

cooksville

Area Specific Review City of Mississauga



Area 1: Gordon Woods
Community Advisory Meeting
May 11
Summary Report

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Area 1: Gordon Woods



Area Specific Review City of Mississauga

1.0 Meeting at a Glance

On Monday, May 11th, Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd. (MSH) in association with Brook McIlroy Planning + Urban Design | Pace Architects (BMI | Pace) met with the Area 1: Gordon Woods Community Advisory Group to discuss the top ten issues derived from the Kick-off Workshop held on April 21st.

A brief introduction by Anne McIlroy served as a reminder of the top issues from the Post-it Note exercise at the Kick-off Workshop (based on the percentage of comments received):

1. Maintain the Character of the Area (100%)
2. Protect and Preserve the Mature Forest/Trees (60%)
3. Control Impacts of Intensified Traffic and Safety at Intersections (39%)
4. Control Impacts of New Development (24%)
5. Provide Opportunities for Parks and Trails (24%)

1.1 Community Recommendations

Following the introduction, a discussion session was held based on the “Top Ten” Priority Directions derived from the Kick-off Workshop. The following recommendations were generally agreed upon throughout this discussion, including:

New Development

1. The scale and mass of new and alternate forms of housing should be consistent with existing housing to preserve the existing scale and character of Gordon Woods.
2. Subdivision of lots is discouraged because it is inconsistent with the character of Gordon Woods and disrupts the water table and tree canopy.
3. Intensification is discouraged and should be limited to the edge of Gordon Woods if necessary.
4. Properties in Gordon Woods should not be designated as heritage properties because it is too restrictive on future development.

Streets and Traffic Calming

5. Sidewalks are discouraged in Gordon Woods to preserve the rural character.
6. Consider means to slow traffic on Harborn Road, Parker Drive, Premium Way and Grange Street including two Speed-bumps at equal intervals along Parker Drive.
7. Stop signs should be included at Harborn Road/Parker Drive and Parker Drive/Isabella Avenue.
8. A four-way stop should be included at the intersection of Harborn Road, Grange Street and Premium Way.

Natural Heritage, Parks and Open Space

9. By-law variances (i.e. garages set-forward) should consider the protection of trees and preservation of the water table.
10. The by-law allowing four trees/year to be cut down should be reconsidered to make approval required before removing any tree in Gordon Woods.
11. Stillmeadow Park should be cleaned up and maintained. Pathways should be cleared of overgrown/fallen vegetation, and amenities should be built for all ages including a community gazebo and sports fields and courts.
12. Public access to Mary Fix Creek is discouraged to protect the wildlife population from the adverse effects of public use.



Maintain the character of the area.



The large tree canopy and sidewalk free streets define the character of Gordon Woods.

1.2 Who Came to the Meeting?

The Community Advisory Group consists of eleven members of the Gordon Woods community, including:

- Karen Campbell
- Dag Proctor
- Diane Stewart
- Mike McCutcheon
- Candace Sharma
- Jackie & Joey Gideon
- John Sabiston
- Bert Bertolo
- Shelly Byman
- Joe Fedel

Staff from MSH, BMI|Pace and the City of Mississauga were present to help lead the discussion and answer any questions. Staff in attendance from the City of Mississauga included:

- Susan Tanabe, Manager of Community Planning
- Diana Rusnov, Manager Development Team Central
- Karen Crouse, Policy Planner
- Frank Marzo, Policy Planner

1.3 What was Presented?

A brief introduction by Anne McIlroy served as a reminder of the top issues from the April 21st Kick-off Workshop Post-it Note exercise (based on the percentage of comments received):

1. Maintain the Character of the Area (100%)
2. Mature Forest/Trees (60%)
3. Traffic (39%)
4. Development (24%)
5. Parks and Trails (24%)



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2.0 Discussion Session

From the April 21st Kick-off Workshop, the “top ten” directions for Gordon Woods were distilled. From these directions a set of questions was created to guide the Community Advisory Meeting and encourage further discussion. The following section summarizes the discussion.

2.1 Issues Discussed

To ensure the most important issues received proper attention, they were presented and discussed in order of significance.

Issue # 1: New development in Gordon Woods should be consistent with existing housing (i.e. large lots and setbacks, no subdivision/high-rise).

