

CEAC Report 2006-04

Report to: Mayor and Members of Council

From: John Abbott, Chair, Caledon Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC)

By: Mayfield West Community Development Plan sub-group: Pete Paterson, John Abbott, Graham Bryan, Debbe Crandall, Kari Morrison, Steve McElroy.

Date: June 20, 2006

Re: **Remaining True to the Mayfield West Development Plan**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Caledon Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC) recommends to the Corporation of the Town of Caledon:

1. That Council receive CEAC Report 2006-04
2. That Council request staff to advise how staff has considered each of the Critical Issues noted in the Discussion section of CEAC Report 2006-04. Such issues include the need for Mass Transit, concerns regarding the Main Road Transportation Network, concerns regarding Residential Mix/Housing Types and Community Design principles, Stormwater Management best management practices, etc.
3. That Council request staff to advise how staff has addressed each item noted in the Detailed Comments of the Discussion section of this report.

INTRODUCTION

The Mayfield West Development Plan (referred to as the Mayfield West Secondary Plan) is a plan to establish policies that will achieve the design objectives developed for this community over an extended period of time starting in 1996 and culminating in the submission of the Town of Caledon Official Plan Amendment 208 (OPA 208) at this date.

The Plan encompasses a total area of 1,100 acres of which 450 acres are devoted to employment lands, while commercial space of 100,000 sq. ft. is envisaged. 9,000 residents and 2.845 dwelling units are anticipated to be in place by the year 2021.

Including the Valleywood and Snell's Hollow communities, the 2021 population forecast for Mayfield West is 13,100 persons.

The purpose of OPA 208 is to amend the Town of Caledon's Official Plan to establish policies, land use designations, environmental management and servicing requirements, and a policy framework for community design guidelines that will guide development within the Plan area to 2021. As indicated by Town Planning and Development staff during the course of the Statutory Public Meeting held on May 23, 2006; "The proposed Amendment will serve as the basis for the consideration of development proposals and land use changes within the Plan area."

CEAC appreciates the complexities that have been involved to date in the development of the Mayfield West Community Development Plan. The transparent process that has been adopted and the public input that has been solicited during the course of the design of Mayfield West is admirable and Town Planning and Development staff, and in particular Mr. Tim Manley, Senior Planner, are to be commended.

CEAC members have participated in the Mayfield West Planning and Design Workshop held in 2003 (referred to as the Design Charettes) and have monitored the status of the project since that time. CEAC's current role, as approved by Council, is to "Review and offer advice on the environmental studies and strategies that emerge from the process". Members of the CEAC sub-group tasked with addressing the issues emanating from the development of OPA 208 met with Town Planning and Development staff on May 31, 2006 to discuss the contents of the draft CEAC report in some depth. A subsequent meeting was held on June 6th with Mr. Abbott of CEAC and Mr. Manley to discuss staff's initial reaction to the report and to finalize the coordination of the reporting process to Council on June 20th including CEAC Report 2006-04.

BACKGROUND

The creation of a plan for Mayfield West confirms Caledon's commitment to 'tri-nodal' growth. The planning approach, including design charettes and use of design criteria that included 'green' criteria, has allowed community involvement and greater consideration of environmental factors than might otherwise have been the case.

OPA 208 sets out to describe much of what the Mayfield West development will look like. Within OPA 208 there are references to the Mayfield West Community Design Plan which will further detail certain aspects of the overall development plan. It is intended that the Design Plan will follow the approval of the OPA 208 and will be available for comment by the early summer of 2006.

How well environmental considerations will be truly addressed in the development of Mayfield West will depend on how such factors are treated in the official plan amendment (OPA 208). While OPA 208 shows a continued commitment to the tri-nodal plan there are concerns as to:

1. how well environmental considerations are addressed within the specific text of OPA 208,
2. what considerations will be carried over into the Mayfield West Community Design Plan and how binding that plan will be, and
3. the lack of adequate attention to ‘bigger picture’ issues such as mass transit connections, green space connectivity, phasing of the construction and development of residential, commercial and employment lands, Valleywood connectivity, stormwater management best practices, etc.

