



**Town of Aurora  
Special Council Public Planning  
Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Monday, April 17, 2023  
**Time:** 7 p.m.  
**Location:** Council Chambers, Aurora Town Hall

**Council Members:** Mayor Tom Mrakas (Chair)  
Councillor Ron Weese  
Councillor Rachel Gilliland  
Councillor Wendy Gaertner  
Councillor John Gallo

**Members Absent:** Councillor Michael Thompson  
Councillor Harold Kim

**Other Attendees:** Marco Ramunno, Director of Planning and Development Services  
Edward Terry, Senior Policy Planner  
Jaclyn Grossi, Deputy Town Clerk  
Linda Bottos, Council/Committee Coordinator

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**1. Call to Order**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

Mayor Mrakas acknowledged that the meeting took place on Anishinaabe lands, the traditional and treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island, recognizing the many other Nations whose presence here continues to this day, the special relationship the Chippewas have with the lands and waters of this territory, and that Aurora has shared responsibility for the stewardship of these lands and waters. It was noted that Aurora is part of the treaty lands of the Mississaugas and Chippewas, recognized through Treaty #13 and the Williams Treaties of 1923.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved by** Councillor Gallo

**Seconded by** Councillor Weese

That the revised agenda as circulated by Legislative Services be approved.

Yeas (5): Mayor Mrakas, Councillor Weese, Councillor Gilliland, Councillor Gaertner, and Councillor Gallo

Absent (2): Councillor Thompson, and Councillor Kim

**Carried (5 to 0)**

**4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50*.

**5. Planning Applications**

The Mayor outlined the procedures that would be followed in the conduct of the public meeting. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the appropriate notice was given in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Planning Act*.

**5.1 PDS23-041 - Official Plan Review Second Draft**

**Consultant**

David Riley, Principal, SGL Planning and Design Inc., presented an overview of the Official Plan Review process and proposed revisions including phases, engagement, summary of comments, vision, Town structure and growth management, design excellence and green community, housing, land use designations, cultural heritage, greenlands and environmental designations, economy, site specific policy areas, Aurora Promenade and Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and visualizations, Secondary Plans, and next steps.

**Public Comments**

Aurora residents and property owner representatives including Jennifer Day, Joanna Fast, Wendy Kenyon, Adam Layton, George Skoulikas,

Katarzyna Sliwa, and Klaus Wehrenberg expressed the following comments:

Concerns regarding:

- Proposed redesignation of lands at 1289 Wellington Street East and larger Environmental Protection Area (EPA), and non-conformity with the Regional Official Plan
- Preservation and protection of natural heritage and decisions made based on subjective argument
- Dependence on environmental impact studies submitted as part of the application process, usually by firms representing developers, instead of an impartial environmental expert
- Draft Official Plan (OP) contains contradictory policies regarding EPAs
- Draft OP still leaves natural heritage areas open to inappropriate development, loss of biodiversity, and increased climate change risks
- Potential redevelopment of numerous properties on Yonge Street south of Wellington Street and loss of heritage
- Draft OP Section 6 - Building a Greener Community has no mention of establishing policies toward shifting away from car dependency to active transportation, and little mention of the transportation network's importance in greenhouse gas reduction efforts
- Draft OP Section 15 - Connecting the Transportation Network mentions the Town's Active Transportation Network and Aurora Trail Network Concept is shown on Schedule 'K', which is short of being the operative planning tool that is suggested and needs much greater detail

Questions regarding:

- Impact of provincial legislation, Bill 23 and Bill 97, on quality of planning applications with significantly diminished input from conservation authorities
- Conflict of interest related to environmental impact studies compiled by environmental firms hired by developers
- Consideration for modest height increases above five storeys related to future redevelopment applications for properties on Yonge Street south of Wellington Street
- Land use designation of Case Woodlot and Anne Bartley Smith Lands
- Lot coverage in Aurora Promenade Major Transit Station Area (MTSA)

- Clarification on Town's population growth projections

Suggestions regarding:

- Unevaluated wetlands should be included in the EPA designation to ensure they are not viewed as potential development areas
- Opportunity to enforce policies that provide better protection for natural areas while consistent with regional and provincial plans
- Update the provisions of OPA 34 Yonge Street South Secondary Plan concurrent with OP update to allow for more modern policy framework to be enacted for area
- Town should grow in a way that respects natural heritage
- Need to connect the Town's green spaces, which should be mapped, and afford equal opportunities and funding for off-road walking/hiking activities as for motorized traffic
- Replace the words "the change will **not have a net** adverse effect" with "the change will **have no** adverse effect" in Draft OP Section 12 - Protecting the Greenlands System, subsection 12.3.3 Policies (b)

#### **Planning Staff and Consultant**

Staff, the consultant, and the Mayor addressed the questions and concerns regarding lot coverage, population growth projections, land use designations, Case Woodlot and Anne Bartley Smith Lands designations, EPA and Parkland definitions, protection of designated heritage properties in the downtown core, and the Section 12.3.3 Policies language.

**Moved by** Councillor Weese

**Seconded by** Councillor Gilliland

1. That Report No. PDS23-041 be received; and
2. That comments presented at the Public Meeting be addressed by Planning and Development Services for consideration in the FINAL DRAFT Official Plan and in a report to a future General Committee meeting.

Yeas (5): Mayor Mrakas, Councillor Weese, Councillor Gilliland, Councillor Gaertner, and Councillor Gallo

Absent (2): Councillor Thompson, and Councillor Kim

**Carried (5 to 0)**

**6. Confirming By-law**

**6.1 By-law Number 6486-23 Being a By-law to confirm actions by Council  
resulting from a Special Council Public Planning Meeting on April 17, 2023**

**Moved by** Councillor Gallo

**Seconded by** Councillor Weese

That the confirming by-law be enacted.

**Carried**

**7. Adjournment**

**Moved by** Councillor Gaertner

**Seconded by** Councillor Weese

That the meeting be adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

**Carried**

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Tom Mrakas, Mayor

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Jaclyn Grossi, Deputy Town Clerk