

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 27, 2014

Item 3, Report No. 25, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 27, 2014.

3 PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL PARKING SOLUTIONS FOR EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOODS CITY-WIDE

The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:

- 1) That staff be directed to develop a policy for a City wide on-street paid program reflecting discussions from Members of Council to be reviewed at a future Committee of the Whole (Working Session) early in 2015;
- 2) That recommendation 2. contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works and the Commissioner of Planning, dated May 21, 2014, be approved;
- 3) That staff report back on current parking issues as identified in this report and provide recommendations as to how solutions will be incorporated into new block plans; and
- 4) That the presentation from staff and Communication C4, presentation material entitled, "Proposed Parking Strategy for Existing Residential Neighbourhoods", dated May 21, 2014, be received.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, and the Commissioner of Planning recommend:

1. That staff be directed to develop policy for a City wide on-street paid permit parking program to be implemented on a resident initiated petition basis; and
2. That staff bring forward a report to a future Committee of the Whole with a draft Zoning By-law amendment to enable parking on the hard landscaped portion of the front yard on lots.

Contribution to Sustainability

On-street parking could optimize the use of the existing road infrastructure, which supports sustainable use of existing infrastructure. The on-lot parking solution does not change the current maximum driveway widths of minimum landscaping requirements and encourages the use of permeable paving options for driveway and walkway paving materials.

Economic Impact

There are no immediate impacts resulting from the adoption of this report. Preliminary costs associated with implementation of the preferred solution(s) are detailed later in this report.

Communications Plan

The communications plan which took place to engage citizens in providing feedback to the proposed parking solutions in residential areas included public meetings, website information, a survey, contact information, and electronic information exchange areas. The public meetings were held at Vaughan City Hall, Vellore Village Community Centre, Al Palladini Community Centre, North Thornhill Community Centre and Garnet Williams Community Centre. The communication strategy includes informing citizens of next steps through an email group and updates on the website.

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback from the public engagement activities carried out in February, March and April 2014 and to receive feedback from Committee on the proposed parking solutions. This report will provide Committee with updated residential parking solutions which have been modified from the December 2013 Council Report to reflect resident comments and concerns. The information in this report and Committee comments will be used to develop a draft policy for residential parking solutions.

Background - Analysis and Options

Council directed staff, at the December 10, 2013 Council meeting to elicit citizen feedback regarding proposed parking solutions

“That staff be directed to engage residents in the ‘New Urbanism’ areas in Blocks 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 33, 39, 40 and 53 for feedback on the application of the proposed parking solutions in their neighbourhoods and on their streets, and from residents of any other area not listed, who may wish to comment on the proposed blended parking solution”

Citizen engagement activities were conducted in February, March and April 2014

Staff worked with the Councillor’s offices and Corporate Communications to develop a comprehensive communication strategy. The following activities were conducted in February, March and April 2014 to engage the public and elicit feedback to the proposed residential parking solutions:

Public Information Meetings

- Five public meetings, one held in each Ward
- Advertised through:
 - Six, strategically placed, mobile signs
 - Newspaper ads published twice in *Vaughan Weekly*, *Vaughan Citizen*, *Vaughan Liberal* and *Lo Specchio*
 - Vaughan Website, Parking Strategy page
 - Personalized letters to the Ratepayer’s Associations
 - Twitter, Vaughan Blog, Jostle
 - Vaughan TV
 - Councillor Newsletters
- Approximately 80 people (in total) attended the public meetings

Parking Survey

- Parking survey available on line for eight weeks
- 2500 surveys distributed to Councillor offices, community centres and libraries
- Hard copies available at public meetings
- Advertised through:
 - Newspaper ads
 - Jostle, Twitter, Vaughan Blog
 - Vaughan TV
- Received 615 completed surveys

Parking Webpage

- Parking Webpage developed to highlight Proposed Residential Parking Solutions
- Advertised through:
 - Jostle, Twitter, Vaughan Blog
 - Vaughan TV

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Emails and Phone Calls

- Citizens contacted staff directly through email or phone to express their concerns or support for the proposed residential parking solutions
- Received 35 email and phone calls

Survey participation rate representative of Vaughan's population and has low margin of error

Staff received 615 surveys, both electronic and paper copies. The participation rate for the target population of 300,000 is at a +/- 4% margin of error and the percentage of the types of home resided in by the participants, closely matches the make-up of the City. Each Ward was represented with the largest participation from Ward 5 in all types of communication. The detailed results of the survey are available in Attachment 1.

Results from surveys, emails, phone calls and public meetings show support for the proposed on-lot parking solution

Comments from survey responses, emails, phone calls and public meetings all indicate favourable support for the proposed on-lot parking option.

