

**Cullen Central Park Master Plan Study**  
**Phase 1 Meeting, January 23, 2008 ~ Minutes**

1. Drop-in to review presentation boards, meet staff and consultants (6-7 pm)
  2. Introductory Remarks, Peter LeBel, Director of Community and Marketing Services on behalf of her worship, Mayor Pat Perkins who sends her regrets for not being able to attend tonight's meeting due to a conflicting Region of Durham Council Meeting. (7pm)
  3. Staff and Consultant Introductions, Steve Edwards, Manager of Parks, Marina and Long Range Planning.
  4. Presentation by Consultants, including Caroline Marshall and Eha Naylor (ENvision – The Hough Group) and Rowan Faludi (urbanMetrics Inc.)
  5. Questions (7:45 pm)
- What has been planned? Concern that many ideas have been presented, but you don't really know what you are planning to do.
    - This presentation is about findings from Phase 1, which involved researching the site's background, compiling an inventory of the site's natural and heritage features, and gathering public input. We are still open to ideas for the site and are not making plans yet. Phase 2 and 3 will involve making plans and these will be presented at the next workshop in mid-march.
  - Can we make suggestions?
    - Yes, we are still in the process of gathering ideas for the site
  - Concern that there is desire to reduce the wildflower garden area and replace it with lawn area
    - Again, there are no concrete plans for any part of the site yet and we are still open to ideas. Having said that, the site has a history of heavy disturbance, which have let in invasive species. Because of this, we would not recommend simply letting the site go. Management of the area is required even if naturalization is decided.
  - Accessibility Committee: how are areas going to be made accessible?
    - Accessibility is certainly a consideration. It is #7 of the Strategic Principles: Seek opportunities for leisure and recreation activities for all ages and abilities.
  - After 7 years, nothing has changed. There is a need to consider other priorities in the Town as well as the waterfront.
  - Concerned for the environment of the site
  - Risks to buildings themselves: fire and abandonment. Are they protected?
    - The buildings are locked after hours. There are fire and intrusion alarms. During summer weekends, when there are incidences of entering the park after hours, private security is on hand.
  - Can the park be gated and undesirable activities controlled in this fashion?
    - It is not something normally done for our public parks because the Town does not have a crew to open and close the gates.
  - Pleased so far with the work to date; more dialogue and comments will arise in the next stage when specific plans are presented.

- Preserve green space and avoid any new permanent structures – rehabilitate the existing areas only.
- Leave area 8, East Field, as green space and integrate into valley. This is important for enhancing wildlife habitat.
- Advocate that the next public session be a creative/interactive workshop session
- What are the plans to the west and how will the development impact Cullen Central Park?
  - The West Whitby study that is currently underway is at a very high level. The land is designated for urban development, but the study is not intended to lay out details such as the road skeleton and land uses. Therefore, we can't really say what the impacts would be at this time.
- The main building – are there thoughts of getting a new operator for the restaurant? How long will planning take?
  - This study is scheduled to wrap up in July of this year. If it is determined at the completion of the study that a restaurant is desired in the main building, then we would ask for proposals from potential operators. However, we are not at that stage yet as we are still gathering the public's ideas for the buildings and character areas.
- Pleased with the concern/focus on ecology of the area. Protect the green space and do not allow any commercial and residential development. An environmental education centre in the existing buildings would be a good idea though.
- Allowing dogs to run on the property is an issue – they are harassing wildlife
- There is a need to maintain park for future generations
- What is cost of the plan and how will this be presented?
  - When uses on the site have been established, a cost analysis will be conducted. This will happen in Phase 4 of the study.

**Additional Verbal Comments Received after the formal Question and Answer session:**

- Would like to see the Emerging Themes and Ideas posted on the web, separate from the Presentation.
- Need clarification on what neighbourhood-oriented activities for Area 3 are being suggested. Would hope it is not a strip mall.
  - Neighbourhood-oriented activities are referring to park-related amenities that might support a new residential area to the west. There is also a reference to other development potential for this area due to its proximity to a new urban area and frontage on Cochrane Street, but a strip mall would not be one of the contemplated uses.
- Recognizing that Cullen Gardens as it once was is no longer an option, would like Cullen Central Park to be a destination again. It was once 'the' place to take visitors from out of Town to.
- Would not like to see neighbourhood amenities in Area 3. This should continue to be a place for events and other town-oriented activities that support the park. Any new park development should be interesting and well-designed, not just a basic Whitby park.
- Other comments included support for an ecological / environmental approach to the park, and appreciation for a consultative process.