



**Leslie Street Road Improvements
(From Wellington Street to Mulock Drive)
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment
Public Consultation Centre 1**

Meeting Notes¹

Newmarket High School Cafeteria
505 Pickering Crescent, Newmarket
Wednesday, November 26, 2008
6:00 pm-8:30 pm

I. Opening

Jeffrey Holec, facilitator from Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited, opened the session at 7:00 pm. He welcomed the 14 attendees and introduced the project team members.

YORK REGION

- Stephen Hollinger, EIT - Study Manager, Transportation Services
- Shane MacDonald - Project Coordinator, Environmental Services
- Stephen Collins, P.Eng. - Manager Engineering, Transportation Services
- Jian Guan - Engineering Assistant, Transportation Services

GENIVAR

- Edward Chiu, P.Eng. - Principal, Transportation Ontario
- Vivian Mak, EIT - Transportation Planning

AECOM

- Karl van Kessel, MCIP, RPP - Senior Environmental Planner
- Richard Booth, Ph.D. - Senior Ecologist

Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited

- Jeffrey Holec - Director Central Ontario
- Olav Sibille, MCIP, RPP - Urban and Regional Planner

¹ The electronic version of these meeting notes is available at: www.lesliestreetea.ca/meeting_notes.html

II. Presentation

Steve Hollinger, Study Manager from Transportation Services, gave a 30 minute presentation.

Mr. Hollinger introduced the study area as being the Leslie Street corridor from Wellington Street to Mulock Drive, including all its intersections. He indicated that the Regional Transportation Master Plan identifies needed improvements for this section and provides timelines for its implementation (by 2015, as part of York Region's Roads Branch 10 year capital plan).

Mr. Hollinger indicated that the study is following the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for a Schedule 'C' project, as established by the Municipal Engineers Association, and that the meeting tonight covers Phases 1 and 2 of the Class EA process, which he explained in full.

He also introduced the problem / opportunity statement as follows:

- *The current configuration of Leslie Street will not accommodate the anticipated traffic increases within the 20 year planning horizon.*
- *The opportunity exists to update the roadway geometrics, incorporate Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan initiatives, improve transit facilities, and incorporate streetscaping to reflect current York Region policies.*

Mr. Hollinger discussed the existing conditions found in the study corridor including:

- Safety Conditions
- Land Use Conditions
- Natural Environment Conditions (Fish habitat, vegetated areas, forest communities, etc.)
- Existing Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Conditions; and
- Noise Conditions

Mr. Hollinger then discussed each of the six Alternative Solutions developed in Phase 2 of the Class EA process as follows:

1. Do Nothing (base case)
2. Improve Transportation Systems Management (TSM)
3. Improve Travel Demand Management (TDM)
4. Increase Public Transit Service
5. Increase Capacity on Leslie Street
6. Increase Capacity to parallel roadways

He also presented the results of the evaluation of each alternative solution and indicated whether or not the alternative fulfilled the problem and opportunity statement either fully or partially. Based on these results, he then identified the recommended Alternative Solution as a combination of "Increase Capacity on Leslie Street" along with "Improvements to Transportation Systems Management", "Improvements to Travel Demand Management", and "Increase Public Transit Service".

After Mr. Hollinger completed his presentation a Question and Answers or Dialogue Session ensued².

² A copy of this presentation is available online at: <http://www.lesliestreetea.ca/presentations.html>

III. Dialogue Session

Q: Is “cut and fill” as a means of leveling roadways always necessary? Is it a policy? Leaving hills and valleys as they are can help to slow traffic down.

A: It is not always necessary. Hills and valleys are sometimes beneficial; for example, they help get water off the roadway. We are not considering making a flat road.

Q: On slide 42 you presented the opportunities that you are considering incorporating. However, in the Stakeholder Meeting more opportunities were discussed. Have they been ruled out?

A: No, they haven't. The opportunities presented today are opportunities that are supported by the current policies and thus they reflect the opportunity statement. There are opportunities for the public to add others.

Q: In the last Stakeholder Meeting it was mentioned that truck traffic could be discouraged through design. Leslie Street is a regional road; its purpose is to provide efficient and safe transportation. This area is predominantly residential. Most users are actually those who live in the area. Why has traffic increased 3%? I think that transportation on other main roads such as Bayview is being pushed to surrounding areas like along Leslie Street.

Are there ways to discourage traffic on Leslie? I'd like that opportunity to be identified; to look for ways to divert traffic from Leslie (e.g. Alternate routes for widening, i.e. Woodbine). I don't oppose growth but I want to see efficiency, if there's a super-road at 80 km per hour that may create a problem. I am sure that most people will support 50-60 km per hour. We will like to see that.

