be achieved, the remaining units would need to be market rate

-If you remove commercial space:

-cost/square foot increases, negative impact on cash flow – commercial space supports debt so additional market units would be needed to break even, there are approximately the same number of overall attainable units if the commercial space is replaced with residential space

-Task Force members commented that if the commercial units were removed, the associated parking requirements may be less

-Task Force members cautioned that there may not be a demand for commercial market space at this time, and the rental rate (\$17/square foot) is high

- **Online Survey Findings**
 - Core questions: will the Gateway Site have to conform with the Town's Official Plan (Answer: either conform to the Official Plan, or be successful in receiving an amendment to the Official Plan) , will state of the art green building standards be used wherever possible (Answer: not seeking a specific green building certification, but certainly doing as much as we can to make this a sustainable building), impacts of the site on the Town's population, neighbourhood character, transportation needs, and infrastructure needs (Answer: the Design Builder will have to go through the planning process and the design guidelines themselves can be reflective of these needs)

- **Breakout Groups: Design Guidelines and Height + Massing**
 - Task Force members broken into two groups to discuss design guidelines for the Gateway Site
 - Discussions summarized through Report Back portion of the agenda

- **Report Back and Group Prioritization of Emerging Gateway Project Design Guidelines**
 - Breakout Group 1**
 - Importance of defining "design excellence" in the context of attainable housing
 - Height and Massing – 4 storey that steps down to a 3 storey
 - Town character, parking and traffic concerns
 - building orientation – 4 storey towards the eastern portion of the property, stepping down to three storeys as the building progresses along the lot
 - Commercial does not make sense – market housing is more important than commercial in The Blue Mountains, even if the ground level cannot be attainable housing, it doesn't need to be commercial, unless there is a demonstrated need
 - Emphasis on the priority being provision of attainable housing
 - Storage needs
 - active families and individuals
 - balconies versus common areas
 - Common areas are important
 - Is on-street parking possible? Less of an impact than large, concentrated parking lot
 - Breakout Group 2**
 - Height and Massing – preference for 3 storey or 4 storey
 - Commercial needs to be measured against return on investment
 - What can attainable housing be from sustainability, landscaping, "showcase" building?
 - Need for storage options
 - Permanent, good quality window coverings

- Sustainability expert included in Design Builder Request for Proposal process
- mitigate pedestrian experience by providing access to trails
- mindful placement of waste storage and unit storage on the site
- Electric Vehicle charging stations – consider the future of movement throughout the site’s longevity
- Parking requirements for commercial versus residential are very different – should be considered when determining the impact of commercial space at the site

- **Question and Answer**

- Feedback regarding the woodlot?
 - important to provide visual screen to mitigate Wastewater Treatment Plant and impact on existing community – buffer is critical
 - tolerance for shift in woodlot, while being mindful of tree preservation
 - have a plan of compensation for any trees that are removed (3 to 1 ratio)
- Communications Committee – considering the “Town’s Brand” through the Communications Strategy – we want to stay true to our heritage and community character – stay away from stucco and siding, for example – should be kept top-of-mind when determining appearance of the building

- **Next Steps**

- Feedback consolidated into a report for the Board at the December 3, 2020 meeting
- If there is additional feedback by Task Force members, provide to the moderators

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.