What should new housing look like?

The general consensus was that new housing at a consistent scale and mass is desired. Some examples of inconsistent development include townhouses, the 30’ lot developments along Grange Street and the dilapidated white house near the Rabba at Hurontario Street.

Zoning by-laws should not allow subdivision of lots because this is inconsistent with the character of Gordon Woods and puts stress on the water table and tree canopy. Some property owners want to subdivide and it is becoming difficult to object because there have been so many variances in the area (i.e. garages set forward) that a precedent has been set. The City noted that these variances were approved by the Committee of Adjustment. The residents said they wanted to see the current by-laws upheld.

It was mentioned that as long as a property owner is within the by-law it is not fair to dictate the style of housing they build.

Are there different forms of housing that are appropriate in different areas of Gordon Woods?

It was generally accepted that Mississauga is growing and Gordon Woods will have to accept some form of intensification. The preferred location would be at the edge of the community. 20-storey developments are undesirable, but something similar to the housing on Castlestone Crescent would be acceptable. There was also concern as to whether the infrastructure in Gordon Woods would be capable of accommodating new development.

It was generally felt that seniors housing would be acceptable providing it was developed in a form and scale that is consistent with the community (i.e. converted house or church).

One resident was concerned that Gordon Woods should maintain single family housing and that seniors housing is inconsistent with the community. Seniors housing would create more traffic.

Other Issues

Water ponding on private property was another concern. Some houses do not have ditches and some ditches were filled in during the construction of new housing. It was asked if ditches could be provided for all the residents.



“Monster homes” and sub-divisions are discouraged because they are inconsistent with the character of Gordon Woods..



Sidewalks are discouraged to maintain the "rural" character of Gordon Woods.

Issue # 2: The "rural" character of Gordon Woods should be preserved (i.e. sidewalk free streets, mature tree canopy, housing style, etc.).

Discuss these features and their importance to the community and any thoughts on how they might be improved/enhanced?

Lynchmere Avenue and Taylors Orchard are the only streets with sidewalks in Gordon Woods. It was generally felt that Gordon Woods does not need sidewalks and that the traffic issues (see Issue # 4) are more of a concern. Without sidewalks, ditches and swales can be reintroduced to fix the drainage issues.

Issue # 3: Maintain and protect the existing mature tree canopy.

What features in the Gordon Woods area allow such large trees (i.e. no central sewage system, large and well landscaped lots, etc.)?

Large lots with houses that do not occupy the entire lot allow many trees to be preserved in the area. There was concern that the soil in Gordon Woods is very sandy and there are a number of underground springs which has caused many trees to blow over already this year.

What actions should the City take to help maintain the existing tree canopy and ensure that new trees are planted?

The existing by-laws determine appropriate building setbacks and help to protect the tree canopy. If the City is going to allow variances, they need to consider more than dwelling style (i.e. tree protection, water table, etc.).

Residents disapproved of the by-law that allows property owners to cut down trees that are under a certain size. The City noted that this is a City-wide by-law and they will respond if property owners remove more than the allotted four trees. It was suggested that one should have to apply to remove any tree in Gordon Woods (with the exception of unhealthy or dead trees and those that are infected with Gypsy Moths).

One resident asked if the Berkely property has been sold and is no longer up for development. The resident suggested that this would be a good opportunity to preserve the trees on-site. The City responded that the zoning is already in place and that whoever develops in this location is likely to remove all the trees.



The large mature tree canopy is a significant natural feature in Gordon Woods.



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Issue # 4: Reduce traffic speed and congestion at key intersections.

Where are the major traffic issues in Gordon Woods (i.e. Harborn Rd. and Grange St.)?

It was estimated that there are approximately 400 vehicles in Gordon Woods. Since the traffic seems much worse than this, people must be “cutting through” the community causing a serious increase in traffic.

The Harborn Road and Grange Street intersection is a particularly constrained area due to traffic. Vehicles often run red lights here and there are a lot of collisions as people try to turn right in/out of Harborn Road (from Hurontario Street).

