

Armadale Community Meeting

Monday, April 20, 2009

Denison Room C
Armadale Community Centre
2401 Denison Avenue
Markham, Ontario

Summary Notes

Attendance:

There were 21 participants at the meeting.

Open House (6:00 pm to 7:00 pm)

- Participants were invited to walk around, view informative panels and ask questions to available staff.

Opening Remarks (7:00 to 7:15 pm)

- Welcome by Amanda Kennedy, DPRA
 - Introduction to the Town of Markham's Growth Management Strategy and the Transportation Strategic Plan.
- Councillor Logan Kanapathi (Ward 7) welcomed the audience and provided opening remarks.

Presentation – Growth Management Alternatives (7:15 pm to 7:45 pm)

- Presentation by Valerie Shuttleworth – Director of Planning and Urban Design, Town of Markham
 - The provincial, regional and local context for growth
 - The approach that Markham has taken to plan for residential and employment growth
 - Some of the options that the Town has been examining, including potential strategies for intensification

The presentation is available on-line at:

http://www.markham.ca/NR/rdonlyres/40639712-ADB1-4304-AB6C-F78A9D4747D7/0/GMS_communitypres_090311.pdf.

Note: Questions and answers were not recorded verbatim

Question: When you say apartments, what are we looking at? Condos or regular apartments?

Answer: When I use the word "Apartments" I am talking about the type of building. The majority of those apartments would be condominiums, but one of the things the Growth Plan requires us to do is look at affordable housing as well. That is a piece we still have to work on. Markham can't deliver that alone; we will need help from the Region or Province.

Question: I see a lot of single, and semi-detached, why won't we be doing more apartments for growth?

Answer: We will be doing more apartment growth; we want to limit expansion north. This will be discussed later in the presentation.

Question: In terms of concession blocks, how many people in single family houses could a block accommodate all the way through?

Answer: At this time, without the information in front of me, I'm unsure; the Growth Plan sets targets per hectare - currently 50 people and jobs per hectare. If you are familiar with Cornell, that community is achieving those targets. That is the density that we are talking about.

Question: The Greenbelt area is going to stay green?

Answer: Yes, it is Provincial legislation; now that it's in place it is going to be very hard to retract it.

Question: Is a population of 10,000 per block realistic? Overestimate, underestimate?

Answer: At this time, without the information in front of me, I'm unsure; it all depends on the density. We will not be doing strictly single-detached housing. Even if we go into the Whitebelt, it will include a mix of housing stock.

Question: I was going on the premise of today without development. What you are trying to show is that there will be 30 people per hectare; that doesn't seem like a lot when you look at it like that, but accumulatively it is a lot of people. I was just trying to get an idea of what it would look like, if it is 10,000 now and you go 40% there would be 15,000 people in that block. I presume an apartment is anything over three storeys high.

Answer: That is correct

Question: We are talking about growth. I have lived here since 1977, and I have seen a lot of growth. Before we can talk about growth, we need to clean up the town first. It is our biggest problem. We need to clean up the roads, the garbage, the houses, before we can move along with growth. We need to have our tenants / neighbours cleaning up after themselves. Garbage disposal should be doing a better job.

Answer: The local Councillor offered to discuss this issue further after the meeting.

Question: Where can I find information on the studies that have been conducted?

Answer: You can find them all on our website. If you can't find it then send us an email and we will direct you to them.

Question: How do you account for social infrastructure with all of this growth concentrated in certain areas of Markham (i.e. community support, schools, etc.)? I don't even see that mentioned in this whole conversation.

Answer: It is a tricky one for Markham, because those are services we don't deliver directly. It is going to be more about understanding the needs and where they are, and working with York Region and other levels of government to ensure that we are coordinating to have those services delivered. Because we are the local municipality, we are most familiar with those issues, so we are going to try and reach out to those other service providers to identify needs early on the process.

Question: You indicated that Cornell was the closest thing to a "poster child", what is the housing mix in Cornell?

Answer: I don't know off the top of my head, it is a healthy mix however; there are even some low-rise apartments. If you give me your information I can let you know. It has a good variety. Cornell also has coach houses - apartments over garages in the back. That would be considered an apartment.

Question: You talked about Section 37 - when you enforce that does that benefit go into a larger pool for York Region and redistributed, or does it stay in Markham?

