

CMGRA E-Mail Newsletter – February 1, 2012

Subject: Metrolinks Public Information Session (January 30, 2012)

This past Monday evening **Metrolinks** (the provincial government agency responsible for Go Transit, and builder of the questionably located parking garage) held a public information session to discuss their plans for development at the site of the Oakville GO Station.

Oakville is the second highest volume station in the network, with over 3,000 commuters using Go Transit on the average morning. This is projected to rise to 4,800 in the next couple of years. Metrolinks plans to continuously increase service by 2015, including a plan to increase off-peak service to every half hour.

They also plan to extensively re-vamp the Oakville Station. Their plans coincide with the Province's mandate to add approximately 12,000 residents and 8,000 jobs by 2031 in what is called Midtown Oakville. This is the area bounded by Cornwall Road on the South, the QEW on the north, 16 Mile Creek on the west and Chartwell Rd. on the east. As a result of these intensification plans, Metrolinks has identified this area as an "Emerging Urban Growth Centre" and as a "Mobility Hub".

The bottom line is that **Metrolinks is planning to expand the existing station, by extending the platform eastward over Trafalgar Road.** Parking will ultimately be relocated from the existing north lots to lots and garages on the east side of Trafalgar. New roads and accesses will be built as part of the grand plan, as well as a new overpass over the QEW connecting Iroquois Shore Road to an eastward extension of Cross Ave. New pedestrian, bicycle and car accesses to the station will eventually be built, along with supporting retail and commercial activities. There are also tentative plans for a bus-rapid-transit line running north from the station along/beside Trafalgar Road.

Potential plans to build a Civic Centre in the area were tested for a response. It was suggested that Town Hall should possibly be moved there, along with other major community resources.

The following links provide some information on Metrolinks mandate and plans:
http://www.metrolinx.com/en/projectsandprograms/mobilityhubs/mobility_hubs.aspx

We hope that their presentation from Monday will also be made available.

The following are links to the Town's Official Plan – Liveable Oakville – look for the sections that refers specifically to the Midtown development:

<http://www.oakville.ca/townhall/livable-oakville-plan.html>

<http://www.oakville.ca/assets/general%20-%20business/MidtownPlan-LivOak.pdf>

Our position at this very preliminary public consultation was that the focus was too directed at developing the Midtown Core as a destination on its own. Oakville's character is defined by its historic downtown and its lakeside location, and we thought it should remain that way, with any major public arts facility being located there. We suggested their plans should include efficient ways to link the Go Station to downtown. Other hubs/stations, such as Port Credit and Burlington, have been identified as "Historic Suburban Town Centres", and we felt they were remiss in not identifying Oakville that way.

Traffic concerns were a common thread for all participants, with many people bringing up the issue of traffic emanating from the soon-to-be-completed 1350 car garage at Cornwall and Trafalgar.

We also commented that adequate public notice of this meeting had not been given. Those present were entirely nearby residents and association representatives. Go Train commuters from Toronto could hardly be expected to make a 6pm meeting in Oakville. The only public notice for this session was in the Oakville Beaver. We suggested they place notices at the Go Station at the very least, to receive input from those already vested in their services.

It will be interesting to see how their plans develop from here. The preferred design concept is anticipated to be complete by February, and a further Public Open House will be held in March. Stay tuned!

Dani Morawetz, President, CMGRA