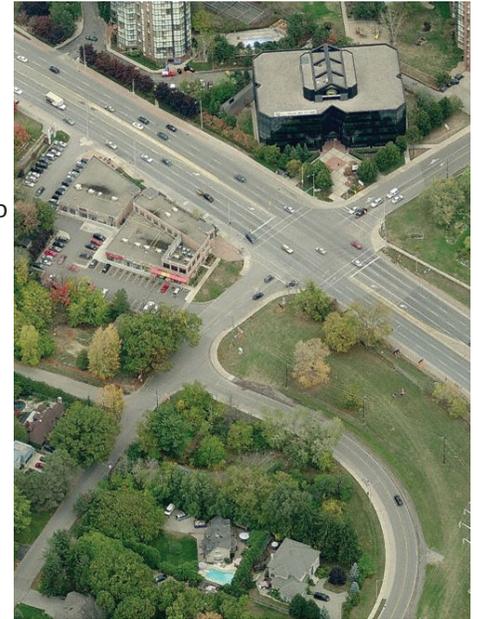
Premium Way is another street with dangerous speeds because it is a one-sided street (hydro corridor to the south) and acts like a service road for the QEW. New development plans to relocate the stop sign so vehicles on Premium Way are not required to stop at Harborn Road. Traffic on Harborn Road will be required to stop instead, increasing congestion for residents on Harborn Road at peak times.

Currently there is a resident’s petition regarding traffic speed along Parker Drive and Gordon Drive because it is so dangerous for those who walk in the area.

How can the situation be improved?

There were a number of improvements discussed:

- *Stop signs* were the most popular solution. It was agreed that stop signs should be located at Harborn Trail and Parker Drive, and at Parker Drive and Isabella Avenue (because it is forested and visibility is poor). It was generally agreed that a 4-way stop at the intersection of Harborn Road, Grange Street and Premium Way would solve the traffic issues. Limiting right turns between the hours of 7-9am (like Old Carriage Road) was another solution that was recommended.
- *Speed-bumps* were generally favored as they are being used more frequently in neighbourhoods and are not as visible as they once were. On Parker Drive it was suggested that the street be divided into thirds to allow for two speed-bumps, but the City might have issues regarding snow removal and emergency access.
- A *Traffic circle* at Premium Way and Harborn Road was well received as it could act as a gateway into the community and traffic circles were successful in other areas.
- “*Rumble strips*” were considered but there was concern about the noise they would make.
- *One way streets* were discussed but it was agreed that they were not suitable for the area.
- *Narrowing streets* was unfavourable to residents because this would eliminate places to walk. It was suggested that narrowing Harborn Road might prevent the delivery truck parking that causes traffic problems in the area but the general agreement is that Rabba trucks would still park there or continue to park in front of Rabba and block sightlines for vehicles turning left out of Harborn Road. One recommendation was to convert the Rabba parking area to a delivery zone because it is not large enough to accommodate the parking that is there. As the area grows, this problem will just get worse if it is not fixed now.



The intersection at Harborn Road and Grange Street is poorly designed, dangerous to pedestrians and in need of improvements.



- *Chicanes* were discouraged as they have generally been unsuccessful in the past and often go unplanted.
- *Sidewalks* are not appropriate where they require the removal of rural swales and are inconsistent with the character of Gordon Woods (Lynchmere Avenue and Taylors Orchard are examples).
- *Distinct materials*, such as red brick, to distinguish pedestrian crossing locations were seen to be inconsistent with the area.

Issue # 5: Develop new parks and open spaces/Enhance existing parks and open spaces.

How can existing parks and open spaces be enhanced?

It was generally agreed that Stillmeadow Park is not being used to its full potential and should be cleaned up and maintained to enhance safety and accessibility. It is good for children but does not offer much for the youth in the area. Some recommendations included clearing overgrown vegetation, flattening the man-made berm and using it for a soccer field, tennis courts or a basketball court (they do not need to be regulation size).

Currently people have picnics and gatherings in their back yards but it was agreed that it would be nice to have a gazebo in the park where people could congregate and play music, providing any structures fit within the character of Gordon Woods.

Some residents felt that there could be some more lighting in the area for people who are walking at night but others felt that the lack of light was part of the Gordon Woods character.

Issue # 6: Preserve and maintain important natural features (i.e. Stillmeadow Park, Stavebank, Kenollie and Mary Fix Creeks).

Should these areas be maintained as is, or enhanced?