Answer: We have a report going to Development Services Committee, and we are suggesting that if Council uses Section 37, that the community benefits should be local, and that they should work together with community councillors. We can't use it to get things that we are otherwise entitled to (i.e. parks, couldn't get more). We would look to local councillors to get at some of the issues in the neighbourhoods that the community benefits might be directed to. York Region is looking at Section 37 from the Regional, but they would have to work with us, due to zoning by-laws. They are looking at targeting transit improvements; we have more work to do in that area.

Question: Is there an advisory committee?

Answer: They would be considered through Development Services Committee as part of any development application. {Re-explaining section 37 and what it is.}

Question: What is the area of Ward 7?

Answer: The boundaries are: Steeles Ave, McCowan Rd., Hwy 407 and all the way east to Pickering.

Question: Did everyone in the community get an invitation letter?

Answer: It has been advertised on the website and in the paper. If we sent out a notice saying there is a 40 storey apartment going up next to you, this room would be full, but growth management is a bit different.

Audience Polling Activity (7:45 pm to 8:00 pm)

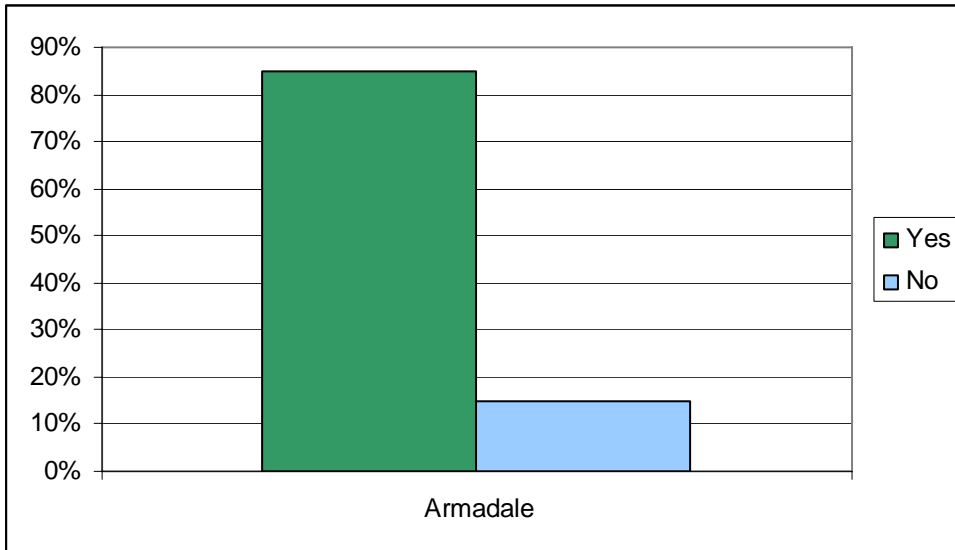
- Participants were provided with a hand-held polling device to respond to the list of questions posed.

Note: An interactive and innovative polling technology was used at the community meetings to elicit feedback from the participants. The polling tool allowed participants to answer multiple-choice question immediately followed by a presentation of the results. This polling exercise was one method used to gather feedback from participants attending the public events. The sample sizes were small and therefore, the results of the polling exercise are *not statistically significant*.

Polling Questions (Facilitated by Valerie Shuttleworth)

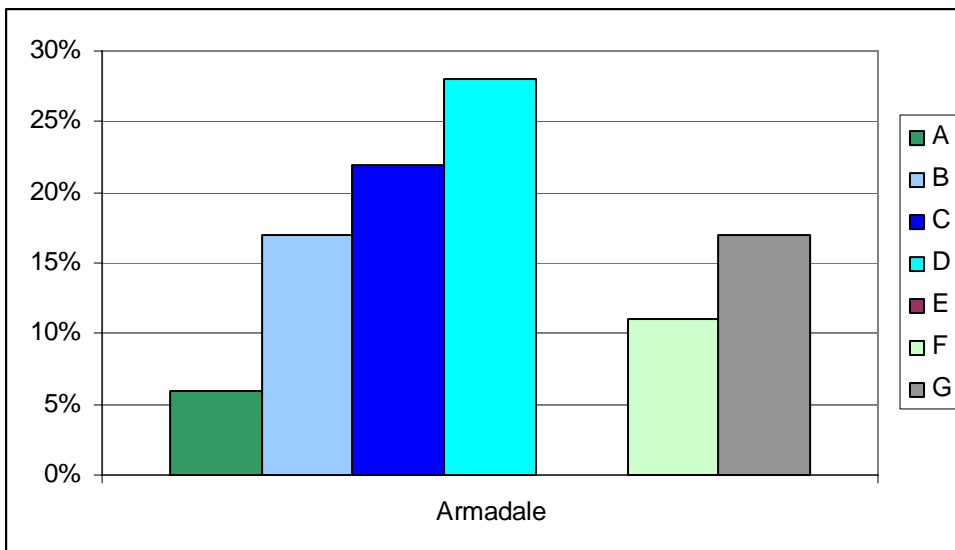
Question 1: Do you agree with the "environment first" approach to planning for new development

