

Public Interest Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Niagara Escarpment Commission

Monday, February 6, 2023, 4 pm – 5:25 pm

Attendance

PIAC Members

Susan Robertson	Chair
Sean Morrison	Ontario Real Estate Association
Kevin Nichol	Ontario Snow Resorts Association

NEC Staff

Amaraine Laven	Senior Strategic Advisor
Annemarie Bochenek	A/Manager, Admin & Financial Services
Rameez Sadafal	Policy and Program Intern

Regrets

Melanie Horton	Ontario Stone Sand and Gravel Association
Drew Spoelstra	Ontario Federation of Agriculture

4:05 pm – Meeting called to order

- Quorum established – see attendees above

Introductions

- Quorum established – see attendees above
- Amaraine confirmed that Susan is the Chair
- Members and staff introduced themselves
 - Amaraine Laven – Introduced herself as the new Senior Strategic Advisor, and lead on the file.
 - Rameez Sadafal – Introduced himself as the Policy and Program Intern, supporting Amaraine in taking meeting minutes and notes.
 - Annemarie Bochenek – Introduced herself as the Acting Manager of Admin & Financial Services, supporting Amaraine in taking meeting minutes and notes as well.
 - Susan Robertson – Introduced herself as the Chair and a watershed planner and provided a land acknowledgement.

- Sean Morrison – Introduced himself as a committee member, and representative of the Ontario Real Estate Association.
- Kevin Nichol – Introduced himself as a committee member, and representative of the Ontario Snow Resorts Association.
- PIAC meeting procedures were clear for all participants and did not need to be reviewed.

Proposed NEPA: PW 218 20 – Columbia Northcliffe Campus

Staff Background Overview

- Amaraine provides background information for NEPA 218 (site info: e.g. location, natural heritage features, designation; special policy 2.2.21(f), agency and public comments received)

PIAC Discussion

- PIAC would like a staff overview of the amendment, as not all PIAC members were present at the site visit
- Amaraine provides overview of the amendment, including agency comments and public concerns
- Kevin asked a question regarding the current provision for 36 students, as an accessory use to the convent versus the proposed 1000 students plus 80 staff
 - Raised concern regarding the proposed increase of students and staff contributing to the use as an urban use
- Kevin asks if the rise in the number of students and staff has led to the suggestion from the public that the proposed use is an urban use
- Susan has comment regarding what constitutes an urban use, besides occupants of the building.
 - Amaraine notes that there is no regulation defining urban uses but notes that there exists a Commission endorsed policy paper from 2005 which was reconfirmed in 2008 that when a specified use exceeds the related provision in the NEP, then it warrants consideration for an urban use.
 - Amaraine offers to share policy paper
- Susan asks for an overview of agency comments
- Susan comments on the driveway in relation to the top of bank and slopes, noting that the road could be hazardous during the winter months
- Sean identifies that the area surrounding the site shows evidence of significant erosion. Sean references a significant mud slide that occurred in the area two years ago affecting traffic of the nearby road and highway 403

- Susan expresses concern regarding traffic and parking spots, in relation to the existing road infrastructure and its capacity
- Amaraine clarifies that the proposed school is to accommodate 1000 grade 12 students only. The school would act as a feeder program for students going to university
 - Notes that the students could potentially be of driving age, with access to personal vehicles
- Sean is familiar with the site and surrounding area, and has concern regarding the rural roads and neighbourhoods around the site. The current surrounding site does not support public traffic, and school bus traffic would be a huge concern on the roadway going in. Comments that there are little to no sidewalks in the area, which needs to be addressed
- Susan comments that the site acts as an island, cutting students off from the surrounding uses, due to lack of sidewalks, lack of transit
- Amaraine informs PIAC that there is a Ministry of Transportation project to have a traffic circle on York and left-hand turning lane on to Newman Road as a way to deal with existing traffic in the area. Applicant has claimed that those traffic projects will mitigate impacts of increased traffic related to this proposal
- Kevin notes that the road leading to the site is right against the top of bank
- Based on the site visit, Susan notes the areas of steepness on site, having walked the entire perimeter
- Susan comments that the driveway feels more like a private laneway versus a two-way road
- Sean notes that the closest transit stop is further south, where York Boulevard Meets Plains Road. Potential transit users would have to walk through the nearby rural roads
- Susan comments that the valley near highway 6 is quite steep and dangerous.
- Amaraine informs PIAC that the proposal is for students to be picked up from their residences in the urban area and dropped off at school in batches. The applicant said 5 buses will be used for bringing the students to the site in smaller groups, in an effort to mitigate traffic impacts. Acknowledges the public concern with this approach
 - Reports submitted speak to an interim use; 1000 students may not be the immediate number of students but that number needs to be considered with regards to the proposed change in use
 - The public has questioned how 5 buses going back and forth could manage getting all the students to the school in time for the start time and if this is realistic
- Kevin Nichol has a concern regarding upstream and downstream developments (Residential and Industrial uses nearby)

