

Developers want "win-win" with Highland Gate community

By Brock Weir

Developers and ratepayers are set to begin a dialogue this month on the redevelopment of Aurora's Highland Gate Golf Course.

As The Auroran reported last month, landowner ClubLink and developer Geranium Corporation, are forging ahead on a 50/50 joint venture to overhaul the venerable former golf course into what they describe as a "one-of-a-kind residential development."

According to Cheryl Shindruck, Executive Vice President of Land Development for Geranium Corporation, the company is currently working on plans for the site, including different types of housing forms for different locations on the lands and once those are completed, discussions between themselves and the ratepayers will then begin to bear fruit.

"We are at the very beginning of the process," says Ms. Shindruck. "Until we go in and meet with the municipality and talk about our vision in general for the site, I don't think the ratepayers have had a full opportunity to consider what we are thinking about. We are looking forward to having some further discussions with them later this month and then I think, at that point, we will have a better sense of what they are thinking."

"From our point of view, our intention is to see the site developed in a way that is in keeping with the community that surrounds it so it is compatible with the housing forms that are there and that is what is guiding us with respect to how we see the site ultimately be developed."

Given that the neighbourhoods surrounding the golf course are comprised primarily of single detached homes, Ms. Shindruck says she envisions housing forms like that being built on the land. Closer to Yonge Street, however, where multi-unit buildings exist, those opportunities are also on the table where the Highland Gate Club House currently sits, she adds.

There will also be efforts to retain "some of the greenspace" as parkland in the new development.

"Aurora is a wonderful community," says Ms. Shindruck. "It is a highly desirable community from the point of view of a place to live, a place to buy a home and being that it is an infill site in a community that has a great degree of attractiveness, those are two key factors [on why we were interested in Highland]"

"Our next step would be to meet with the municipality and talk about the application requirements. We see that happening in the next week or so, then we meet again with the Ratepayers' association to continue the dialogue with them. We are looking forward to working with the community and generating a vision for the site that is really in keeping with the community, will enhance the community, and bring benefits, finding a win-win solution for everyone."