Figure 1: Armadale, n =20



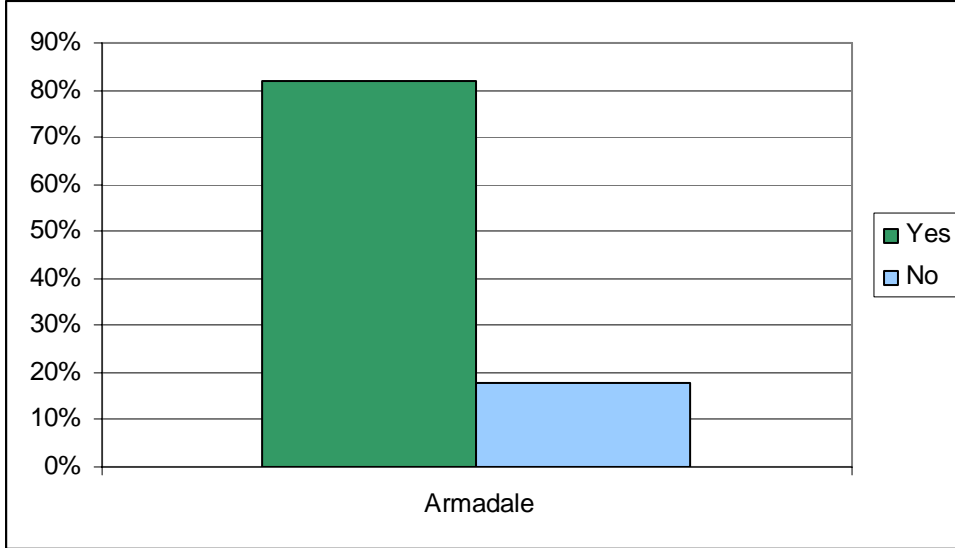
Question 2: What is the most important guiding principle:

Figure 2: Armadale, n =18



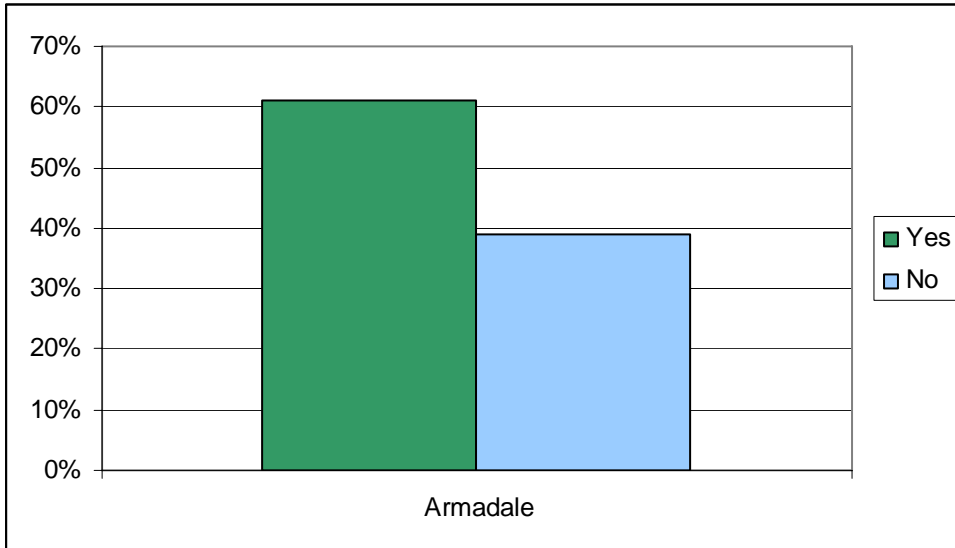
Question 3: Do you agree with accommodating the majority of new residential growth in the current urban area (Settlement Area)?

