

Council adopts 20-year blueprint for growth

By Dianne Cornish

Two planning documents, which will help shape commercial and residential development in Georgetown and Acton over the next two decades, were approved by town council at a special meeting last Tuesday night. The Acton Urban Area Residential Implementation Study and the Halton Hills Urban Area Study were adopted with amendments at the close of the five-hour meeting.

The former study serves as a guideline for consideration of draft plans of subdivision in Acton as dictated by servicing capacities identified by Halton Region. The latter study, authored by a Toronto firm of planning consultants called Walker, Nott, Dragicevic Associates Limited, sets the framework for residential and commercial development in Halton Hills up until the Year 2011. Both documents are designed to clearly illustrate to residents and developers which areas of town are designated for future development, either commercially or residentially. The scale of proposed development is also indicated in the studies.

The two biggest projects on the commercial development front are the proposed mixed commercial and residential development plans for the Dominion Gardens property on Guelph Street, Georgetown and Coscan's proposed commercial shopping centre to be built east of Churchill Road and south of Highway 7, Acton.

A new land use designation will be applied to the Dominion Gardens property to allow for mixed use development that will incorporate up to 230,000 square feet of retail commercial floor-space, multiple-family residential uses, parkland, community facilities and other uses. The town will retain development control for the lands to ensure compatible integration of its commercial and residential components. Commercial development on the site will be timed in direct response to real population growth in Georgetown.

The Coscan property will be designated as a Community Commercial Area, allowing for up to 30,000 square feet of food store space and 45,000 square feet of department store space. Commercial development on the

property will be timed to coincide with residential development in Acton East, including Coscan's plan to build a 250-home subdivision south of the proposed shopping mall.

The Urban Area Study also designates Freure Management lands, where the old Ajax building is located in Acton, as a Neighborhood Commercial Area, allowing a 17,500-square-foot commercial development, specifically excluding supermarket and department store uses.

Most of Georgetown's future residential growth is expected to take place in Georgetown South, Georgetown West and in proximity to the GO Transit station.

Last week, council designated as

medium density, a portion of lands off Guelph Street in the Mill Street and Dayfoot Drive area. At the same time, councillors agreed that the Memorial Arena lands and adjacent Sacre Coeur Church property be designated as high density residential land. Council also agreed that any development slated for the arena site and neighboring church property be integrated in design.

The east and northeast areas of Acton will be the main focus of future residential development.

With the adoption of the planning documents, town planning staff will now concentrate its efforts on drawing up Official Plan amendments which will reflect the content of the studies.

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