



Concerned Citizens of King Township

Box 875, King City, ON. L7B 1A9

www.cckt.ca

September 23, 2024.

To: Mayor Pellegrini and King Township Council

Re: 8.1 Report GMS-PL-2024-027. Doctors Lane and Old King Road Neighbourhood Plans Draft Conceptual Plans

CCKT is encouraged by and supports the initiative by King Township to draft and implement Neighbourhood Plans for the core areas of King City and Nobleton. This is a very timely planning process as both King City and Nobleton are undergoing significant growth and redevelopment. We commend the King policy planning staff and Dillon consultants for seeking to carry out a robust process to engage the public and receive thoughtful input from residents, business owners and others. We will organize our comments under several headings and key items for consideration in creating concept plans that will contribute to healthy and complete communities in both King City and Nobleton.

Introduction

The need for far more diversity in housing and commercial opportunities in King City and Nobleton is very evident. The historical context, first as rural service villages and then as residential “bedroom” communities with primarily single-detached homes comprising what is often called “urban sprawl” and car-dependent neighbourhoods needs to be recognized as we plan for the future. Recent planning policy and many comments from the public in this planning process clearly call for what are termed “complete” communities, with appropriate intensification, diversification in housing including “affordable housing”, mixed uses, walkability, municipal public spaces for people to gather, retaining key heritage resources and the repurposing of municipal buildings and spaces.

Diversification in Housing

This has been a major theme in the workshops, open houses and comments received in the planning process, and is well-reflected in the draft concept plans. In our view housing diversification includes small-scale bungalows, duplexes, semi-detached units and small-scale townhouses clustered together around common green spaces with good walkable connections to amenities. The need for affordable units in King Township is apparent, so that young adults, seniors

and others may stay and live in their home communities of King City and Nobleton. A key question: How will we ensure that 25% of the newly built units are “affordable”? Diversified housing also includes both rental and condominium units, whether ground units or low rise multi-unit buildings, units that can accommodate a variety of households from singles up to families with several children.

CCKT also supports mixed use buildings with a mix of commercial space and residential units in well-designed buildings that create a sense of place in our communities.

Public Spaces

We support the inclusion of outdoor and indoor public gathering places that are attractive and inviting for people in all stages of their lives. A well-designed “Commons” with safe connections helps to build a healthy community and supports local businesses. Transforming the King City Arena parking lot into a public “piazza” with activated commercial frontages and multi-unit buildings with residential units facing the open space is an excellent idea for creating a “hub’.

CCKT strongly supports maintaining municipal ownership of the King City Community Centre and Arena, the old Seniors Centre, the Nobleton Community Hall and other municipal resources, and the thoughtful re-purposing of these facilities for public uses. For example the indoor arena space could lend itself to music concerts, art shows, workshops, theatre, and other community gatherings. The outdoor space could also accommodate a water feature that could become an ice-skating surface in winter, plus an outdoor covered feature to accommodate music concerts and other presentations.

Walkable Connections, Roadways and Parking

As has been recognized by many, King Road, especially through King City, is not a suitable or safe place for pedestrians. CCKT is encouraged to see the inclusion of new pedestrian walkways that connect residential and commercial buildings in the core areas of King City and Nobleton away from major roadways, and the promotion of “active transportation”. In King City could a walkway be extended from Fisher Street to Patton and then on to Banner Lane where the new condominium building is being completed?

Traffic lights at Fisher Street and a “right in” and one way on Doctors Lane are very sensible and will add to both traffic and pedestrian safety.

Underground parking in the core of King City will free up outdoor space for public walkways and places to gather.

Building Massing, Landscaping, Heritage and Design Guidelines

CCKT expresses concern in the Concept Plans to see virtually all proposed buildings in the core areas potentially at six storeys in height. We would like to see a variety of heights and attractive tiering on buildings be incorporated into the plans.

We heartily support the strong focus on retaining heritage structures, adaptive reuse, and incorporating them into the design, site plan and construction of new buildings in the core areas.

Rooflines, window treatment, exterior materials all need to work together to relate to and compliment the heritage design features of earlier structures and to give a unique sense of place to both Nobleton and King City. The Village Design Guidelines is a thoughtful document that needs to be actively used in both design for new buildings and the repurposing of existing buildings.

CCKT strongly supports and encourages retaining mature, healthy trees, as these contribute to the character and health of the core areas, along with expanding the planting of many additional native trees, shrubs and perennials throughout the core areas.

In Closing

There are several excellent examples of attractive public community spaces that are well-utilized in York Region and beyond. “The Commons” in Newmarket comes to mind, along with the park in the centre of old Aurora, and the Mill Pond in Richmond Hill. We encourage Council to consider these and other examples that are working well. The Concept Plans highlight several of these examples.

Along with countless residents and businesses in King, CCKT shares the vision for creating complete communities that offer diversified housing, attractive well-used public spaces, a variety of helpful amenities, sustainable businesses and extensive landscaping with trees and shrubs that are well-integrated in the core.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely, Bruce Craig, Chair, on behalf of CCKT.

*** Note: These comments are based on numerous conversations and the input of several CCKT members.