Figure 3: Armadale, n =17



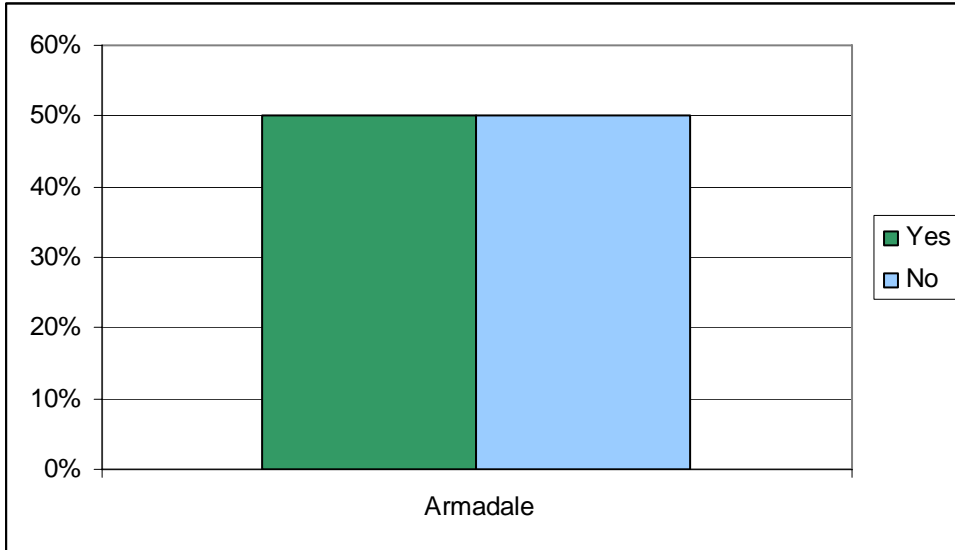
Question 4: Do you agree that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix?

Figure 4: Armadale, n =18



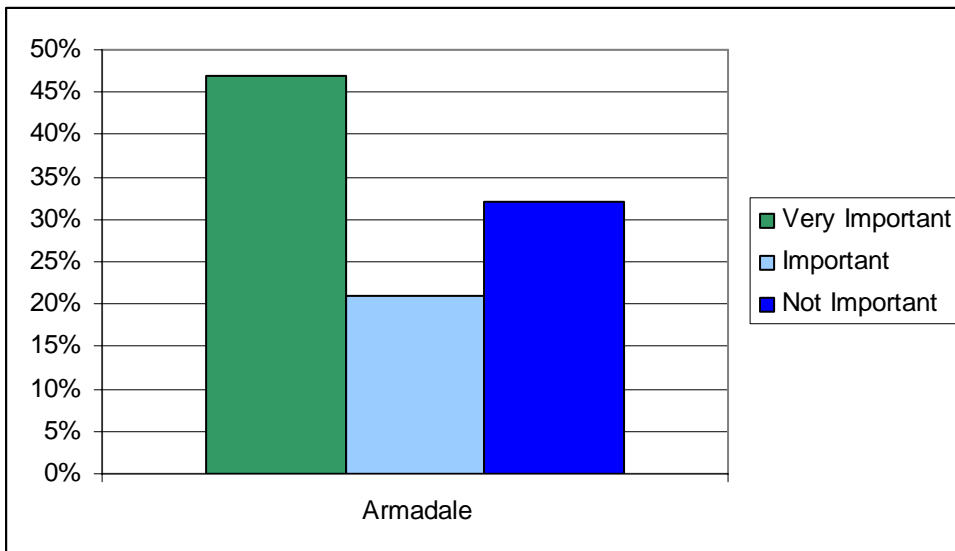
Question 5: Do you agree with expanding the Town's urban area into the Whitebelt to accommodate lower density residential growth?

Figure 5: Armadale, n =16



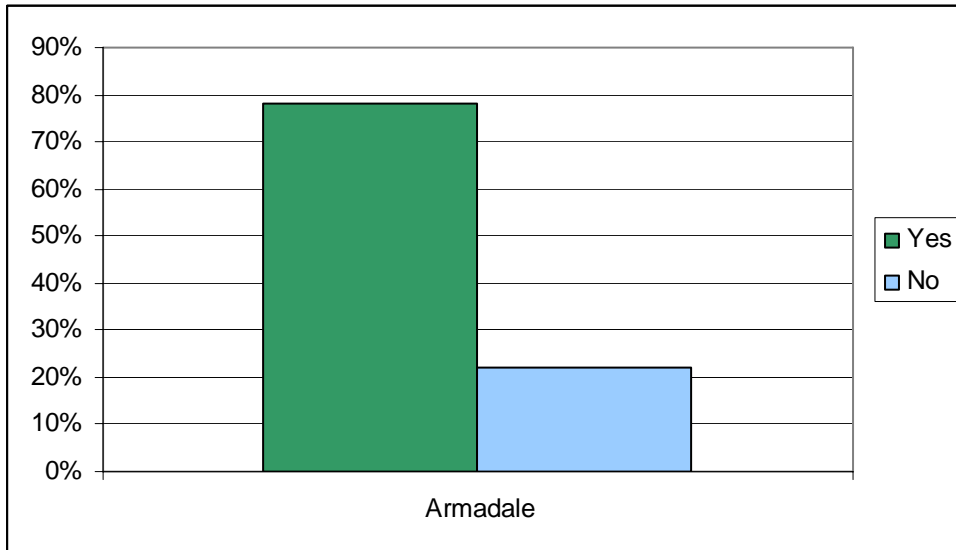
Question 6: How important is it to have a mix of housing types (e.g., single-detached, semi-detached, townhouses, apartments) in new development?

