

Good Evening Mayor Burton and Councillors,

My name is Janet Haslett-Theall and I am the president of the Joshua Creek Residents Association. Tonight I am also delegating on behalf of Chartwell Maple Grove Residents Association, Trafalgar Chartwell Residents Association and Oakville Lakeside Residents Association. I am joined by representatives of the coalition Tim Danter, Doug McKirgan and Boyd Waites.

As way of background all four Resident Associations have been actively involved in public consultation on Downtown over the past 2 years. In particular OLRA and TRCA were invited and attended Stakeholder meetings.

The June 2015 Downtown Cultural Hub presentation provided 3 options to the public but with new costs and potential public land sales . Our members look to us to understand and raise concerns on their behalf. Given the critical importance of the Downtown to ALL of Oakville we felt we needed to do our part to better understand resident feedback regarding their level of knowledge of the proposed plans, their preferences, their thoughts on the possible sale of public lands and funding for the Downtown Cultural Hub, so we developed an online Residents Survey to ensure that we would be able to represent their views.

The Survey was open for 27 days closing Sept 29. In our request for their participation we provided residents with links to the Cultural Hub options and the Parking information. We asked residents to rank in order what was important to them to seek greater clarity on what they valued or were concerned about. Additionally we asked which statement best represented their views with options to express on none or other.

This survey did not test the respondents' views of the Staff Report before you tonight as it was released just 10 days ago. However, as you will see, it sends you clear messages on what their views are.

Tonight it is my role to share with you key information that has come out of the survey which we believe is important to your discussion.

The Survey had a total of 475 responses and which had a household population of 1345. 62% of the respondents have lived in Oakville for over 20 years

When asked about their knowledge level of the Downtown Cultural Hub they reported as follows:

- 28 % of the Respondents told us they had read the staff report, understood it and were engaged.
- 64% stated they understood somewhat the Downtown options and plan.

We wanted to confirm what was important to them with respect to the different Cultural Hub facilities and asked them to rank their choices.

Their preferences from highest to least in the survey are:

- 56% is to protect Public Access to and use of the Creek Lands
- 41% Flagship library
- 37% Parks and Open Space
- 33% 750 Seat theatre
- 9% Studio theatre
- 8% Innovation Space
- 8% Amphitheatre
- 7% Galleries

We dug deeper and asked directly which of the June Cultural Hub options they preferred:

- 24% New Build
- 23% Renovate Modest
- 18 % for Renovate Major.

As you can see this is not a ringing endorsement of any of the Options.

Within that same question:

- 14% stated they do not feel they have enough information to make a choice.

The respondents were asked if they preferred the Cultural facilities centralized on Centennial Square or dispersed across the Town:

- 47% prefer to have all cultural facilities located together by the creek.
- 33% prefer to have cultural hub facilities spread across downtown Oakville
- 15% don't understand the pros and cons of centralizing or dispersing facilities
- 5% have no opinion.

There is a clearly a need for further consultation and information sharing on the pros and cons of centralized versus dispersed and options

To determine what their preferences were for funding the projects we asked “which response best fit their opinion on funding the project.”

- 33% Financing should include Town and other levels of Provincial funding as well as naming rights
- 26% support the project as long as there is no tax increase to pay for it (it is paid for out of existing budgets)
- 19% support the project provided that funding comes from other levels of Government(Federal or Provincial) and /or sponsorship funds
- 12% would prefer Town funding be directed to other projects and priorities
- 8% support a special tax levy on all Oakville residents to help fund this project.

