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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS – PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	BEAUFORT/ IRWIN/ GUNN/ SAUNBY/ ESSEX (“BIGS”) STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN MEETING ON Monday, October 15, 2012

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the Beaufort/Irwin/Gunn/Saunby/Essex (“BIGS”) Streets Neighbourhood Draft Plan **BE RECEIVED** for information and that the Draft Plan **BE CIRCULATED** for public, agency and City review in advance of the formal public participation meeting required under the Planning Act to be held on November 26, 2012.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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August 15, 2011 Report to BNEC entitled “Planning Options for the BIGS Neighbourhood”

BACKGROUND

The Process to Date

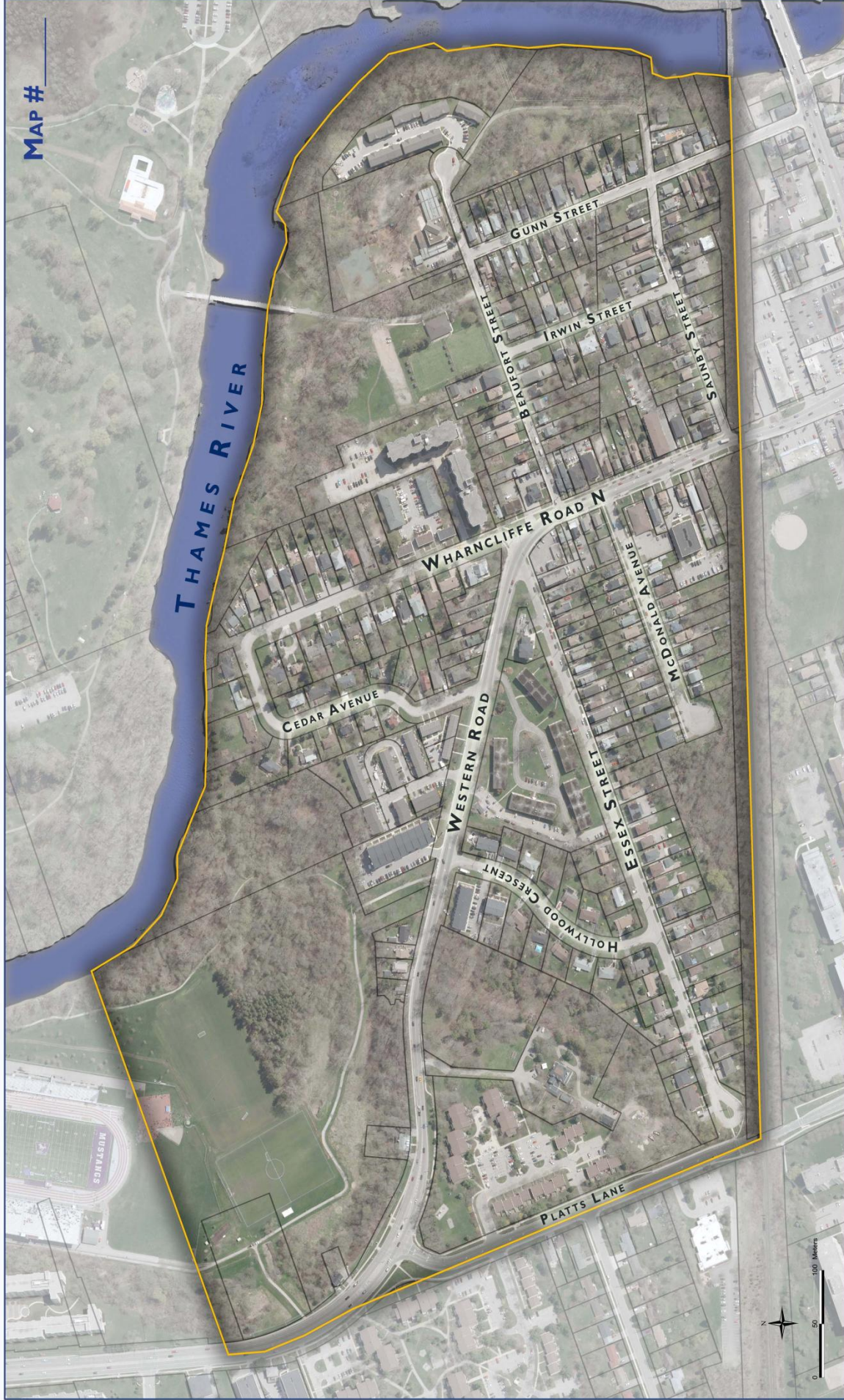
On August 29, 2011 representatives of the “BIGS” neighbourhood appeared before the Built and Natural Environment Committee (BNEC) to raise concerns about intensification in the area and ask Council to put in place an interim control by-law until revised policies are put in place to control intensification. As a result Council directed that staff report back regarding potential actions that could be done to address these neighbourhood concerns.