Figure 6: Armadale, n =19



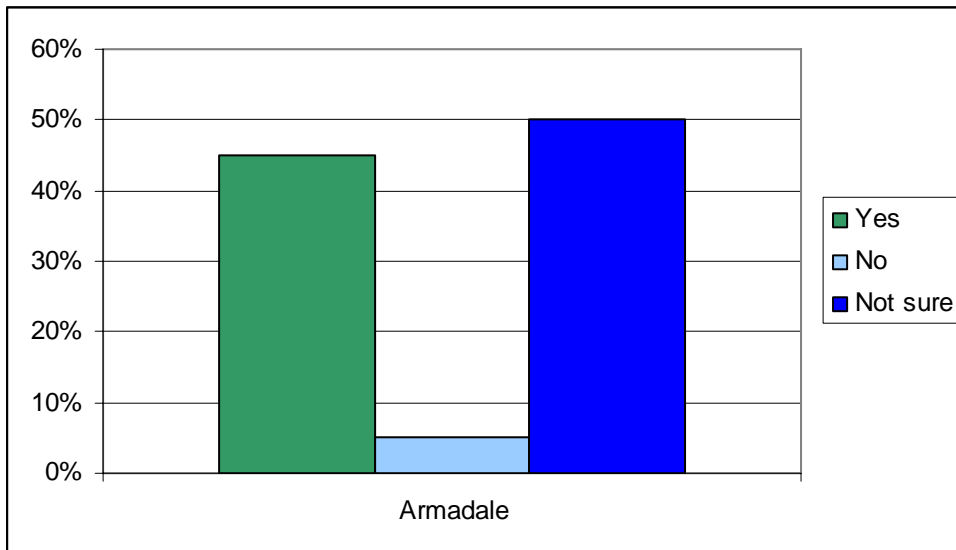
Question 7: Do you agree generally with the approach of distributing residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services?

Figure 7: Armadale, n =18



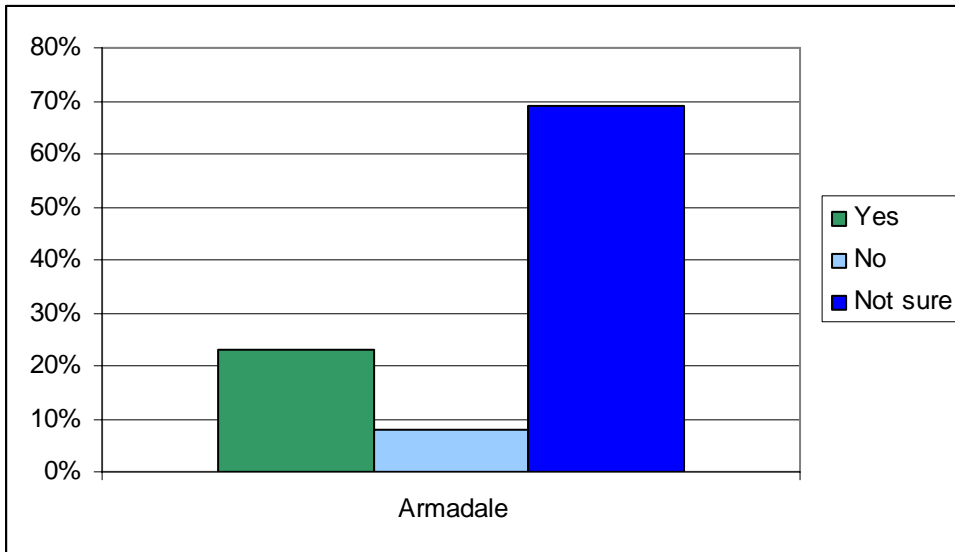
Question 8: Do you agree with the intensification areas identified?