REPORT OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of this report are:

1. to ensure that the urban design concepts that resulted from the Planning and Design Workshop held in 2003 and which have a potential impact on the socio-ecological development of Mayfield West are specifically addressed in OPA 208,
2. to provide a different perspective to that of staff with respect to community design and planning principles within the larger regional context,
3. to highlight significant areas of environmental importance that may have been overlooked by Town Planning and Development staff, and
4. to ensure the provision of clear guidelines that leave little room for developer misinterpretation insofar as environmental and socio-ecological issues are concerned.

CEAC has considered most, if not all, aspects of the development in commenting on the environmental impact of factors such as transit, jobs, urban design, and services which are inextricably linked to environmental concerns. For example, a community may have preserved all natural heritage features but will have a large greenhouse gas impact if no transit is available.

DISCUSSION

The Discussion section of this report first addresses what CEAC believes is the big picture context governing municipal planning within the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Included is a perspective taken from a number of sources that attempts to overlay a conceptual framework for suburban and exurban community design within a regional context. From this, the report identifies the most critical issues that, in CEAC’s

perspective, must be considered in the planning and implementation of Mayfield West. In doing so, an attempt is made to clearly define and address each specific issue in the context of the wording of the proposed OPA 208.

The second section deals with the precise wording used within specific sections of the OPA 208 and, in a number of cases, poses questions in order to clarify the intent of the documented comment.

The Regional Context:

The provincial Greenbelt Act and Plan have heralded in a new approach to regional planning. By legislating growth boundaries and identifying and protecting a natural heritage system comprised of the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Protected Countryside the Province has legislated a vision of where (and where not) new urban development will occur and what kinds of development will take place. While this is a first key step, planning is not sufficient in and of itself – battling urban sprawl requires a recognition of the connection between land use planning, transportation and air quality – like the proverbial snake that has its tail in its mouth, its hard to know which comes first. However, a key building block is the development of a regional transit system that would connect all the components of the region - exurban and suburban development with the city and town centres (i.e., connecting people in their homes to where they work, shop and recreate). This then sparks the kind of sustainable development patterns envisioned by regional design.

The challenge for municipal planning in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is that a regional transit system is not in place although there continues to be much debate around the need for a more equitable role of transit in a GGH transportation network. So while land use planning in the GGH is moving towards a regional approach, transportation services continue to be road-based, parochial and uncoordinated. This in turn continues to feed the market-driven low-density housing patterns, which in turn do not provide the critical mass necessary for private/public investment in transit. And so the cycle goes.

Planning for the End of Sprawl:

According to Calthorpe and Fulton¹, there are a number of essential ingredients in a successful suburban town: there must be mixed-use development that will encourage a wide range of housing, communities must be pedestrian-friendly, transit-accessible and balanced. Calthorpe et. al. list a hierarchy of centres that are common not only to the region but also to the suburban town. At the smallest scale is the Neighbourhood Centre (usually serving about 120 acres or a five-minute walk in any direction with at a minimum a neighbourhood green which includes a simple shared open space, some civic uses – daycare, senior's centre and ideally some small stores.). The next is the Village Centre, which is the logical place for multi-family units and seniors' housing, civic uses including a post office, library or youth centre, small-scale office space such as dentists'

¹ The Regional City: Planning for the End of Sprawl, (2001), Calthorpe, P., and Fulton, W., Island Press

offices, travel agencies etc, and a large village common. Next is the Town Centre which is “the heart of the municipality” – 24-hour services, highest concentration of jobs, typically the highest density of housing, and which sits at the crossroads of the area’s transit system.

Connecting these centres are corridors both within the town but also to other parts of the region. Small scale walkable corridors would connect the neighbourhood centres to the village centre, ideally the village centre would be within walking or biking distance from the town centre – certainly a transit corridor would connect these two with the town centre which in turn would be connected to other town centres within the region.

There are other factors that make urban areas work including the need for a critical mass for adequate private and public investments in commercial and employment jobs, and soft and hard infrastructure.

We recognize that this is an idealized regional design. However, there are useful pieces that can be used to inform the design of a new exurban greenfield development such as Mayfield West. Admittedly, many existing conditions present problems – the proximity of Brampton and Snelgrove may hamper the ability of Mayfield West to attract the necessary kinds of public and private sector investment – civic uses, and retail outlets. For instance, Valleywood already has a library, which will probably inhibit a library from coming into the Mayfield West Village Centre. There is currently no regional transit system that connects the Town Centres to each other and therefore, by necessity, Mayfield West will continue to be almost wholly car-dependant. Designing for zones rather than for places can also be a barrier as it tends to stifle creativity and entrepreneurial incentives – key factors for success.

