

Britannia Farm Master Plan Refresh

September 21st 2016 Public Consultation #2 Summary Report



September 21st Public Open House #2 Overview

The Peel District School Board is undertaking a Refresh of the Britannia Farm Master Plan (1989), in partnership with the City of Mississauga. Britannia Farm is an approximately 200 acre site owned and operated by the Board on Hurontario Street, just a few kilometres north of Mississauga's City Centre. The site is intended to be used as an experiential learning field centre but a lack of sustained funding has limited its use to the Britannia School House experience and seasonal sugar bush use. A multi-disciplinary team of consultants is facilitating the Master Plan Refresh process, including public engagement and community consultation. The second public open house took place on September 21st 2016 and was well attended by community members who heard an introductory presentation from the consultant team that focused on consultant work to-date, including an assessment of natural heritage, built heritage and physical opportunities and constraints of the site, a preliminary assessment of the development parcel, and a summary of 'Big Moves' that will be included in the Refreshed Master Plan. Following this, participants broke out into small discussion groups and provided their feedback on a worksheet.

The worksheet contained the following two questions:

1. The development parcel will likely include a mix of retail and commercial uses, in addition to residential. What kinds of uses do you think the community needs here?
2. Understanding that Britannia Farm is an educational facility owned and managed by the Board, what type of access or activities would you make use of if they were free? What types of paid programs could be offered?

This document identifies and summarizes themes and comments with respect to each question.



Members of the public shared their ideas for Britannia Farm at breakout table groups and submitted their thoughts on worksheets.

Q1. The development parcel will likely include a mix of retail and commercial uses, in addition to residential. What kinds of uses do you think the community needs here?

Overall, attendees stated that future development should include a mix of uses along with open space that is accessible to the general public. The following are key themes that emerged as well as some of the more frequent responses to question number one.

Retail

- Food market/grocery store and a bakery
- Drug store
- Retail spaces on first floor of all new buildings to create an engaging streetscape
- Independent retailers, such as coffee shops, restaurants etc.
- Professional services such as dry cleaning, hair dressing, etc.
- Fitness space

Office

- Healthcare offices, such as a dental, doctor etc.
- Professional offices, such as lawyers, etc.
- Maker-spaces
- Daycare
- Spaces for social enterprises/non-profits

Residential

- Assisted living facility or other types of housing for seniors
- Include an affordable housing component
- Live/work spaces for artists

Design

- Pedestrian-oriented development that's walkable with sidewalks and a vibrant public realm
- Reduce surface parking as much as possible

- Allow for cycling connections and maximize transit use since the site will be right on the Hurontario LRT
- Encourage LEED certified buildings and other environmental/sustainability features in building design
- Include green open space that is accessible to the general public, not just residents
- Development should respond to Britannia Farm context through a design that architecturally fits with the theme and history of the site

Q2. Understanding that Britannia Farm is an educational facility owned and managed by the Board, what type of access or activities would you make use of if they were free? What types of paid programs could be offered?

Overall, attendees would like to see public access to walking trails, the creek and the sugar bush. A number of ideas emerged as possibilities for free and paid activities. The following are key themes that emerged as well as some of the more frequent responses to question number two.

Free

- Walking trails
- Sugar Bush and creek access
- Outdoor play area for children and their families
- Dog walking
- Public access to field centre
- Community gardens
- Farmer's Market
- Picnic space
- Fairs and festivals
- Herbertism (i.e. aerial ropes courses)
- Creative/themed playground, such as a farm playground
- Recreation centre

- Bike paths
- School Board could partner with the City to provide interpretive panels for birds, wildlife and other ecological assets of the site

Paid

- Space for social enterprises
- Museum
- Day camps in the summer and over March Break
- Community kitchen
- Classes for kids or adults to learn about the ecology on the site, such as the different species of trees
- Animal husbandry
- Event space for weddings and other
- Concerts and other cultural events
- Family outdoor education
- Managed orchards
- Sugar Bush tours and maple syrup making
- Pubs/artisan shops
- Sponsor a tree
- Cross country skiing

Design + Other Considerations

- Use of natural/organic materials
- Preserve natural heritage
- Promote stewardship of the site
- Don't impede animal habits
- Design outdoor space for safety and security
- The site should be closed at times to give the property "a rest"
- Trails and activities on site should include access for people that use mobility devices

Other comments

- First Nations history should factor into any planning for the site -- there should be acknowledgement of First Nations history and presence on the site.
- A school/educational site seems like it could be a good fit to extend education about the residential school legacy. This is part of the mandate of the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It would support the new history/social studies curriculum.

- Some individuals expressed their opposition to any type of private development on the development parcel and instead would like to see the site used for public or School Board activities only.
- Adequate staffing and maintenance will be important to support public access to site.
- Space is needed to store archival material and artifacts donated or otherwise acquired by Friends of the Schoolhouse over the years. These materials complement the educational heritage programming on-site and include, textbooks, maps, science models, and other educational tools currently stored in the schoolhouse, by the Board, or by members of the Friends of the Schoolhouse. There is concern that these materials may eventually be lost if an adequate storage facility is not made available.
- The flower gardens located between the schoolhouse and the Board Office was originally planted by one of the Friends of the Schoolhouse and is now maintained by that group with the assistance of adult and student volunteers. The plants in it reflect the type of flowers that were found in gardens of an earlier age. Friends of the Schoolhouse would like this area to be addressed by any future plans for site.
- The vegetable garden and the orchard to the south of the schoolhouse are maintained by the teaching staff and students participate in planting and taking care of the vegetables as part of the schoolhouse programme. This programming should continue.
- The integrity of the schoolhouse and schoolyard property be ensured and not violated in any way
- The original farm house, the Dunton-Gardner house and the Conover barn, if they must be moved, must be preserved and included as significant assets in all site planning.
- All planning is conscious of the environmental sensitivity of the property with special concern for

the wood lot, the sugar bush and the wet lands.
- While public access to and enjoyment of the property is desirable, student programs should not be limited because of public access.
- The historical, agricultural and educational legacy of the property be respected and reflected in all site planning.