Figure 8: Armadale, n =20



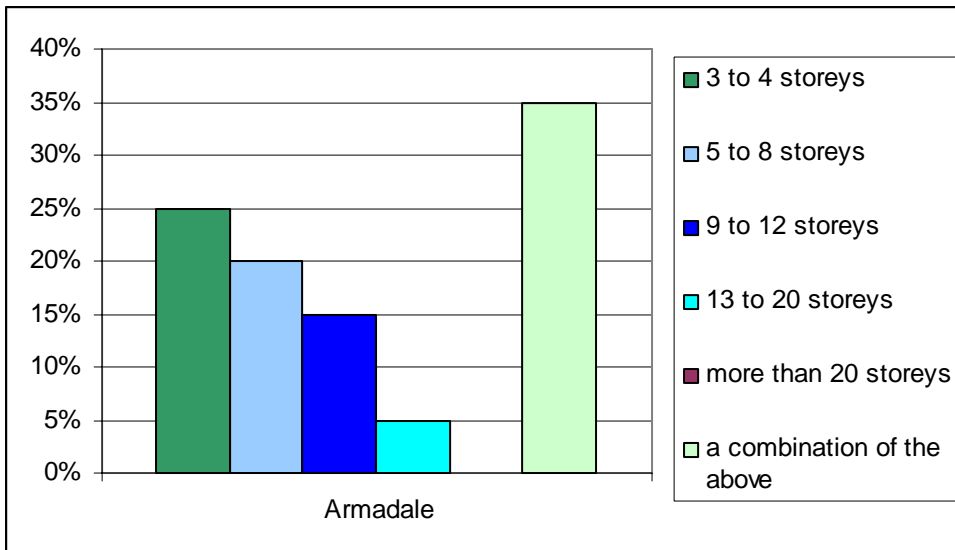
Question 9: Are there any additional intensification areas that should be considered?

Figure 9: Armadale, n =13



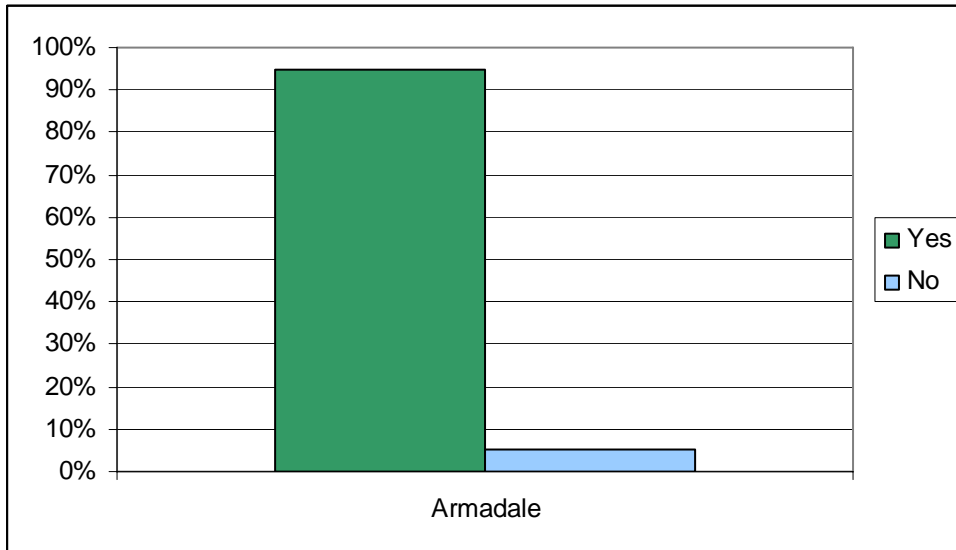
Question 10: If a significant amount of intensification were to be in the form of apartment buildings, what building height would you prefer?

