

Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association Development Review Committee What We Heard – Report

INTRODUCTION:

On October 28, 2010, the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association held its Annual General Meeting. At the AGM, the KNA Executive provided the opportunity for members to brainstorm what they value in the neighbourhood. The results of the brainstorming session will form the basis of how the KNA Executive would develop a Development Review Committee.

Below is a summary and analysis of the three break-out groups that brainstormed ideas on what members value in the neighbourhood and their ideas on the scope and functions of a development review committee.

Approximately 50 members of the community participated in the brainstorming session.

THEME: DIVERSITY

Many members in all three groups brought up the concept of diversity. All three groups indicated that they highly value this concept. Diversity in this context meant many different things to different members.

First, diversity in the context of **physical environment** was a key issue. Many members placed a high value on retaining, enhancing and utilizing the neighbourhood's diverse physical space which includes varied architecture (some of which is worthy of heritage designation), green spaces and attributes (HAAA, escarpment, Chedoke Golf Course, Highland Gardens, dog-friendly park, walking/biking trails).

Second diversity was also used to describe the **social and economic environment** of the neighbourhood as a special attribute residents would want to see supported. Examples of diversity in this context include diversity of ages of residents living and working in the neighbourhood which ranges from pre-schoolers to the elderly; diversity of income and size of families living in the neighbourhood; diversity of independent proprietor shopping opportunities, especially on Dundurn and Locke, was highlighted as being a strong point for the neighbourhood to support.

THEME SCALE:

In all three brainstorming groups, the concept of scale was brought up as a high priority to keep in mind in future development.

By scale, neighbours expressed a concern that new development should be scaled to access and compliment **existing transport modes** in the neighbourhood – namely walking, biking and short transit or automobile drives.

Neighbours value the scale of **residential density** that is sufficient to create walkable opportunities to commercial and recreational areas. It was also observed that the scale of

residential development (both single-detached and apartment/condominium housing) and commercial development (walkable, highly compact) is scaled to ensure access from existing transportation modes.

THEME SUSTAINABILITY:

Neighbours brought up in several instances different aspects of sustainability in their brainstorming sessions.

First, sustainable was brought up in the context of **aesthetics and architecture**. Many members expressed the high value a varied, evolving and incremental change to the neighbourhood's residential and commercial properties. Members place a high value on retaining this diversity and see it as a sign of a stable and sustainable community. Going forward, both residential and commercial development should take into consideration how new aesthetics fit into the existing neighbourhood to ensure sustainable growth.

Second, sustainable was brought up in the context of **density and transportation**. Members highly value the idea of a densely populated community, with diverse housing options, sizes and values mixed with a varied commercial density, size and purposes. These residential and commercial areas should be connected by several different transportation options (e.g. Biking, walking trails, transit routes and roads). Members indicated they highly value the idea of walking or biking to several of these areas and view the varied options of transportation linked to varied housing and commercial properties as a key sign of sustainable development.

Third, sustainable is a highly valued concept in **environmental terms**. Members highly value, in a densely populated residential neighbourhood, their green spaces and open spaces for the public. Members indicated they see these open spaces as providing value to the community and would like to see these areas maintained, expanded and provided with more opportunities to connect them.

Fourth, sustainable was brought up in the context of **community services**. Members place a high value on the idea that there are services that all age ranges and incomes enjoy in the community. Examples of this include day-care centres, community-centres and programmes, elderly care and city services. Members see the provision of wide range of services and facilities attracts a sustainable and highly valued community.

NEXT STEPS:

The Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association determined that there is a need to develop a Development Review Committee. The feedback from this brainstorming session will provide the building blocks for the purpose of this committee; its goals; and objectives. The development review committee will now take this feedback and develop the parameters for a Committee.

Some of the key observations from the brainstorming session are the following:

1. A KNA Development Review Committee would be volunteer-run
 - o Neighbours acknowledge that a Development Review Committee members would

be coming from the community, would be volunteers and would bring a variety of skills and aptitudes to the group that are not necessarily in the urban planning or municipal government skill set.

1. Communication early and often

- Members want a community-based opportunity to engage with proponents as early in the development stage as possible.
- Members found that in most circumstances where there is a conflict between proponents and residents stems from the fact that there is a lack of communication and understanding of what communities value, what they want protected and how they want to see development occur.

1. Governments Issue Permits, Communities give Permission

- Neighbours don't want a shadow government that would take on the responsibilities of the City or other levels of government.

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