CEAC recognizes that this is the big picture reality in which the Town of Caledon is moving forward with its Mayfield West Development Plan. The challenges are huge and could very well be insurmountable. However Caledon has never shied away from moving ahead of the pack and continues to be recognized as a leader in a number of challenging areas. The approach taken so far in Mayfield West attests to this and there is no question that the intentions of the Town are admirable and very much in keeping with a desire to do things differently. The principal question, therefore, is will the design and policy framework of OPA 208 achieve any of the objectives of the original vision for Mayfield West?

Critical Issues:

1. Mass Transit

If Mayfield West is to be other than another suburban entity driven by commuter traffic passing through and emanating from its streets and roadways, then public transit servicing Mayfield West and providing its residents convenient transportation to the employment centres of Brampton, Mississauga and Toronto must become a reality; and as early as possible in the development of the Town.

One of the Transportation Objectives noted in the OPA (refer to section 7.12.3.4d)) states “Ensure that the road network provides opportunities for transit to play a role in serving the community and to connect Mayfield West to other areas of the Town and the rest of the Greater Toronto Area”.

This is one of the few times that mass transit is mentioned in the proposed OPA 208 and the issue was not raised during the course of the Public Meeting of May 23rd. At the very least, “opportunities for transit” needs to be more clearly defined at this early stage and built into the OP policies and community design plan. Failure to recognize and plan for this need will mean that roadway design allowing for bus stops and transit hubs will be ignored, leading to costly retrofitting at a later date. The standard argument of the need for cost justification based on adequate ridership will undoubtedly be raised as a reason for delaying the provision of public transit in the early days of Mayfield West. Yet the provision of adequate public transit will be essential to encourage the early development of employment lands and will act as an enticement for residential and commercial growth.

With the proximity of Mayfield West to Brampton Transit services, perhaps there are opportunities over time to have Mayfield West serve as a staging point to attract ridership from north Caledon and beyond which then may create a more attractive market for more transit investment.

2. Parking/Transit Hub/Car Pool Areas

The issue of parking is recognized only briefly in section 7.12.7.2 of the OPA with the principal guideline that “Provision and maintenance of on-street parking on Kennedy Road and Main Street within the Village Centre shall be encouraged”. More positively, an additional statement stipulates that “Alternatives to permanent, large areas of surface parking will be sought. Where they are required, they will be located at the rear of buildings -----“.

CEAC’s concerns with this issue reside principally with the possibility of traffic congestion within the Village Centre, with the encouragement of on-street parking on Kennedy Road and Main Street and the possible need for a paved area for a transit hub and additional areas to meet car pooling requirements.

All of this could lead to a significant amount of land within the village boundaries being paved (impervious) unless specific guidelines are set in place to direct the developer to minimize adverse environmental impacts such as those associated with stormwater management. Such guidelines might encourage off-street parking in the Village Centre, multi-storey parking at the rear of commercial operations, the use of area surfaces that are not impervious but which can be maintained at a reasonable level of quality, the combination of a transit hub with off-street parking areas, and the location of car pooling pick-up areas close to gateway intersections and away from ecologically sensitive areas.

3. Main Road Transportation Network

OPA 208 precisely documents the changes to the transportation network that will form the “skeleton” of the new town of Mayfield West (refer to section 7.12.4.5), and recognizes “the need to develop a more pedestrian oriented community”. This section goes on to state that “the road network will be refined and expanded to enhance the accessibility to and from and, as appropriate, through the Secondary Plan Area”.

Section 7.12.16, Transportation, deals comprehensively with the need to undertake a number of studies prior to the finalization of “designs, functions and requirements for roads and other components of the transportation system ----“. However, the OPA proceeds to stipulate that Kennedy Road will be designated as a Major Collector Road from Mayfield to Old School Roads and that developers “shall provide a widening to the Town to provide for a 26 - 36 metre right-of-way”. Furthermore, developers are to provide a 22 - 26 metre right-of-way for “A new “Main Street” from Highway 10 easterly to the east limits of the Community Development Plan”, i.e. a north-south roadway west of Heart Lake Road.