To be more specific we asked them to rank order some funding options

- 63% Contributions from other levels of Government
- 41 % Sale of naming right on buildings
- 37% Timing of development and costs should be managed out of existing budgets with no delays to other committed Town projects
- 20% Sale of public lands
- 19% Lease of public lands
- 12% Delay of other capital projects in the Town’s existing budget
- 5% Increasing the Town budget and therefore a tax increase
- 4% A special tax levy on all Oakville ratepayers

We wanted to better understand their views on the possible sale of public lands:

- 7% support the sale of selling public creek side land to help fund this project.
- 14% any land should only be leased and not sold outright
- 35% do not support the sale of selling public creek side land to help fund this project.
- 41% support the sale of public lands but want to ensure public access to and use of creek side land is maintained or enhanced.

The strong message is Public Use and Public Access is priority.

We wanted to understand IF some public lands needed to be sold to finance the project what was their preference:

- 61% George and Church (where the old Post office is)
- 53 % None at all

- 47 % The Corner of Navy and Randall (where the current fire station is)
- 39 % Surface Parking on Church
- 17 % Corner of Navy and Randall (where current Performing Arts centre is)

The respondents have a stated preference to keep the Cultural Hub buildings and library on Centennial Square and therefore in this survey the value of the Post Office location to them is reduced. We would interpret that as additional reasons why more consultation on the design and use of Public Lands is needed.

The value to residents of the location of the current Performing Arts Centre is strong and cause for reconsideration of options for public use of that land.

The possible sale of Firehall lands has 47% support with 39% support of the possible sale of Surface Parking on Church. We want to emphasize that the 39% most likely comes from a concern regarding the number of parking spaces in Downtown .In assessing the possible sale of any of these lands:

- 87% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Town needed to provide additional Cultural Hub options that did not include the sale of The Performing Arts current land

We wanted to understand IF public creek side land is sold, what would they prefer the development on that land be directed towards.

The following reflects a ranking of 1 or 2 out of 5:

- 65% Residential on top of/above public spaces
- 42% Hotel on top of/above public spaces
- 41% Residential
- 35% Additional parking
- 17% Hotel

There is a consistent theme that they want you at a minimum to protect the ground floor for public use and space. And as a reminder they want Public Open space to be a priority.

Please note we did not ask about heights when considering residential and hotels above public spaces; that would require additional discussion and consideration.

When asked what that meant in terms of moving the projects forward:

- 36% The Town should approve a plan if the capital resources are available to support it
- 21 % The Town should earmark funds for the first stage of development in the capital plan pending one final round of consultation on the location and design
- 21% The Town should provide additional build options for public consultation before they approve a plan
- 17% The Town should approve a plan and start building

42% are saying further consultation is needed.

We further asked:

“The revitalization and building of the cultural hub is a capital investment that could be completed in stages spanning over 20 plus years: Please choose your preferred statement”

- 39 % Build the Cultural Facilities over the next 10 years in stages
- 36% Build the Cultural Facilities within the next 5 years
- 10% Build the Cultural Facilities over the next 20+ years in stages
- 8% Build the Cultural Facilities over the next 15 years in stages

Overall, the Respondents support a 5-10 year period for the build.

Onto the Parking Garage:

Let there be no doubt about the need and support for Parking.

70% strongly agree or agree with the need for a Parking Garage.

In particular Underground parking received strong support when combined with retail and commercial space above.

In summary the respondents expressed the following preferences and concerns:

- 1) Public access, public space and best use of the public lands for Oakville residents are a high priority!
- 2) A flagship library, and 750 Performing Arts Centre funded by multiple sources over a 5-10 year period are endorsed
- 3) There is support for a parking garage with a preference to underground with retail/ commercial above ground
- 4) There is strong support that the Town needs to extend the consultation to better inform all of Oakville. The locations of the facilities with other options need to be part of that consultation.

- 5) The Town needs to build within its means but seek other sources of funding to offset the costs without compromising public use of public lands in particular by Centennial Square.
- 6) Defined options with appropriate funding models need to be clearly communicated.

In conclusion: We look to the Town to work with us to continue to inform but more importantly consult residents before this plan is finalized so that there is a clear integrated plan that more residents will be proud of and support. After all you are building a legacy from this generation for the generations to come.