

# Residents help city plan for the future

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Deciding how older parts of the city will look in the future was on the minds of Barrie residents, Wednesday night.

About 40 people attended the first of two public meetings being held to gather public input for the historic neighbourhoods strategy (HNS), a project of the city's planning department.

The strategy's community committee is developing ideas about future growth in Barrie's residential core, an area designated as an urban growth centre in the provincial growth plan.

Six sections of area, much of it built 50 or more years ago, has been sectioned off into distinct neighbourhoods, with each being given a name reflective of its part of the city.

The HNS stretches from Grove and Oak streets to the north (The Grove), south to the city centre and lakeshore (Downtown), northwest to Highway 400 (Queen's Park), along Highway 400 south to Vespra Street (West village), southeast to the lakeshore (Brock Park) and then south to Baldwin Lane (Allandale).

HNS is intended to give residents an opportunity to plan for the future of their neighbourhoods themselves, instead of staff or consultants, according to Coun. Jeff Lehman.

"What do you want to see in your neighbourhood? It's long overdue being asked," he said at the meeting.

Parkside Drive homeowner Harvey Holtzhauer didn't mind being asked, but he doesn't want the strategy to lead to unpopular development in his neighbourhood of Downtown.

He has spent a considerable amount of money refurbishing his 160-year-old home.

"I'd like to see them keep older homes. I want to keep (mine) looking nice and see everybody else do the same," Holtzhauer said, adding he doesn't like old homes being utilized as rooming houses.

Holtzhauer doesn't want to see any development in his neighbourhood that includes more drinking establishments, especially when they include hundreds of patrons spilling out into the streets in the wee hours of the morning.

"That overflows to everything around that area," he said. "The last thing I want to see in Barrie is another bar."

Other residents raised concerns about older homes being demolished to make way for the new look of the neighbourhoods and about access to the waterfront possibly being curtailed.

There were also concerns about the area being designated as a growth area and the higher density that could accompany that, with one resident commenting that "some areas can accommodate growth better than others."

Lehman said the HNS is intended to gather information about those kinds of concerns and forward the strategy's suggestions to council for its review.

The second historic neighbourhoods strategy meeting will take place at the MacLaren Art Centre on Saturday at 1 p.m.

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