

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2013

Item 22, Report No. 1, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on January 29, 2013.

**22 NATURAL HERITAGE NETWORK INVENTORY AND IMPROVEMENTS (PL-9025-11)
 PHASE 1 CONSULTATION SUMMARY
 FILE NO. 25.5.4**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Planning, dated January 15, 2013:

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

1. That the information contained in this report and in Attachment 1 to this report, Summary of Consultations and Stakeholder Meetings for Phase 1 of the Natural Heritage Network Study, BE RECEIVED.

Contribution to Sustainability

The Plan is consistent with York Region Official Plan policies directing local municipalities to develop local greenlands systems.

The Vaughan Official Plan (VOP 2010) was adopted by Council on September 7, 2010 and was subject to further modifications on September 27, 2011, March 20, 2012 and April 17, 2012. VOP 2010 designates a natural heritage system, the Natural Heritage Network, which is delineated on Schedule 2. Environmental policies in Chapter 3 of VOP 2010 direct that appropriate studies be undertaken to determine the precise limits of “natural heritage features and any additions to the mapped network”.

Two specific action items in Green Directions Vaughan (2009), the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan, relate to the need to complete a natural heritage system.

1.3.2. Through the development of the City's new Official Plan, and in partnership with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, ensure protection of remaining natural features and explore opportunities for habitat restoration in headwater areas, along riparian corridors, and around wetlands.

2.2.4. Develop a comprehensive Natural Heritage Strategy that examines the City's natural capital and diversity and how best to enhance and connect it. As part of this action:

- *Develop an inventory of Vaughan's natural heritage, and identify opportunities for habitat restoration;*
- *Ensure that policies in the City's new Official Plan protect all ecological features and functions as per current provincial and regional policies, and also include consideration for locally significant natural features and functions;*
- *Develop policies to create opportunities for near urban agriculture within Vaughan's rural areas, through policies described in the City's new Official Plan.*

The refinement of the Natural Heritage Network (NHN) in Phase 1 of the Natural Heritage Network Study, and the further refinement and development of a stewardship strategy in Phases 2 through 4 of the NHN Study, are key components in support of Green Directions Vaughan.

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Economic Impact

Funding for undertaking the Natural Heritage Network Study was included in the 2011 Capital Budget (PL-9025-11) on the basis of a two part allocation. Phase 1 was treated as a stand alone project and was funded in the amount of \$52,400. In the 2012 Capital budget, the funding for Phases 2, 3, and 4 was approved at \$199,700. The total budget for the preparation of the Natural Heritage Network Study is \$252,100.

Communications Plan

A communication plan in respect of this report is not required. Public consultation as part of Phase 1 of the Natural Heritage Network Study, is summarized in Attachment 1. A communications and public consultation plan will be prepared as part of the process of conducting Phases 2 to 4 of the NHN Study.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with supplementary information regarding comments received from the public in respect of the work completed in Phase 1 of the Natural Heritage Network Study, as directed by Council on December 4, 2012.

Background - Analysis and Options

The following recommendation was made at the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting of December 4, 2012 regarding Item #2 of Report No. 51:

“The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Planning, dated December 4, 2012, be approved;**
- 2) That staff report back to the Committee of the Whole meeting of January 15, 2013 on comments received from the public on the subject matter;**
- 3) That the deputation of Ms. Gloria Marsh, York Region Environmental Alliance, Lakeland Crescent, Richmond Hill, be received; and**
- 4) That Communication C4 from Mr. Philip J. Levine, Director, IBI Group, Richmond Street West, Toronto, dated December 3, 2012, be received.**

This recommendation was ratified by Council in December 11, 2012. In reference to recommendation 2), staff has prepared this report and Attachment 1 which summarizes the public consultations, meetings with stakeholders, and written communications undertaken as part of Phase 1.

City staff and the consulting team held two Public Consultation Meetings on June 28, 2012 and October 4, 2012 at the Vaughan City Hall. The two Public Consultation Meetings were each attended by 40 to 50 people and presentations made by the consultants and City staff were made available on the City of Vaughan web site. City staff also coordinated additional consultation sessions on September 19, 2012 and September 20, 2012. The session on September 19, 2012 was attended by about 40 people and the session on September 20, 2012 was attended by approximately 10 people. All comments have been recorded. City staff and the consulting team met with landowner groups representing Block 27, Block 40/47, Block 41, Block 55, and Block 59 in September 2012.

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The staff report submitted for December 4, 2012 Committee of the Whole (Working Session) (Item #2, Report No. 51) describes the policy and planning context for the NHN Study, the relation to the VOP 2010 and Green Directions Vaughan, and the completed deliverables of Phase 1 of the NHN Study.

The expectations set out in the Terms of Reference for Phase 1 of the NHN Study have been addressed. A separate report to Committee of the Whole (January 15, 2013) is recommending the retention of a consulting team to undertake Phases 2 to 4 of the NHN Study.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

The Natural Heritage in the City report is consistent with the Vaughan Vision 2020 Strategic plan, through the following initiatives, specifically:

Service Excellence:

- Lead & Promote Environmental Sustainability

Management Excellence:

- Plan and Manage Growth & Economic Vitality
- Demonstrate Leadership & Promote Effective Governance

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Regional Implications

Policies in the ROP 2010 support the efforts of local municipalities to identify and implement local greenlands systems.

Conclusion

Phase 1 of the Natural Heritage Network Study is complete. This report and Attachment 1 to this report addresses the direction from Council from December 11, 2012 that "staff report back to the Committee of the Whole meeting of January 15, 2013 on comments received from the public on the subject matter".

Attachments

1. Summary of Consultations and Stakeholder Meetings for Phase 1 of the Natural Heritage Network Study, January 2013.

Report prepared by:

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(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)