

Town revises its Memorial Arena site's development concept plan

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Area residents had a chance to see a refined development concept for the former Memorial Arena site at a public meeting last week.

Back in October 2013, Halton Hills Council approved a preferred development option for the property, owned by the Town, that featured one 162,180 sq. ft. mid-rise building fronting onto Mill St. with a maximum height of five storeys, a reconfigured Lions Park located at the rear of the site, and a new road running through the site that connects with both Mill St. and Dayfoot Dr.

At that time, Town staff was directed to move ahead with amendments to the Georgetown GO Station Secondary Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw, which would allow redevelopment of the property and a reconfigured Lions Park in keeping with the preferred option, but during further review it was determined some changes to the concept were needed.

Heather Swan, a planner with Dillon Consulting, the firm hired by the Town to come up with concepts for the land, said the original plan was based on using the existing driveway, but it was determined that access was too close to Guelph St. so it had to be moved. Also, now instead of one building, the revised concept shows two buildings of up to five storeys each, separated by the relocated driveway. As well, the road that accessed Dayfoot Dr. has been removed due to grading issues.

Swan said the refined option still follows the same principles as the original preferred plan—there is the same commercial and community space available and about the same number of units (from 118 to 115). The square footage of the buildings is reduced to 144,675 and the park is smaller, down from 0.60 to 0.24 hectares in the revised concept.

The required Official Plan amendment would permit high density residential and the Zoning Bylaw amendment would rezone the property to site specific High Density Residential Zone. By doing that it would ensure after the Town sells the property, future development of the site would be consistent with Council's preferred option.

Increased traffic congestion from the development was a key issue raised by several residents at the meeting.

A Victoria Gardens resident wanted to ensure they would still have access to the back gate onto their property, which they use to bring in snow clearing and grass cutting equipment.

Area resident Ryan Humberstone presented an alternative proposal—complete with drawings left with Town staff—for the property.

"I think the old arena was very special in Georgetown," said Humberstone.

His drawings showed a new arena that included a curling club, which he said "adds to the cost benefit analysis."

"Put the pool back where it was," said Humberstone, to applause from the gallery.

Addressing the concerns raised, Town senior planner Jeff Markowiak said Dillon Consulting had submitted a traffic impact study. He said he would ensure the Town's Engineering department would take all traffic concerns into consideration when commenting.

"The design of the park would occur at the site plan stage," said Markowiak, regarding a comment raised about the park.

He said the gate utilized by Victoria Gardens would access onto public land and remain accessible to their property.

Council didn't make a decision on the issue and Town staff is to report back at a later date.



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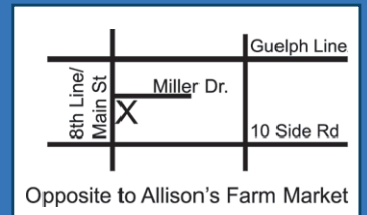
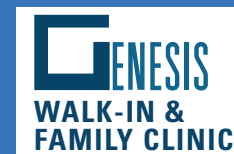
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