

## **MIRANET Annual General Meeting: March 2, 2011**

### **Mississauga Official Plan Subcommittee Report**

*Delivered by Mike Douglas: Past-President, SHORA*

I'm going to pick up where Mike Spicer left off in speaking about the City's Strategic Plan.... 'We believe that Mississauga will inspire the world as a dynamic and beautiful global city, for creativity, innovation: and Prosperity!' **Do we believe it?**

Even as we evaluate tax rate increases and look at cutting jobs and programs, the Strategic Vision sounds rather grand. And that's the thing with a Vision worth having: from time to time the Vision will sound a little Optimistic. As it should.

Optimism is a useful reminder that these momentary hard times will pass. However much the media exacerbate fears and picayune conflicts, we cannot run the risk of having the same issues stuck at the same juncture again next year. And certainly not because we get distracted and think short-term and diverge from an active commitment and investment in our Strategic Plan.

In order to realize the Creative Vision of our City's Strategic Plan we need an aligned and effective Official Plan, our City's rule book for development and growth, responsible for providing the protections and innovations, essential for guiding the improvement in quality of life that MIRANET and so many others are determined to help bring about.

The MIRANET Official Plan Review Committee took on this challenge with significant support from the City's Policy Planning Staff, in particular Angela Dietrich and John Calvert. Planning staff facilitated an enjoyable and creative Official Plan workshop for MIRANET representatives in Port Credit last May.

The workshop was well attended by 40 community leaders working in groups to identify key interests and discuss the opportunities that should be included in the Draft Official Plan.

In summary, we want the Official Plan to be respected and used as an effective Stopper to inappropriate development and a workable attraction for urban planning innovation.

A consensus list of Draft OP Revisions formed the basis for a 15-page brief, which members of our OP Committee spoke to at the Planning and Development Committee meeting on June 28, 2010.

#### **Here are the areas we'd like to emphasize:**

- Completing Local Area Plans as quickly as possible was seen as a crucial starting point with the input of local Resident Associations where possible.
- Transition zones need to be planned and delivered to properly transition from high density buildings to low rise to help preserve neighbourhoods.

- Lori Kelly and Bruce Carr from the City, came to a MIRANET meeting last November 2010 to underscore that Realizing the vision of Mississauga as a Waterfront city necessitates involving the whole city in that discussion, as we've seen with the Inspiration Lakeview Project.
- Effectively getting to the lake, underlines the well-known health and space benefits of a multi-modal transportation approach which is a MIRANET priority that the OP addresses.
- We urged consideration and inclusion of a Parking Authority modeled on Toronto's successful experience and appreciate this is being discussed at Council.
- We recommended retention of specific density metrics, like Floor Space Index (FSI) to provide a standard base.
- We support appropriate Community bonusing and builder incentives, that can become dynamic, creative tools to motivate construction of special projects with community support.
- We believe that Community improvement areas and incomplete communities are but a few important priorities, that could be addressed by a collaborative and proactive 'Mississauga Development Corporation'.
- Such a Corporation could eventually help Council to fulfill their excellent new Urban Design initiative which will identify sites for architectural excellence and use international design competitions to compete for them. Brilliant! With this, Council epitomizes our belief in the importance of applying benchmark urban design to best in class architecture, across Mississauga.

Inspiring architecture can be another tangible part of our City's evolving brand identity - the holistic pursuit of Excellence! We urge Council and the Executive leadership team at City Hall to continue aiming high with the support of an exceptional Official Plan.

As a group of community leaders we are relatively well informed, however the general population are not and that knowledge gap needs to be bridged to minimize misunderstandings and maximize collective contributions. All this is part of an urgent drive to deliver the quality of life we have prescribed for, in our new Official Plan.

As you've seen here tonight, community volunteers are tackling big questions and avoiding the glib answers, because the stakes are too high for most sound bites. However I'd like to close with one, as the man sang - 'Ah, You gotta have faith.' In each other. And we do! Thank you....

Mike Douglas  
Jim Danahy  
Andrew Gassmann  
Brian Holtham  
John McKinnon  
Sue Shanly  
Dorothy Tomiuk