

Sales begin to roll on Highland Gate development



By Brock Weir

Prospective property owners have begun descending on the sales centre for Allegro which opened its doors this week, heralding the start of Highland Gate redevelopment.

Plans for the new infill development on the golf course lands were unveiled to the public in a special grand opening held last Tuesday, June 18, and the contemporary designs, which were tailored to fit into the existing community surrounding the development receiving early plaudits.

‘The house designs were done following all approvals and they were all visualized and characterised as developments that would complement the existing community,’ says Cheryl Shindruck of the Geranium Corporation and Highland Gate Developments Inc. (HGDI), the companies behind Allegro. ‘We are very cognizant of wanting to fit into the community and this was really the first time for us to show [the community], with the designs now done, what those houses might look like.’

The plans received thumbs up from some members of the Highland Gate Ratepayers Association, who said they were pleased the existing community was indeed taken into consideration with the designs.

‘They are really taking into consideration the ambiance and the surroundings as they are putting together the development,’ says Susan Walmer of the Highland Gate Ratepayers Association. ‘I think they are taking into consideration the community values and concerns.’

Ms. Shindruck says they are ‘delighted to hear there has been a positive response’ to the designs, but there is still another component that needs to be hammered out: the details of a 21 acre parkland that will form the heart of the community, featuring trails linking Yonge Street to Bathurst.

Plans enshrined in the Minutes of Settlement, a binding agreement entered into by HGDI, the Ratepayers and the Town on the details of the redevelopment call for these trails to be illuminated, a detail that raised significant disapproval from neighbours both within, but particularly outside the Ratepayers Group.

With no parties looking to reopen the minutes of settlement, neighbours were, for a time, at loggerheads but cooler heads prevailed and now all parties are working together to devise a plan they all agree upon.

The first meetings of an ad-hoc committee of the developers, the Ratepayers Association, and community members outside the Association, are hoped to take place this week.

‘We haven’t really discussed anything specific other than from the public comments made at Council that lighting is a concern and that is one of the things we’re definitely going to be looking at,’ said Ms. Walmer. ‘At the opening of Allegro [there were some] comments made by the principals that they do want to create a really beautiful, one of a kind park to match the kind of development they’re putting in place.’

‘I am just hearing positive things from everybody at this point, which is a great start to working together. We’re hopeful that it will remain that way and we will come to a consensus at the end of a couple of meetings that we can present to the Town. The Town is going to be involved in the meetings so we don’t look at amenities or items that won’t work with the Town’s plan and various future

risk analysis. That is a good addition, I think, to this ad-hoc committee going forward.?

This is a sentiment shared by Ms. Shindruk.

?This process has always been open to dialogue about each aspect of the plan,? Ms. Shindruk told The Auroran on Friday. ?We were especially concerned about opening up the Minutes of Settlement. The Minutes of Settlement provide some latitude to have a discussion about the details of the park and that is exactly what we continue to be committed to doing, and so that is what we will be committed to doing.

?We are trying to get everyone's schedules to align and we're hoping to be able to convene and have that conversation with them next week sometime.

?We continue to be committed to building a park amenity and trails that we're going to be proud of and, as we work through this process with the community, ensure they feel the same way. With that kind of sentiment on the parts of all parties, I am pretty sure we're going to be very pleased with the result.?