Residents mostly agreed that Mary Fix Creek should not be accessible to the public because it is full of wildlife (coming from the Credit River corridor) and the people who currently live there are sensitive to this. Having houses which back onto the creek help to ensure its protection.

There is currently no public access to Stavebank Creek. It was suggested that this is to avoid liability issues for the City and because there is a private golf course to the west



Stillmeadow Park is a valuable community asset but is in need of improvements.



Issue # 7: Preserve and maintain important built features (i.e. St. Mary's and St. John's Lithuanian Cemeteries).

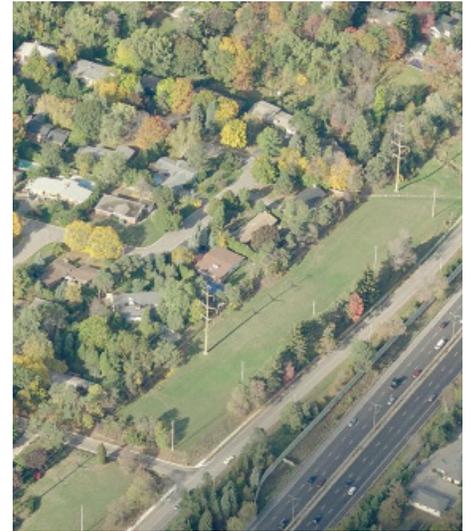
Are there important heritage buildings in the Gordon Woods area which should be protected in addition to those that are already recognized in the City's heritage register (i.e. 2100 Gordon Dr. and 2170 Parker Dr.)?

Generally, the residents did not want heritage designation in Gordon Woods. It was felt that the restrictions associated with designation could be onerous and potentially decrease in property values.

2.2 Additional Issues

Due to the detailed discussions concerning the first seven issues, there were three issues that were not discussed at this meeting. These issues will be reconsidered at the next meeting on June 8th.

- Issue # 8: Create more trails and greater connectivity to natural features.
- Issue # 9: Convert the hydro corridors along The Queensway and The Queen Elizabeth Way into useable open space.
- Issue # 10: Develop a variety of community amenities.



The hydro corridors are potential open spaces and will be discussed at the next meeting.

3.0 Opportunities Plan: Area 1: Gordon Woods



	<p>Study Area Boundary</p> <p>The existing canopy of mature trees should be maintained throughout the entire study area.</p>
	<p>Parks and Trails</p> <p>Stillmeadow Park is underutilized and considered unsafe by the community. It should be cleaned up, maintained and enhanced with new walking and cycling trails, and amenities for all ages (i.e. sports courts and a community gazebo).</p> <p>The hydro corridors are potential open space areas. They should be cleaned up, maintained and enhanced with new walking and cycling trails.</p>
	<p>Special Sites</p> <p>St. Mary's and St. John's Lithuanian Cemeteries provide opportunities to accommodate passive recreation.</p>
	<p>Special Site # 11</p> <p>Special Site 11 is a special policy area directed at maintaining the character of Gordon Woods (i.e. setbacks, scale, lot size, trees, etc.). This boundary should be extended to include the entire study area.</p>
	<p>Traffic Concerns</p> <p>Opportunities for pedestrian crossings should be investigated at The Queensway.</p> <p>Gordon Drive and Parker Drive are dangerous streets to walk or cycle because of speeding traffic.</p> <p>SS - Stop signs should be provided at Harborn Trail/Parker Drive and Parker Drive/Isabella Avenue.</p> <p>SB - Speed bumps should be used to divide Parker Drive into three sections to decrease traffic speed.</p> <p>4W - A four-way stop should be incorporated at the intersection of Harborn Road, Grange Street and Premium Way.</p>
	<p>Street Network</p> <p>Discontinuous streets create a "rural character" and allow streets that can be walked safely without sidewalks. These should be maintained.</p>
	<p>Creeks</p> <p>The 3 creeks in Area 1: Gordon Woods (Stavebank, Kenolli and Mary Fix) should remain generally inaccessible to the public to help preserve wildlife and natural habitat and protect from the adverse effects of public use.</p>

Note: The information included in the Opportunities Plan represents a summary of public input collected at the Community Advisory Meeting held on May 11. The plan is for discussion purposes only and does not represent final community recommendations.



4.0 Next Steps

