

Public Meeting

29 November 2021 | Tannery District Sustainable Neighbourhood Master Plan

**Public Submission | Comments from Miriam Mutton
Cobourg Resident and Business Owner**

Chair Councillor Nicole Beatty and Members of Cobourg Council:

As an area property owner and business person, I support this master plan. It has great potential as a progressive and living demonstration of sustainable neighbourhood within existing urban boundaries, and appears responsive to existing community amenities and connecting networks. I also encourage the Town and its related company holdings and partners, like HOLDCO and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) among others, to be active investors in this project as it moves forward. It is a plan, detailed and built over time. There is some consideration needed also, such as subtleties in detail design and response to other changes beyond the Town's jurisdiction, which require leadership along the way.

This is a very good plan for a neighbourhood. To address sustainability it needs to be a three dimensional plan, for example considering access to the sun for energy collection and optimizing use of all platforms such as roofs as green amenity spaces for residents. And, the fourth dimension of time when considering durability of materials and construction techniques for resilience to climate change and potential to adapt built spaces if community needs change.

Background and Related Commentary

I have been a property owner within the proposed Tannery District since 1989. Before then, I was a regular visitor to family living here. And, for a while was a train commuter relying on the Cobourg VIA Rail station at the top of George Street, living in Toronto and working in Cobourg.

For more than 30 years a landscape architect and garden designer by profession, I live in and care for a designated heritage building (circa 1856) located in the George Street Heritage District. My home garden is a project in adaptation to climate change, a resilient and cool oasis on the hottest of days, and has been certified as wild life-friendly habitat by the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

The following notes are from an email I sent to then Director of Planning and Development Glenn McGlashon shortly after the Tannery District Master Plan had been presented to Town Council earlier this year. I have read the final report dated June 2021, *Tannery District Sustainable Neighbourhood Master Plan*, prepared by Fotenn Planning + Design in collaboration with Urban Equation, Altus Group and Crozier & Associates. I also read the Final Background Report dated March 2018 and participated in a workshop charette some years earlier.

In addition, last winter there was a water main break involving the line east-west through the lower (southern) part of the tannery property along Alice Street. It is my understanding the line was used as a back-up main and this section has since been capped due to the breakage. I mention this now because there was a separate review of related infrastructure Town wide earlier this year e.g. a new, third water tower needed. It seems to me local utility company investments in the tannery property and district may also be relevant to the water system community wide.

A Question and the Comments

- The question. From the reports, what is (3yr) SRI for roofs?
- The pandemic may have done something to the real estate market, making this project even more desirable and marketable. People leaving the city because working from home is more acceptable as an employment option now.
- OPL, one planet living. Very good way to list assessment criteria for a proposed development!
- A bit concerned about the background report using \$\$\$ e.g. optimum sustainability techniques, \$\$ e.g. LEED, and \$ e.g. code. Cobourg's new *Green Development Standards* could give this assessment technique a good overhaul as will asset valuation and management which may show long term operations is lower cost using blue-green infrastructure design (as example). I did not see the \$ references in the Master Plan though.
- Medium density 700 people/jobs and high density 1400 people/jobs. And, a bargaining chip for better design including public realm as part of project development. Also, I can already hear the ask for relief of parkland D/C charges to support affordable housing. This report silences the argument that quality outdoor spaces are unneeded. Good!!
- Trees along streets. Tree cells can be very expensive. The design of the boulevard and street spaces should be more important so that trees can be accommodated more effectively. And, I read street trees at 8m spacing but note that the OP amendment says 6m spacing. The latter is better. A good tree in the right place can thrive for much longer than the typical forty years fate of many urban street trees.
- While on the OP amendment, good idea that 'borders are flexible'. I would like to see serious consideration of including the arenas and possible development lot (re: MLI) there following same criteria as the Tannery District.
- On architecture, helpfully not so much in way of brutalism box style architecture (see sample images in reports). I know details will come. Good descriptors in writing, though.
- Rail corridor park is also ideal as a gateway for the Town. (on public art and recycling, how about a giant dragon made of recycled metal machine parts by local artists or shop classes ... could be a creature more like Cobourg, ideas to be invited.
- Potential for new street design standards is awesome, glad to see reference in the OP amendment.

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