

Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee

September 6, 2018 – 7:30 AM

The Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee met on the above date at the County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

Present: Fred Varkaris; Karen Ferri; Councillor John Bell; and Warden Stewart Halliday

Regrets: Chair Brian Davenport; Vice Chair Don Lewis; Ashley Chapman; Councillor Barb Clumpus; and Lance Thurston

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Savanna Myers, Manager of Economic Development; Steve Furness and Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officers; Jacinda Rudolph, Outreach Coordinator; Courtney Miller, Business Enterprise Centre Manager; and Jacquelyn Morrison, Deputy Clerk/ Legislative Coordinator

Call to Order

Warden Halliday called the meeting to order at 7:58AM. Warden Halliday declared that there was no quorum and therefore no resolutions could be passed. General discussion on the agenda items commenced for information purposes.

Reports – CAO

CAOR-ED-18-18 Community Improvement Plan Program

Savanna Myers and Randy Scherzer presented the above report.

Ms. Myers advised that a Community Improvement Plan (“CIP”) is a tool for municipal planners and economic developers to create policies and incentives to target specific types of development and investment. A CIP is meant to provide a return on investment by growing the assessment base. Grey County hopes to prioritize development and have an inventory of investment ready properties.

Ms. Myers provided the following examples of CIP incentives:

- In Hanover, grants were provided to improve façades;
- In Owen Sound, a tax rebate provided incentive to develop brownfield and vacant land;
- In Meaford, grants and loans were used to develop a boutique hotel, obtain a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment on “moose property”, upgrade an existing hotel, improve farms, and develop two new cider businesses.

Mr. Scherzer reviewed the requirements to designate, adopt, and implement a CIP. He noted that Grey County is not prescribed to adopt a CIP. Grey County will partner with local municipalities to develop their respective CIPs and to provide funding. He advised that municipalities will need to hold a public meeting, pass By-law(s), and circulate the CIP to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. He recommended that the entire municipality be designated as community improvement project area and that a wide range of incentives be included in order to ensure flexibility in the future.

Mr. Scherzer noted the priority areas of residential, agricultural, vacant/brownfield, and residential and commercial. He also provided a list of proposed incentives for municipalities to consider. Some discussion occurred on budgeting and eligibility for the incentives. It was noted that customer service will be important to ensure that these incentives are accessible and useful to consumers.

Ms. Myers outlined the process currently envisioned for the CIPs. The County will advance an annual budget to the municipality, participate in tax increment financing, and offer surplus land. Administration of the CIPs would be provided by the member municipalities.

Ms. Myers advised that Grey County is working to develop a performance measurement through an annual report card to track the return on investment. Promotion and marketing will also be a priority to ensure success of the program.

Ms. Myers outlined the steps taken to date. A draft CIP was circulated to local municipal staff on August 17th. Grey County staff met with local municipal staff on August 29th to discuss the draft CIP.

Ms. Myers also outlined the next steps. At the end of September, finance staff will meet with local municipalities. There will be a presentation to County Council on September 27th. A second draft will be circulated to each municipality. Public meetings will be held, the drafts will be circulated to the Ministry, and the CIPs will go forward to council for consideration. The anticipated timeframe for implementation is six to eight months, with the target completion date being the spring of 2019.

Positive comments were received from the Committee members. Committee members provided feedback, including the importance of making the application process easy for

consumers and ensuring effective customer service.

Staff will bring a report to County Council on September 27th.

CAOR-ED-19-18 Economic Development Department Priorities and Staffing

Savanna Myers advised that the Economic Development Working Group met in August to discuss the 2019 priorities for drafting a work plan. Ms. Myers noted the Working Group's most important priorities. The work plan will provide direction for member municipalities and the County.

The Economic Development website, www.madeingrey.ca, was reviewed with the Committee. Ms. Myers encouraged members to review the website and provide any feedback to her. There will be training with municipal staff on the website.

Ms. Myers noted that the target completion date for the draft work plan is October 2018. The plan would then be circulated to member municipalities for review.

Ms. Myers noted that there will be an adjustment in staffing over the next few months. At the end of October (approximately), the senior economic development officer, Steve Furness, will step into the manager role for six months. The outreach coordinator will become full-time and then will be transitioned into an economic development officer position in January.

Agri-Food Business Retention and Expansion Update

Philly Markowitz provided an update on the agri-food business retention and expansion ("BR&E") study. The BR&E study had a 91% completion rate, which was higher than the targeted rate. The last interviews were completed on August 31st. There will be public consultations held in October. A work plan will be drafted in November. The study is anticipated to be complete in December. Ms. Markowitz noted that affordable housing, cost of land, speed of development, etc. were brought up in the BR&E interviews.

Business Enterprise Centre Update

Courtney Miller provided an update on the Business Enterprise Centre. There has been a lot of interest in the Business Enterprise Centre. There was recently a summer company wrap up event, which the Warden attended. The Starter Company Plus has 16 companies up and running.

New to Grey and Regional Forum Update

Jacinda Rudolph advised that New to Grey received a grant and will be hosting a Regional Forum on Rural Newcomer Integration. The Forum will be held on November

30th at Blue Mountain Resort – Village Conference Centre and will be employer focused regarding newcomer attraction, retention, and integration. A number of counties have partnered with Grey County to host the Forum, including Huron, Perth, Wellington, and Bruce.

Dates to Remember

The following dates and upcoming events were highlighted:

September 27, 2018: Grey County Administration Building Open House

October 2, 2018: Final New to Grey Training

November 30, 2018: New to Grey Regional Forum

Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be determined at the call of the Chair.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 AM.

Stewart Halliday, Warden