While the re-aligned Kennedy Road and the new Main Street will be intersected at a number of points by somewhat narrower “green collector roads” (20 – 24 metre right-of-way), the width and position of the Kennedy Road/Main Street axis with regard to the extended 410 raise serious concerns as to the realism of establishing a pedestrian oriented community in the very heart of Mayfield West. Of interest is the similarity between Issaquah Highlands – a small 3,200-unit community within the Puget Sound regional plan limits - and the Town of Caledon and its relationship to the Greenbelt. Issaquah Highlands dealt successfully with a potentially crippling arterial road system that passed straight through its Town Centre. Rather than building a typical four-lane highway, four one-lane streets were designed to form an urban grid. Similar volumes of traffic were handled without any loss to the pedestrian-friendly character of the town; in fact it is reported that it “moves traffic more efficiently because all the left-turns are “free” – they turn from a one-way street to another (Calthorpe).”

4. Residential Mix/Housing Types and Community Design

The example of Issaquah Highlands can also be instructive in its range of residential housing types. According to Calthorpe et, al. “60% of the housing in Issaquah Highlands is multifamily and 33% will be affordable.” This compact urban form, mixed uses, walkability and higher density has been attributed to the growth management laws of Washington State.

Similar signs of rapid changes in the housing market of the Toronto region have been noted in an editorial by John Barber of the Globe and Mail (May 24, 2006.) “The number of apartment starts in Canada has increased at 15-percent ...three times the growth in the stock of front-door type housing. The trend is even more concentrated in the Toronto region, where the number of new apartments overtook the number of new detached homes in 2005 and never looked back, according to the CHMC.” And further that “the decline in construction of detached homes will be severe enough to cause a dip in overall

housing starts according to CHMC.” Barber attributes some of this change in housing types to the effect that the Greenbelt growth management boundary is having on the market.

However, Mayfield West is being planned seemingly oblivious to the changes taking place within the region - 88% of the residential dwelling units are ground units comprised of single family, semi-detached and townhouses. Of the 2,845 units in the Secondary plan, only 344 (12%) are to be apartments. This low-density housing is not the mixed use, compact form that will in any way be able to create the critical mass for transit, for attracting commercial and retail services or public civic uses.

CEAC had two representatives at the two-day design charettes and can attest to the key themes that emerged. It is worth noting that participants were working under the premise that this would be a different type of community – one where the first-stage mature population of 7,500 could be accommodated within a 200-hectare land area. The expectations raised and the results of the conceptual planning process indicated that Mayfield West was not to be a typical suburban community.

The Community Design section of the OPA has used many of these design principles in the design of the Village Centre. However, outside the Village Centre boundaries the key design principles (mixed-use, transit-supportive densities, walkable, connected – *different from Brampton*) have not been incorporated, or at least are not evident in OPA 208. As notes one participant “*Perhaps we were wide-eyed optimists, however we envisioned an entire Mayfield West Community to be one that more closely resembled that which is now relegated to the Village Centre*”.

Another observation, using Calthrope’s hierarchy, is that key structural element of Neighbourhood Centres, mentioned above, is not being realized and won’t be with single-family low-density housing being the only type of housing outside the Village Centre. Another key feature, the corridor, could be planned to radiate out from the Village Centre into the adjacent neighbourhoods thus allowing people to move freely to the heart of Mayfield West. This could be more easily accomplished with hubs of medium to high density focused around the neighbourhood common space and opportunities for small-scale retail hubs.

Questions that come to mind include:

- What is the rationale behind the dwelling unit calculations? Why is there such a high percentage of ground units?
- What happened to the ‘transit-supportive densities’ as a key design principle?
- We know that the Province sees transit-supportive densities as an important component of future growth. How does this plan mesh with possible future plans and requirements?
- How did: “Develop a compact, mixed use community that provides a broad range of housing types and tenures” become a predominantly (50%) single-family and an 88% ground unit community?
- What percentage of these medium/high density units might be rental units?
- Are the social housing projects to include affordable housing for the less than affluent home-owners i.e., those that might seek the kind of employment

envisioned in the adjacent industrial lands? If not, does this OPA envision any affordable housing policies? Can some homes be built to suit an owner renting out a separate entrance apartment or for use as a granny flat?