A: The proposed alternative is based on a 80 km/h *design speed*, which provides a factor of safety. This is different from *posted speed*. When designing a road, all safety issues are considered. It is likely that a lower speed limit will be recommended. This will be reviewed at the time of construction and adjusted as needed. If a road has a posted speed limit of 60 km/h but most people feel safe and comfortable driving at 80 km/h then this creates a safety concern. As the difference in speed increases, the chance of accidents also increases. The speed limit has to be adapted to what most drivers feel comfortable with to provide a higher safety factor.

Q: Why not lower the speed now?

A. The technical staff in charge of that decision have recently reviewed speeds along Leslie Street and they concluded that the current configuration of Leslie Street is a rural road setting, and is consistent with the posted speed of 80 km/h.

Q: I see that there is no consistency with what is happening with other roads in York. Some roads are 50 km/h, 60 km/h (on Bayview), or 50 km/h - 60 km/h south of Wellington. I see there's a lack of consistency. Things have changed. We believe the speed limits should be 60 km/h. It is a good number and is consistent with what we see in most of York Region.

A: Thank you for your comment, I will take it into consideration and will request that staff review the posted speed limit again with the concerns identified in mind.

Q: Are you looking only at the existing road configuration or also at existing land uses?

A: The team looked at both existing road configuration and existing land uses and reassessed the speed to what is consistent with the community characteristics. As the community changes, so does the road right-of-way; the speed limit is reviewed on a regular basis to account for this.

Q: Will additional intersections be built? (Crossing Leslie Street between Wellington and Mulock)

A: I cannot provide details on whether there will be additional intersections. The 2C Lands will likely be connected to regional roads, but the design of the 2C Lands is at a very preliminary stage. Under the study though, we will not be adding any additional intersections to Leslie.

Q: Have you considered how the section of Leslie Street south of Wellington will be impacted by this road improvement?

A: The Transportation Master Plan looks at the transportation needs in the entire Region and has not identified improvements to Leslie Street south of Wellington Street within the next ten years. As part of this study we will look into that. If we see that the preferred alternative does increase traffic in that area (Leslie Street south of Wellington), then we will need to see how to solve or improve it if it is a problem.

Comment: Making Woodbine Ave. similar to Bayview Ave. will allow you to leave Leslie St. as it is now.

Q: (Referring to slide 42) How are you planning to preserve trees? I want to ensure that trees are preserved as well as the rights-of-way, so that there is no encroachment to property lines. Many trees are significant and mature.

A: We will ensure everything is done to preserve the trees along Leslie Street if possible. We are looking for opportunities to avoid affecting existing trees, for example, considering which side to widen the road to in order to mitigate impacts to the trees.

Comment: Trees also provide noise protection.

Q: About speed issues; a number of intersections have been added but not enough traffic lights. You can solve the speeding problem by adding more traffic lights to control it.

A: Lights and stop signs are not meant to control speed, but I do recognize that they contribute to lower speed.

Q: Noise is a concern for us. Your studies, as well as other studies, indicate noise fluctuating between 44dBA to 58 dBA. Certain homes because of location and topography may experience higher levels of noise. What are the opportunities to mitigate noise?

A: We have multiple locations where we are assessing noise. We found noise levels as low as 44dBA. Barriers do help to reduce noise. Noise modeling has been done so that it closely reflects the conditions found in each backyard. We have complete modeling at a number of points to reflect this. Analysis has been conducted based on data gathered in various locations.

Q: How do I get my house to host a receptor that measures noise?

A: Receptors are modeled throughout the area. I know that there is a receptor close to your location. There are no field measurements completed, receptor locations are modeled. Receptor locations are chosen so that it ensures every property is properly modeled based on its distance to the roadway and topography (the lay of the land). The model even allows for consideration of unique features, and if that is not enough then specific field measurements will be undertaken.

Q: Do the shown measurements come from the model?

A: Yes, they do.

Q: What about future noise projections?

A: Noise levels will be louder. We will look at opportunities to mitigate noise, for example, lowering the road. When noise projections are completed they will consider the road improvements. If we reach a noise level of 60 dBA, the noise policy obliges us to look for options to mitigate the noise at that time.

Q: What happens if after the construction is completed the noise is higher than 60 dB?

A: If noise levels at that point in time are higher than 60 dB we are obligated by policy to look at noise mitigation measures.

Given that there were no more questions, Jeffrey Holec thanked all participants for their attendance and proceeded to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25

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Note: While every effort has been made to reflect actual comments, they should not be considered as verbatim records. Should you find that a comment doesn't reflect the original intended idea, please notify immediately:

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**Thank you!**