Of the total survey responses, on-lot parking would solve at least 34% of people's parking needs, with 14% unsure. Of the people who indicated on the survey that they did not have enough parking, 71% indicated that on-lot parking would solve their parking needs. The comments in the survey further expanded on citizen support as there was clarification made between parking on the walkway and parking on the sidewalk. In the public meetings, the general feeling was that on-lot parking was a good idea.

However, many people cautioned in the comments and at the public meetings that if the Zoning By-law 1-88 was changed, that additional measures would be needed in order to protect the streetscape and green space. These sentiments aligned with staff's and, as such, draft guidelines for permeable paving options for driveways and hard landscaping have been developed to help citizens make environmentally friendly choices when designing the landscaping for the front of their home.

Concerns over congested streets limit support for the proposed on-street paid permit parking solution

The overall support for on-street paid permit parking was at 19%. Those people who indicated that they did not have enough parking, also showed a low support (24%) for on-street paid permit parking.

The main concern which was brought up in all of the public meetings, emails, phone calls and survey comments was the congestion already on City streets due to cars parked on both sides of the road. This past winter, the parked cars made it very difficult for snow plows and windrow clearing and in some cases, the snow plow could not navigate down the street and windrows were not cleared. Comments also were raised regarding visibility and the difficulty of entering or exiting a driveway. Most comments encouraged City staff to limit parking to one side of the street and not directly opposite a driveway opening on the adjacent side, regardless of the implementation of the on-street paid permit parking solution.

Additional concerns raised included garage space being used for storage, in lieu of parking of a vehicle, smaller garage sizes/widths being permitted that cannot adequately accommodate many current vehicles size standards and concerns relating to greater demands being caused by secondary suites.

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The location of on-street paid permit parking was also raised as citizens were concerned with parking on winding roads, near intersections, distance to hydrants, driveways, bus stops and mailboxes.

Proposed parking solutions have been modified to incorporate feedback

Proposed On-Lot Parking

The December 3, 2013 Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report No. 55, Item 4 proposed that on-lot parking be accommodated by modifying current maximum driveway widths and modifying minimum soft and hard landscaping requirements to allow people to park on their front yards. This suggestion has been modified to protect the streetscape and address resident and staff concerns regarding green space.

The proposed parking solution recommends that cars be permitted to park on the hard landscaped area of the front yard. This proposal maintains the maximum driveway widths and curb cuts, as well as, the minimum landscaping requirements as outlined in Zoning By-law 1-88 for lot frontages which are six or more metres. The proposal is that the restriction against parking on hard landscaping (a walkway or patio, for example) be removed to allow citizens to park on their lot (the private side of the property line), on hard landscaping, beside their driveway.

The current Curb Cut and Driveway Widening program allows residents to apply for a permit to widen their driveway to a maximum width depending on lot frontage, while maintaining soft landscaping as a percentage of all landscaping as required in Zoning By-law 1-88. The maximum driveway widths and percentage of landscaping ensure the streetscape is preserved and prohibits the paving over of the entire front of the home. Citizens can also apply through Committee of Adjustment to widen their driveways outside of the restrictions in the Zoning By-law 1-88. Townhouse development has been subject to site plan control.

Urban design criteria for residential driveway modifications have been drafted by the Planning Commission to help citizens design their driveways in ways which will preserve the streetscape. The guidelines speak to materiality, but also include principles for general design, such as:

- Established and City trees shall not be damaged or removed to permit front yard parking;
- Consideration must be given for permanent above grade utilities (street amenities, hydro poles, fire hydrants, trees, etc.);
- All proposed changes must visually respond to the existing site conditions (consider colour and pattern)

If approved, this parking solution will have impact to the Zoning By-law 1-88 and amendments will be required. The specific sections in the By-law which are affected need to be determined by staff if direction is provided. The process to amend the By-law is anticipated to take a minimum of six to nine months, and staff propose to report back to Council with the amendments in early 2015.

Elements of a Proposed On-Street Paid Permit Parking Policy

An on-street paid permit parking program, if approved, could provide a parking solution for those residents who do not have driveways (townhomes serviced by laneways) and others who also wish to pursue this option. This program would be made available city-wide but would only be implemented under certain conditions and through a resident led petition:

- 75% of residents on the street or block segment would need to participate in a petition (indicates support for or against); after it has been determined the street meets engineering requirements and residents have participated in an information session, 75% must agree to an on-street paid permit program (this is the same percentage and process for support as outlined in the Traffic Calming Policy)

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- Street widths must be at least eight metres wide (curb to curb)
- Permits would be available in one month, six month and one year periods
- One permit per household
- On-street parking would be implemented on one side of the street, with no parking on the opposite side of the street
- Permits valid for the time between 2 am and 6 am
- Permits sold = parking spaces available
- Extra permits sold to a household only if spaces are still available

The high petition participation and support percentage for on-street parking is a concession to those citizens who voiced an unwillingness to support on-street paid permit parking, while still allowing those who want to implement it, an opportunity to do so.