Figure 10: Armadale, n =20



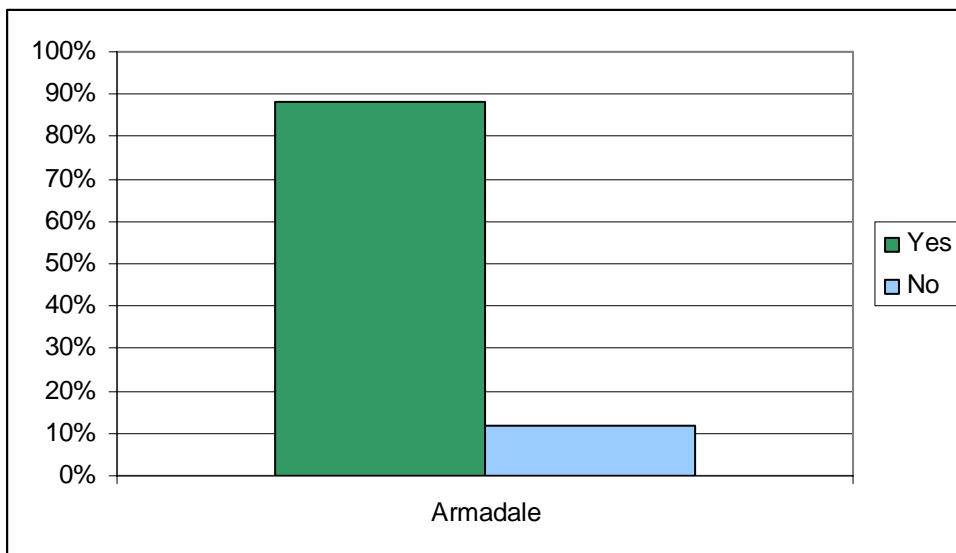
Question 11: Do you agree with reserving land to accommodate employment growth over the long term?

Figure 11: Armadale, n =20



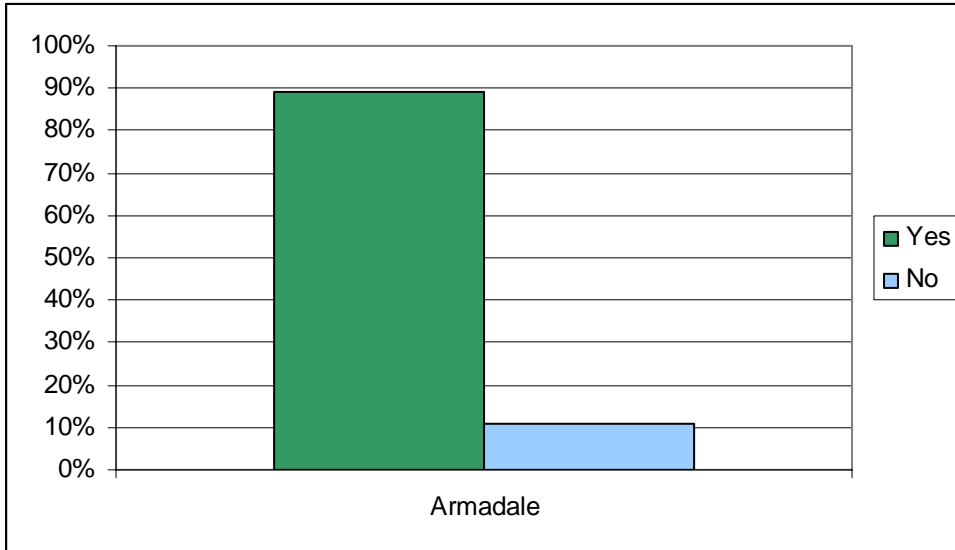
Question 12: Do you agree, that in addition to intensification, employment should be accommodated in the Whitebelt to ensure an adequate supply of land?

Figure 12: Armadale, n =8



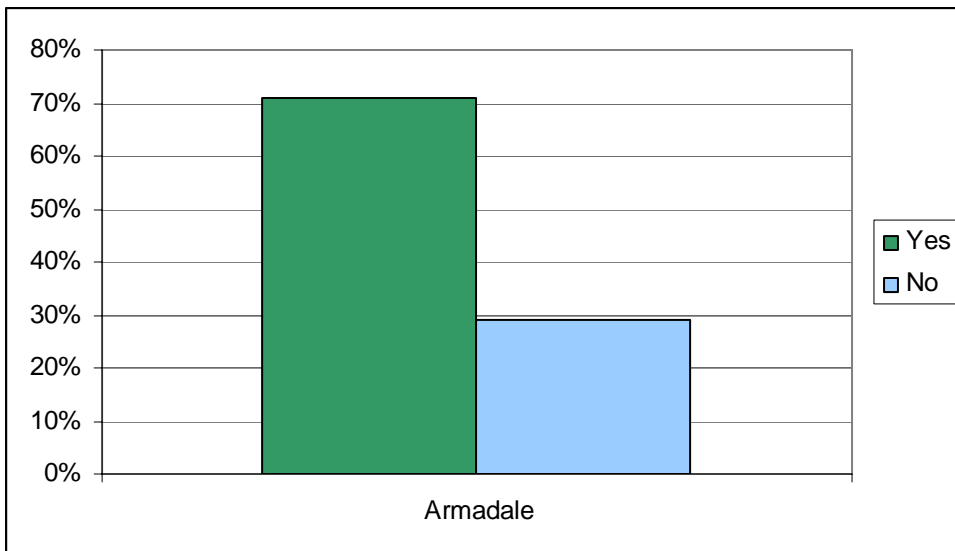
Question 13: Do you support adding more jobs within the current urban area (Settlement Area) through intensification in existing business parks?

