

Port Robinson West Community - Construction Concerns

Thorold City Hall - Committee Room # 1
October 7th, 2021 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

RESIDENTS: Rosina Bisci
Joel Gauthier
Donna Kitchener

STAFF: Geoff Holman, Director of Public Works and Community Services
Terry Dixon, Fire Chief
Sean Dunsmore, Manager Engineering
Steve Santo, Manager Public Works
Karen Olm – Recording

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss previous, ongoing and potential concerns related to construction in the area and the condition of Port Robinson Road with the goal of developing an action plan that could mitigate and avoid future risk to the residents in this part of the community.

BACKGROUND:

- Planning for development in the Port Robinson West area commenced approximately 10 years ago and the biggest concern of the residents was to be kept informed.
- Many of the residents live outside of the notification area (500m) required under the *Planning Act*. Residents met with City staff in August of 2017 when the 1st Phase of the development was underway to express concerns.
- They feel that communication is a major barrier as they were not able to express their concerns and did not know when meetings were being held.
- The residents have created a Facebook group for Port Robinson West residents to keep each other informed.
- The City has acknowledged that there is a need to be more proactive.
- City Council has approved Report PWCS2021-17 (March 23rd, 2021) and By-Law No. 61-2021 (May 18th, 2021) which give it more teeth to ensure compliance.
- The City recognizes the struggle with communication with regards to identifying who needs to know, how to communicate information and how often.
- Construction is going to happen and there will be a certain amount of noise, dust, dirt on roads and inconvenience.
- We need a proactive strategy to mitigate these impacts and create a better process for the sharing of information.
- We need to address serious safety issues impacting public roadways and adjacent private properties.

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

The residents report that there are large trucks occupying and crossing Port Robinson Road and blocking access. There are large rocks, dust, mud and after rain or flushing sometimes 3" or more of thick mud on the road. The residents are concerned the roads are dangerous, and visibility from dust is an issue to the point where you can not see oncoming traffic, pedestrians or people on bikes. There have been times when the roads have been closed and there is no access for Emergency Services. The residents questioned the following:

- What controls are in place with the developer?
- What language is in the subdivision agreement?
- Who is checking the developer is doing what they are supposed to be and how are they held accountable?

Staff advised the following controls are in place during this phase.

- The Developer's Consulting Engineer is required to be onsite for site inspection.
- City Engineering Staff are out every other day to inspect conditions and confirm adequate oversight by the Consultant.
- The City has a large deposit through the agreements that allow the City to use the money to send in our own forces to clean roads etc.
- City PW staff are in the area regularly and also will report if the roads are bad and will ensure it gets relayed to the consultant to clean up.
- The Developer is in the process of building a detour route road that will redirect traffic from Port Robinson Road while it is under reconstruction. This detour road is scheduled to be complete by mid-2022. This will also provide an unimpeded access for emergency services.
- The City will work with the Developer (and the Builders) to come up with solutions that will address resident's concerns.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

- 1) Develop a pre-set (times of day) schedule for cleaning the roads. Additional cleaning may be required dependent on conditions.
- 2) Incentive from the Developer for residents to deal with dust, dirt on vehicles.
- 3) Share Information on the City of Thorold website (providing regular updates with what is happening in the area).
- 4) Traffic Control (with flag men to control road access).
- 5) City to contact the NSTS to get the School bus schedules to attempt to coordinate the heavy construction vehicles around the bus schedule.
- 6) Create clear service expectations for all involved; Developer/Builder/City and Residents.

NEXT STEPS and TAKE AWAYS

- CITY STAFF will work with the Engineering Consultant for the Developer to create an action plan for the suggested solutions above.
- SEAN to talk to the Consultant for the Developer regarding the large trucks crossing the road
- SEAN to work with the Engineering Consultant for the Developer on the suggested solutions above.
- ROSINA will report back to the Facebook group regarding the meeting with the City of Thorold
- KAREN to email Rosina regarding the process of how to report issues so they are captured and tracked in the City's Service Request software. (CityWide)
- MINUTES of this meeting will be shared with all attendees and also with City Council.
- NEXT MEETING TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 28th, 2021