- Will there be opportunities for small home-based commercial enterprises anywhere within Mayfield West (another key theme that flowed from the workshop)?

5. Connectivity to Valleywood and Snell’s Hollow

Little mention is made in the OPA to the need for connectivity to Mayfield West from Valleywood and Snell’s Hollow. Since this was part of the evaluation criteria, important to the concept of a shared community, and related to the viability of the Village Centre and transit, there needs to be further explanation as to how connectivity will occur. How, for example, will the existing bridge below the east side of Valleywood be used? It should be recognized that there may be environmental or practical drawbacks to creating more connections (environmental costs of bridges, steep valley walls, etc.). If this is the case, then the rationale behind the associated cost/benefit analysis should be stated.

Failure to provide adequately for the connectivity of the three separate communities will undoubtedly result in both Valleywood and Snell’s Hollow becoming isolated communities with stronger ties to the more easily accessible City of Brampton for shopping, commercial services and job opportunities. As well the public library will not be available to the residents of Mayfield West resulting in lost opportunities for creating that sense of place.

6. Stormwater Management

One of the Servicing Objectives contained in the proposed OPA (refer to section 7.12.3.3) deals with the design of a stormwater management system that is “integrated with the open space system and minimizes impacts on the natural environment, while meeting provincial, Town and other government agency water quality and quantity requirements and standards”.

This Objective is later addressed comprehensively in the proposed OPA (refer to sections 7.12.17.2.1 through 7.12.17.2.8) in a description of the design requirements for Stormwater Management Facilities.

While some design statements are firm in their direction, for example; “Stormwater management facilities *shall be* developed in accordance with the MESP and the Community Design Plan to the satisfaction of the Town in consultation with the TRCA ---, etc.” (refer to 7.12.17.2.1), other statements are much less so, for example, “Stormwater management techniques shall aim to achieve an overall net environmental benefit to the Etobicoke Creek and West Humber watersheds, *where possible;*” (refer to 7.12.17.2.2 b)) (Emphasis is CEAC’s). Another example of a tentative/conditional design statement exists with regard to stormwater management facilities within designated EPA areas where developers are directed to “—minimize intrusions and alterations to existing valley and tributary features and functions, and adhere to the Town’s ecosystem principle, goal,

objectives, policies and performance measures, *to the greatest extent possible*” (refer to 7.12.17.2.7). In both examples noted above, specific rather than qualified direction would appear to be in order.

The need for Best Management Practices for stormwater system design has been mentioned within the OPA only obliquely in section 7.12.17.2.5 with regard to development in high recharge areas when “—the best available techniques for maintaining water infiltration should be utilized, giving first consideration to innovative grading techniques -----“. The proposed OPA would benefit from greater emphasis on the need for innovation and Best Management Practices in the design and delivery of engineered services throughout the Town, and in particular stormwater systems because of their potential to adversely impact the natural environment.

7. Green Corridors

The concept of green corridors is disappearing as time goes on. The size and number of corridors has dropped since the Concept Plan was adopted in 2005 and there has been little direction as to what form what is left will take (refer to section 7.12.14, Open Space and Recreation).

The proposals suggesting green corridors be concentrated around valley lands and on private lands (in the developers’ Environmental Sustainability Plan) is a concern. These measures alone will fail to address issues of ecological connectivity between the larger valley areas. Caledon could also lose a unique opportunity to bring natural settings into the town and to contribute to the rural and small town feel of Mayfield West.

There should be support for green corridors within the OPA and specific direction as to what form they should take, i.e. naturalized areas. This should include specific support for the Restoration Site opportunities recommended in the MESP.

8. Monitoring – Socio-ecological Impact of the Plan

In CEAC’s previous report (2006-02) submitted to Council on April 18, 2006 the case was strongly made for the Town to immediately engage in developing an impact-of- growth monitoring programme for any new development within the Town. Similarly the Mayfield West Master Environmental Servicing Plan (MESP) calls specifically for ecological monitoring to be developed. Mayfield West presents itself as an ideal pilot project for such a monitoring programme and, as such, direction should be provided in OPA 208 for the initiation of a Mayfield West specific monitoring programme.

