

Two new proposals for Lansdowne development ignore retail, commercial development

By Neco Cockburn, The Ottawa Citizen March 17, 2011

OTTAWA — Two versions of a proposal to redevelop **Lansdowne** Park as a “user-friendly gathering place” without all of the commercial and residential **development** in the city’s current plan were unveiled Wednesday.

The **Lansdowne** Park Conservancy showed its proposal, submitted to the city on Monday, to about 40 people at the Canal Ritz restaurant on Queen Elizabeth Driveway.

One option includes a complete stadium, while the other includes only the north-side stands and replaces the south-side stands with practice fields that could be used for amateur sport.

“We’re presenting options for our city,” said John Martin, the co-ordinator of the conservancy, which worked on the proposal with international architecture firm NBBJ.

Citing the city’s own bylaws — under which Martin says it must consider a competing counterproposal to the unsolicited bid received from the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) — Martin has formally registered the alternate plan.

The bid comes just days before council is to discuss the site plan for its redevelopment plan with OSEG.

Martin said he hasn’t heard from the city since filing the proposal, and city officials haven’t provided a comment to the Citizen so far this week

The conservancy model follows a non-profit management system similar to the Central Park Conservancy in New York City.

Martin said the proposal meets city guidelines and heritage requirements for how the park should be developed, and revenues from the site would improve the city’s bottom line.

The proposal features a synthetic playing field, water fountain, wildflower gardens, pool and restaurant, as well as a covered concert shell, fish pond, farmers market and surface parking.

The Horticulture Building — which would be moved under the site plan that’s to be discussed by council on Friday — would remain where it is now, and would be restored and available for “service-type **retail** and artisans,” the proposal says. The Coliseum Building would also be renovated and used for rentable **retail** space.

The option that doesn’t include the full stadium shows what could be achieved at **Lansdowne** if the city went ahead with a “**development**-tied stadium at the rapid transit hub at Bayview,” according to Martin.

Capital Councillor-elect David Chernushenko said the conservancy’s proposal shows that “there are other great ways of redeveloping **Lansdowne** Park.”