On September 12, 2011 a report was presented to BNEC outlining a range of options available to deal with the residents’ concerns. In response, on September 19, 2011, Council directed that a study be undertaken to prepare possible amendments to address the neighbourhood concerns. Council further directed that staff;

- (i) retain a Planning Consultant to prepare a planning study for the Essex Street Area bounded by the Canadian Pacific Railway to the south, the Thames River to the east, the University of Western Ontario and Thames River to the north, and Platt's Lane to the west (see reverse); it being noted that this plan will consolidate the recommendations of the Essex Street Study prepared in March 1995, where appropriate, and may include a master plan and policies to direct future development within the context of the Great Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Strategy;*
- (ii) consider initiating Official Plan amendments to implement the recommendations of the planning study, as identified in part (i) above; and,*
- (iii) consider adding zoning regulations in conformity with the Official Plan, as amended, as noted in clause (ii) above;*

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MAP # _____

LEGEND

- Parcels
- Study Area

DESIGN
planning
palet, smith & company, inc.
1000 Lakeshore Blvd. East, Suite 200, London, Ontario

PUBLIC INPUT MAP
BEAUFORT / GUNN / SAUNBY / ESSEX STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
FOR THE CITY OF LONDON, ON

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The City retained Peter J. Smith Company, a planning consulting firm, to undertake this study on March 16, 2012.

A liaison letter was sent to public, agencies and other City departments on May 3, 2012 and Living in the City notice was provided May 12 and 19, 2012 in advance of the first neighbourhood meeting on May 23, 2012. Approximately 20-25 people attended. The first meeting focused on identifying neighbourhood issues, strengths, new ideas and a vision for the neighbourhood (see attached). It was evident at that meeting that the attendees were split evenly between those who wanted to allow further development in the neighbourhood and those that wanted to restrict future development.

A second public liaison letter was sent June 6, 2012 and Living in the City notice given June 8, 2012 in advance the second neighbourhood meeting held on June 20, 2012. This meeting focused on discussing density, form/character, occupancy and neighbourhood condition options (see attached). Again, approximately 20-25 people participated in the workshop and, again, there was the same split in the acceptance of future development as at the previous meeting.

Since the end of June the City and the consultants have been preparing a Draft Plan for public review. The attached Draft Plan is the end result of that effort.

Summary of Key Findings, Draft Plan Recommendations and Directions

Existing Conditions and Key Findings

1. Residential land uses occupy 53% of the total land area of the neighbourhood.
2. Approximately 43% of the housing stock in the neighbourhood is owned by absentee landlords
3. Only 6% of the housing stock is considered to be in poor condition.
4. Teachers and professors make up 24% of the population, considerably higher than the City average of 6%.
5. Public transit is the most popular mode of travel for residents.
6. Redevelopment in the neighbourhood is occurring based on the existing Residential R2 Zoning (some R1 and R3 Zones) which has been in place since 1991 and the previous Two-Family (2F) Zoning in the CP By-laws in place since at least the 1970's. Given the City's existing regulations there can be 5 bedrooms per unit.
7. Wharncliffe/Western Road carries 20,000 vehicles per day and will be widened to four lanes in 2020.

Recommendations and Directions

1. The Plan establishes a future vision for the neighbourhood as an "Urban Village".
2. Provides four core principles to implement the vision; 1) enhance character and identity, 2) develop a complete community, 3) support sustainability and healthy lifestyles and 4) connect to University and educational community.
3. The Plan provides opportunities for intensification but recognizes different character areas.

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4. Direct additional residential intensification along Wharncliffe/Western Roads.
5. Provides for a diversity of dwelling types.
6. Establish Street Hierarchy.
7. Provides the planning tools to implement the vision including policies, zoning by-law regulations and urban design guidelines
8. Consistent with the Near Campus Neighbourhood Strategy

What Still Needs to be Done

The attached Draft Plan has not been reviewed by the public, public agencies and most City Departments. That needs to happen. To date all of the above have been liaised for comments but the Draft Plan has not been widely circulated. Planning staff are asking that the report be circulated for review and comment in advance of a formal public meeting.

The Name of the Plan

One issue that still needs to be resolved is the title or “branding” for the neighbourhood. The current Draft Plan calls the area “*Planning for an Urban Village – London’s Secondary Plan for the Beaufort/Gunn/Saunby/Essex Street Neighbourhood*”. It would be beneficial to get neighbourhood public input into an alternative name. Some suggestions to date include;

1. “*University Village*”
2. “*North Petersville Village*”
3. “*South University Village*”

Through comments received on the Plan it is hoped that a name for the neighbourhood will be determined.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
W.J. CHARLES PARKER SENIOR PLANNER – CITY PLANNING AND RESEARCH	GREGG BARRETT MANAGER- CITY PLANNING AND RESEARCH
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR – PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER	

September 28, 2012
cp

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