9. Industrial/Commercial Footprint

Commercial development within Mayfield West is anticipated to occur along both sides of Main Street and along the west side of Kennedy Road, all within the Village Centre. 100,00 square feet of commercial space has been planned for at the ground street level with second and third floor residential located above. As outlined in section 7.12.8, Village Centre Commercial Area, “Sufficient off-street parking will be provided in areas

which are convenient for the commercial and residential uses. Parking and loading shall be accommodated at the rear of buildings”. No commercial development is anticipated in the four neighbourhoods outside of the Village Centre.

Much has been made recently of the need of for “anchors”, i.e. well known brand-name commercial enterprises such as Wal-Mart or Home Depot, to be located in the Village Centre in order to draw other commercial entities with good prospects of long term financial viability because of the proximity of the “anchor” stores.

While CEAC applauds the parking stipulations currently defined for the commercial development, there is concern that “big box” stores could change the small town character envisaged for the development and could lead to large off-street paved parking lots to service customer traffic. As an additional, and somewhat unrelated, point, the Design Charettes anticipated that small scale commercial enterprises, e.g. convenience stores, would be allowed in each of the four neighbourhoods. Obviously, this would allow conveniently close and off-hour shopping for residents resulting in reduced automobile use.

The Community Planning Objectives address the plans for achieving the Town’s employment targets and live/work opportunities in section 7.12.3.1h) “----through the provision of a range of job-creating land uses adjacent to and north of the Highway 410 extension” and east of the 410 extension between Kennedy and Dixie Roads. As indicated in section 7.12.11, Industrial, the Industrial Area covers approximately 444 acres where the following industrial designations will apply: Prestige Industrial, General Industrial, and Academic/Research Campus. The OPA treats each industrial designation comprehensively and states (refer to section 7.12.11.1.3) that “it is the intent ----- to provide for a mix of high quality industrial and small scale accessory commercial uses that would contribute to the Town’s employment and commercial/industrial assessment base”.

However, no mention is made of the need to use the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system as the preferred approach to addressing environmental sustainability in the new community for all forms of building including commercial and industrial. CEAC strongly supports the LEED rating system as described in the “Environmental Sustainability Plan, The Building Blocks of a Sustainable Community”, dated May 2006.

However, CEAC recognizes that the LEED programs are still in their infancy. According to the May, 2006 Plan noted above, current Industrial Building Guidelines are based on NRCAN’s Industrial Building Incentive Program, pending renewal of the program after 2006 (p. 16). The Institutional/Commercial Guidelines are founded on the Commercial Building Incentive Program. Builders are to be “encouraged” to use the LEED-NC (new construction) standard. Homes are using Energy Star as the proposed alternate to LEED-H, and the development will have “regard to” LEED-ND (new development).

CEAC congratulates the developers on being willing to work with the complications of emerging certification systems. Given that the OPA is meant to influence future development, it should include a

section requiring that the various certification systems and guidelines used be monitored for their effectiveness in achieving the energy and environmental goals that they were designed to achieve.

10. Gateway Intersections

In order to bolster the feasibility of mass transit and car pooling, consideration should be given to providing car and bicycle parking/transit stops within reasonable proximity to the gateway intersections and trail networks. These can act as meeting/collection points for Mayfield West residents and Caledon residents needing access to parking for commuting purposes as noted above. This may help alleviate some congestion in the Village Centre. It would also be important to advocate for similar lots along the 410 exits. While parking lots have their environmental drawbacks, if they are well constructed and built away from environmentally sensitive areas, they can help Mayfield West become a transit hub and help make the goal of mass transit more realistic.

11. Phasing Plan

Section 7.12.22 of the OPA, Development Phasing Plan, deals comprehensively with most, if not all, of the various facets of the community development plan necessary to address in the course of putting in place the new community. However, nowhere is there evidence that an overall phasing concept with regard to just how Mayfield West might develop has been considered. For example, should residential development precede the development of employment lands, should the Village Centre precede the development of residential development, should residential development be delayed pending the construction of the Village Centre axis of Kennedy Road and the new Main Street, etc. ?