On-street paid permit parking will impact snow clearing and windrow clearing. During the winter of 2013-14, the City of Vaughan plowed residential streets 9 times. As a result, although snow removal will need to be used more often on streets with paid permit parking to ensure the streets retain the six metre clearance for emergency vehicles, this impact while costing the City more is anticipated to have a moderate impact on the winter maintenance budget. The cost of snow removal will need to be incorporated into the cost of the permit if a decision to move forward with permitted parking is made.

Parking Enforcement Strategy to be developed by By-law and Compliance Department

One of the concerns, consistently raised by citizens, in all of the public engagement forums was the need for an increase in parking enforcement attention and actions in certain circumstances. A question in the parking survey asked residents if they would support towing as a tool for parking enforcement. The table below illustrates the response:

The City of Vaughan will be developing an enforcement strategy to support the existing parking policy. Currently, vehicles that are parked illegally are issued a parking ticket. Would you support towing as a level of enforcement:				
Answer Options	Yes	No	Undecided	Response Count
Where it impacts winter snow operations?	426	128	26	580
Where it impacts safety (emergency vehicles)?	501	59	20	580
In school zones?	361	164	53	578

As can be seen by the table, there is strong support for towing as a level of enforcement.

The findings of the survey will be taken into consideration in considering enhancements to current related compliance practices. Currently the By-law and Compliance Department employs towing of vehicles primarily as a tool to address immediate unsafe conditions, including blocking of Emergency Services vehicles, but does not tow for blocking of winter snow operations as a practice or within school zones.

Cost Analysis of Recommended Solutions

On-Lot Parking

Current Curb Cut and Driveway Widening Program – the current program fees are based on cost recovery for staff review of driveway widening drawings and the actual curb cuts. The fees are currently:

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- Driveway Widening Permit: \$130.00
- Curb Cut Fees for first 4 metres: \$ 225.00
- Additional Curb Cut per metre: \$23.75

Committee of Adjustment (Minor Variance) – the current fee for Committee of Adjustment (Minor Variance) is based on cost recovery for staff review. The fees are currently:

- Minor Variance: \$875.00

The changes proposed to the Zoning By-law to allow parking on the hard landscaped portion of the front yard and to ensure protection of street character may change the amount of time needed by staff to review the application for driveway widening and parking expansion. Staff will provide a detailed cost estimate during the policy development stage.

On-Street Paid Permit Parking

A preliminary cost analysis for implementing the on-street paid permit program identified that the capital cost per street would be approximately \$3,600.00 per street. This cost took into account petition administration, sign purchase and installation and the engineering study to determine street suitability for on-street paid permit parking.

The annual costs for administering the program, including permit sales, increased enforcement and other additional compliance activities, and snow removal have not yet been analyzed. However, staff will provide detailed cost estimates during the policy development stage.

Next steps include developing a residential parking policy which will outline by-law amendments, processes and costs

Staff will incorporate the feedback from residents and Committee to develop a parking policy for existing residential areas. The policy will include impact to resources, by-laws and process costs. It is expected that this work will help inform new development residential parking requirements for planned new communities.

Staff will also pursue studies to determine if there is parking available at community centres and libraries.

Parking issues in Vaughan have current, as well as, long term considerations, and staff is developing a parking strategy with different components

The solution for parking in existing residential areas is only one component of a larger City of Vaughan parking strategy. Policy development for residential parking in existing areas will influence policy for parking in new developments. Currently Planning and Development/Transportation Engineering require the development community to consider layby parking along schools, parks and storm ponds, as well as, the submission of parking plans. Citizen feedback, which is generally supportive, regarding parking on one side of the street for narrow streets, could also be translated into a requirement for new developments.

Secondary Suites Impact

Council had directed staff to consider the impacts of the Secondary Suite legislation on parking. This matter is being addressed concurrently by the Secondary Suites Task Force.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the recommendations of the report will assist in:

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- Lead and Promote Environmental Sustainability
- Demonstrate Excellence in Service Delivery

Regional Implications

On-Street Parking will not have implications to York Region Transit as on-street parking will only be allowed on roads which have minimum widths as determined by the needs of Ontario Fire Code, which is also a sufficient width for buses.

Conclusion

Resident parking needs in existing areas in the City of Vaughan could be met through two options: on-street and on-lot parking. These options would enable residents to either apply, through a petition, for on-street paid permit parking, or manage their front yard landscaping to allow for more available on-lot parking. The choices given to residents could meet their parking needs.

It is recommended that staff develop a residential parking policy for the proposed parking options.

Attachment

1. Draft Proposed Residential Parking Solutions Communication Strategy and Results

Report prepared by:

Jennifer Rose, Manager, Special Projects, ext. 8745

(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.)