Figure 13: Armadale, n =18



Question 14: Do you support adding more jobs within the current Settlement Area by having some types of employment in new residential development (e.g., ground floor commercial uses in apartment buildings)?

Figure 14: Armadale, n =17



Presentation – Master Servicing Study (8:05 pm to 8:20 pm)

- Presentation by Allen Wu (Senior Development Engineer, Town of Markham)
 - Update on the Master Servicing Study

The presentation is available on-line at:

http://www.markham.ca/NR/rdonlyres/E210A2C6-5D6A-4C48-AAF1-B3624DB133E8/0/GMS_servicingstudy_090311.pdf.

Question: What is a green roof?

Answer: Green roof means putting a garden or green area on top of building. This helps absorb rainwater, rather than having it discharged and runoff into sewage system, that currently happens with asphalt/concrete roof. It helps with water conservation as well.

Presentation – Markham Transportation Strategic Plan (8:20 pm to 8:35 p.m.)

- Presentation by Brian Lee, Manager of Development Engineering, Town of Markham
 - Update on the status of the Transportation Strategic Plan

The presentation is available on-line at:

http://www.markham.ca/NR/rdonlyres/EF429246-6356-4E64-8195-6FB88E22BF7C/0/GMS_transportationplan_090311.pdf.

Note: Questions and answers were not recorded verbatim

Question: Is there a 401 exit coming to Markham?

Answer: There is no plan to connect the 401 into Markham; the 407 will be going beyond Pickering where it would connect back to the 401.

Question: The TTC is running free of charge in the municipality of Markham for nearly 2 km. Markham is the only municipality that is enjoying that privilege. That privilege is being taken away - will Markham provide additional service to that community or instruct the TTC to continue running this service?

Answer: One of the things mentioned in the Metrolinx Plan is fare integration, but we recognize that while there are some political agendas behind it, this is something that is critical.

Question: Formerly, the 53 bus was provided for free (i.e. one fare), no supplemental fare, but the development of the place just east of Markham Road, has led to curtailing of this route and they are sending all the buses along Steeles.

Answer: If you see there is a need for a certain bus route, you should let YRT know, because they are not always aware, and can only tell based on how many people are riding the bus.

Question: There was a plan to link the Markham Bypass through the Rouge River to Highway 401, I believe that is what the person was referring to earlier. Is that still on the books?

Answer: It was called the East-Metro Transportation Corridor, and Scarborough took it out the plans about 20 years ago. We do need a link all the way down to the 401, but it is not easy.

Comment: If you get on an YRT bus going east-west, you can use one fare from Markham all the way to Oakville. When Metrolinx comes they will be doing a smart card that you will have you pay based on distance travelled.

Polling Questions (8:35 pm to 8:45 pm) (Facilitated by Brian Lee)

Closing remarks by Amanda Kennedy, DPRA (9:00 p.m.)

Amanda Kennedy (DPRA) provided some closing remarks. Participants were welcome to leave, and those that were interested in continuing the conversation were invited to stay longer and ask additional questions of the presenters.

Closing remarks included comments about the

- Workbooks
- Comment forms
- Timeframes for engagement
- Next steps

Additional Questions & Answers (9:00 to 9:30 p.m.)

Note: Questions and answers were not recorded verbatim

Question: When is the next public consultation for Langstaff?

Answer: A report went to the Development Services Committee about 2 weeks ago; you can find it on our website. The Town is still working on the transportation study along with the planning aspect.

Question: How are you going to solve the problem at Yonge and Langstaff of getting people in and out?

Answer: It's going to be busy. Population and employment growth should be put where you are going to put the rapid transit systems. We are considering one underpass road, similar to Red Cedar.

Question: What is the 407 Transitway system going to look like?

Answer: The rapid transit system will not be a separate lane for the 407, but a separate corridor, that will go over and under the 407.

Question: The railways are certainly a barrier, is it possible to put pedestrian tunnels under the railway? Is that in the plan?

Answer: Yes it is possible, and no it is not in the plan. We need to start looking at these plans and different options.