There is concern that Mayfield West should grow from the Village Centre out, with commercial commitments up front, the establishment of the planned campus a priority, and with less emphasis on industrial development in terms of the planned phasing of the overall development of the community. The rationale supporting this phasing concept is the need to encourage a significant number of high quality non-industrial jobs that, in turn, will encourage the growth of high quality residential housing which will be commensurate with the anticipated character of the new community.

Detailed Comments:

The detailed comments which follow refer to the numbered sections found in the body of OPA 208, the Mayfield West Secondary Plan.

7.12.3 Objectives

7.12.3.1 Community Planning Objectives

7.12.3.1g Insert text to include the concept of a functional community trail system that connects neighbourhoods and provides commuting as well as recreational use, and which provides connections to the natural heritage system.

7.12.3.1j Integrate Valleywood and Snell’s Hollow ; elaborate on how this integration is to happen. This is a critical-mass issue to provide for the commercial and cultural viability of the Village Centre.

7.12.3.2 Environmental Objectives

7.12.3.2 b) “Implement the recommendations and strategies contained in the MESP” – this would be more effective if it followed up with more specific commitments to the recommendations in the MESP (such as restoration opportunities).

7.12.3.2c State of the art energy and water conservation; *Re: “...incorporate to the maximum extent possible”* - how can this be made a stronger requirement for compliance or commitment on behalf of the developer?

7.12.3.4 Transportation Objectives

7.12.3.4a Will there be bicycle lanes along parts of the road network? Can a cyclist safely travel throughout the Town?

7.12.3.4d “Ensure that the road network provides opportunities for transit -----”.

This is weak with no specific direction or call for transit to be an integral part of Mayfield West. The question to specifically ask and address is: Will there be buses? How will the road network accommodate buses?

7.12.4 Structural Concept

7.12.4.2 The Residential Neighbourhoods

7.12.4.2d Include text that open space buffers should not replace natural vegetation buffers around EPA/watercourses – while a pedestrian walkway or trail may be appropriate within some of these EPA buffers, soccer fields are not. Maintaining a naturally vegetated EPA buffer is a prime objective.

Add to the residential neighbourhood organizational element: 7.12.4.2e. Connecting Trail System. The questions that should be asked and answered in this OPA are: Can people walk to work? Can children walk to school? Can children walk to the Village Centre safely?

7.12.4.4 The Public Realm

Add: 1st paragraph: the community trail system as a structural sub-unit as part of the public realm.

2nd paragraph: re: Etobicoke Creek open space buffer; clarify the nature and extent of the buffer.

Modify: “...*The Etobicoke Creek is a significant environmental feature and is designated as EPA and as such will be preserved in its natural state.*” to;

“...*The Etobicoke Creek is a significant natural heritage feature and is designated as EPA and as such will be the focus of stewardship efforts to restore it to a more viable natural state.*”

7.12.4.5 The Transportation Network

An overall comment is that mass transit is required; critical mass for transit is a community density issue -- density is dealt with elsewhere in the OPA (such as in 7.12.6)

Design Charette participants stipulated transit-supported density. This issue is not included in Community Design principles under 7.12.5

Add the need for a transit hub – refer to comments under 7.12.9.2.4 re: *Parking*

7.12.4.5e Two new *green* collector roads are to be located within residential neighbourhoods. Clarify: what makes the collector roads *Green*?

7.12.5 Community Design

- Inclusion of key structural elements – neighbourhood centres based on Calthrope et. al.: requirements of one per 120 acre development that covers a five-minute walking distance; corridors that connect the neighbourhood centres to the village centre in an urban grid pattern that facilitates walking and cycling, neighbourhoods that themselves have a wider range of housing types and densities, A Village Centre that could over time evolve into a more dynamic Town Centre thus drawing more people and services to itself.

7.12.6 Land Use Designations and Policies

7.12.6.1 General Policies

7.12.6.1.3 Include the ‘Community Trail System’ as a specific land use similar to the status granted to Community Gateways.

7.12.6.1.7 Consider impacts on natural features, and change ‘shall consider’ to a stronger commitment .

7.12.9 Village Centre Residential Area

Where did the Farmer’s market go? Where are the connections to the agricultural community? These items were documented during the Design Charettes. One way of approaching agricultural links is to introduce some form of community agricultural engagement/ownership. Another, is to include community garden plots around Mayfield on existing agricultural land occupied, for now, by farms

Can the Village Centre be bigger (larger and denser) in order to help realize the original Mayfield West design? Town Planning & Development staff should be required to provide calculations and justification for the currently proposed extent of the Village Centre.

