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City taps into public input for future of Lansdowne

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Ottawa Citizen

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

More than 150 people gathered at the Ottawa Civic Centre Tuesday night to have their voices heard regarding the redevelopment of Lansdowne Park.

The crowd was divided into about 20 tables, moderated by City of Ottawa officials, and groups were asked to debate a set of six questions.

Topics included the importance of professional sports, the retention of Frank Clair Stadium, the continuation of the Exhibition and whether the city should include the private sector in the redevelopment.

"I've heard some people in the community say the city has already made up their mind and this is all fluff to keep people happy," said Neil Brommell who lives across from the park and is chairman of the Glebe Community Association's Lansdowne Park committee. "But I don't think so. I think they genuinely want public input."

Last year, the city approved a redevelopment design competition for the under-used area.

"These opinions matter in the development of the design brief," said Alta Vista Councillor Peter Hume, explaining that the public input will influence the parameters for the competition.

"I want to make sure this is a public place, with things like a market and parks," said Alta Vista resident Michel Haddad.

Some said they wished for more housing in the area and others said the land should be developed as a sports complex.

"I think it is impractical to think that this park can be everything to all people," said park manager Rick Haycock. "We need an outcome that is practical and that can actually be implemented."

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