- Amaraine provides comment overview of MECP comments (Dated Jan 1, 2022) regarding groundwater and surface water impacts
 - MECP comments discuss the protected Long Pond and connected marshes in Cootes Paradise which is under the restoration from past pollution. Noting that water sources are sensitive receivers
 - Notes that MECP cannot issue permits/approvals until an NEPDA Development Permit is issued
- Amaraine provides overview of RBG staff comments (September 22, 2021), advising that issues with water and sewer in the area are ongoing, and are part of the Hamilton remediation plan
- Susan expresses concern regarding Long Pond, and the impacts that the expanded septic system and ground water seepage would have on Long Pond. Notes that no other construction will occur except for the gym, which is in mostly agriculture type land
- Sean comments there is no significant hardscaping except the gym and the roof will dispel water to a stormwater system that could discharge down to Long Pond
- Sean raises concern regarding overburden beds absorbing contaminated water that could leech into Long Pond
- Susan recognizes that the use is inconsistent with the existing neighborhoods but acknowledges that the building and its built heritage would be used again
- Sean asks if the permitted use is something that the PIAC is okay with going forward; to say whether or not PIAC agrees with the proposed use or not
- Susan reiterates the proposed amendment, highlighting the environmental and neighbourhood concerns
- Sean reiterates if the role of PIAC is to say agree or disagree with the amendment, it should be pending the approvals and work of other ministries (MTO, MECP)
- Kevin comments on the potential for a future parking lot. Expresses concern regarding water running off the roof of the proposed extension, and the impacts it could have on the natural resources nearby, and potential for erosion
- PIAC members discuss a motion to be put fourth
 - Sean supports the use but notes that there are things that will need to be addressed such as bussing of all those students
 - Susan can support the use, and thinks the use lends itself well and protects the cultural heritage. Acknowledges the need to conduct monthly testing of the septic to ensure they are not exceeding capacity. It is an appropriate use
 - Kevin agrees as well. Great use of a beautiful property. Expresses concern about the watershed, which will be up to the Conservation

Authority. Actual use change makes sense provided the agencies agree following the appropriate studies and approvals required.

- Rameez prepared and shared motion as seen below

PIAC Recommendation

Motion:

The PIAC recommends approval of the site-specific amendment as proposed for the Columbia Northcliffe Campus (574 Northcliffe Avenue) lands and to proceed with processing the amendment (PW 218 20).

Note: Subject to the approvals/permits of other government ministries (MTO, MECP), Conservation Halton, and the City of Hamilton.

Moved by: Sean Morrison

Seconded by: Kevin Nichol

CARRIED

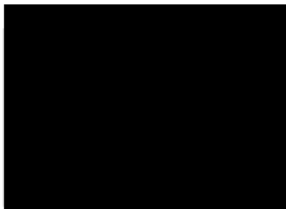
Motion to Adjourn

Moved by: Sean Morrison

Seconded by: Kevin Nichol

5:25 pm - Meeting adjourned

Approval of the Minutes



Feb 14th 2023

Susan Robertson

Date

Chair, Public Interest Advisory Committee