7.12.9.2.3 Four storey limit – “building heights shall be limited to ensure negative environmental impacts are minimal”. What is the ‘environmental’ reason? Is not higher density more environmentally sound? Why are there singles in the Village Centre?

7.12.9.2.4 Parking

What and where are alternatives to parking ?

7.12.11 Industrial

7.2.11.1 General Policies

Industrial land that is located on land between the Etobicoke Creek and the Humber River that forms the headwaters of those watercourses may be ill-sited. Overall landscape conditions should have more influence over the structure of the plan and should better reflect land sensitivities. Should industrial (and industrial only) be located west of Highway 10 directly upon the OBR rail line? Could there be stricter guidelines for industrial use near ecologically sensitive areas?

7.12.11.1.10 Regarding setbacks from EPAs of 10 m; given that urban activities pose greater impacts on stream quality and quantity, one would think that a 30 metre buffer would be required for Etobicoke Creek and the West Humber, all EPA’s and related tributaries.

7.12.13 Ecosystem Planning and Management

7.12.13.2 Consider stronger language than “shall address”, e.g. “conform to”.
Is this paragraph intended to stipulate the implementation of the recommendations in the MESP?

7.12.13.4 Specify vegetative buffer whenever possible – not cut grass.

7.12.14 Open Space and Recreation

7.12.14.1 General Policies

7.12.14.1.2 There appear to be no plans or guidelines for natural corridors (greenway system) outside the valleys within the community. Why does the greenway system appear to have been reduced from the Council endorsed plan? To what extent are developers expected to plant trees, improve vegetation and replace unsuccessful plantings?

7.12.14.1.5 Can road allowances be planned for dedicated pedestrian/bicycle paths?

7.12.16 Transportation

General Policies

The need for mass transit has not been recognized. This section essentially deals only with roads and vehicle traffic. This is a significant flaw and a flaw that will not be recognized in this OPA. It is a regional/GTA flaw that should really preclude or severely limit any organized development north of Mayfield.

7.12.16.6 Kennedy Road Realignment

7.12.16.6.8 Why is Kennedy Road going to become a collector? Why four lanes? How will this affect the viability of the Village Centre to become the heart of this community? Will two of these four lanes be used for parking as has been done in Orangeville? There is a difference between Broadway in Orangeville and Queen Street in Bramalea with the former working and the latter completely inadequate for cultivating a ‘small-town’ feeling.

7.12.22 Development Phasing Plan

Measures must be taken to counteract the demands of the development interests that their financial needs will have to be met by first building the ‘safe’ low density neighbourhoods. Despite the upfront high density policies and zoning that will flow from this OPA, single family neighbourhoods may oppose the high densities. Therefore this should be factored into phasing. Private or public transit providers must see higher density being built before investments are made. Securing commercial investors should be a priority. (Some of these may not be within the purview of this OPA, however timing is paramount to achieving the vision).

7.12.25.3 Mayfield West Community Design Plan

There is a lack of green building standards, energy use or environmental objectives. Text should be added regarding specific green building standards/environmental certification.

CONCLUSIONS

The OPA 208 is a most important document that, when supplemented by the Community Design Plan, will provide guidance and direction to developers regarding the specific development and phasing in the creation of the new community of Mayfield West within the Town of Caledon.

The process of developing the new community provides a unique opportunity for Town Council and Planning and Development staff to “work outside the box” and to embrace some of the most forward urban planning concepts currently in practice and based on actual experience in a handful of municipalities in North America.

CEAC commends the Council of the Town of Caledon and Town Planning and Development staff for conducting a most transparent and constructive process which has lead to the development of the proposed official plan amendment. OPA 208 goes a long way in redressing some of the more egregious urban development errors experienced in other communities.

CEAC has tabled a number of observations and recommendations that address issues that are critical to the development of the new community as anticipated through the results of the Design Charettes, and which borrow from some of the more advanced thinking on urban planning. All are put forward in a constructive manner with the intention of helping to create a new community of Mayfield West which is truly socio-ecologically sustainable.

John Abbott
Chair, Caledon Environmental Advisory Committee