
Economic Development Advisory Committee January 30, 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: Don Lewis; Ashley Chapman; Fred Varkaris and Karen Ferri; Councillors Barb Clumpus and John Bell and Warden Stewart Halliday

Regrets: Brian Davenport

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; Mary Jane Hills, Administrative Assistant and Tara Warder, Committee Coordinator

Call to Order

Kim Wingrove called the meeting to order at 7:34 AM.

Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

ED01-18 Moved by: Councillor Clumpus Seconded by: Warden Halliday

That Brian Davenport be nominated as Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2018.

Brian Davenport was acclaimed Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2018.

ED02-18 Moved by: Councillor Bell Seconded by: Karen Ferri

That Don Lewis be nominated as Vice Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2018.

Don Lewis was acclaimed Vice Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2018.

In the absence of the Chair, Don Lewis continued the meeting as Vice Chair.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Reports – CAO

CAOR-ED-04-18 New to Grey Update

Jacinda Rudolph provided a New to Grey update. Ms. Rudolph noted that one of her initial projects was to undertake an environmental scan. She noted that there is a need to focus on the newcomer retention aspect before the attraction effort. For this initiative, newcomers have been defined as people who relocated from outside the community to work and/or live in our community. They could be from another country or from within Canada.

A kickoff event will be held to show Grey County's support and encouragement of newcomer attraction and retention. The importance of including this in workplace culture was noted.

Discussion occurred on the difficulty of finding housing and child care. Ashley Chapman noted that the newcomers they retain generally have a connection to the area.

ED03-18 Moved by: Councillor Clumpus Seconded by: Councillor Bell

That Report CAOR-ED-04-18 titled New to Grey Initiative Update be received for information.

Carried

Reports - Planning

PDR-ED-05-18 Community Improvement Plan Development

Randy Scherzer and Savanna Myers addressed the Committee on the above report. A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool under the Planning Act that allows municipalities to identify a certain area within the community and provides incentives in these areas for economic development and growth.

Mr. Scherzer noted that the County doesn't have the ability to pass its own Community Improvement Plan. Only regions and single tiers and municipalities that have received an exemption from the Ministry are able to undertake this.

Elgin County however has developed a CIP program that establishes a template for local municipalities to adopt through existing or future CIPs and provides funding or incentives to help promote new development. One area Grey County would like to target is attainable housing. Mr. Scherzer provided examples of incentives that could assist including land and refunds on development charges.

Staff would like to further explore what areas to target and are seeking the Committee's input on what should be addressed. The hope is that the program be developed this year and that funds be sought for 2019.

Savanna Myers spoke to the background work that has taken place to date.

Mr. Scherzer noted that the Planning Act limits what can be done under an upper-tier CIP, and the benefit to taking the template approach is that you don't have to get permission of the Minister and it may not be as limited as what the Act permits for upper-tier CIP's.

Discussion occurred on the tax incentives and possible ways the incentives could be provided. It was noted that more municipalities are providing CIPs into rural areas. Historically they have been focused on downtown areas.

Committee members were asked to review the information and get in touch with staff with any input and comments.

ED04-18 Moved by: Councillor Clumpus Seconded by: Fred Varkaris

That Report PDR-ED-05-18 titled Community Improvement Plan Development be received; and

That staff be directed to develop a community improvement plan program that would provide potential incentives to address current economic development barriers and that would help support member municipalities initiatives and priorities through existing or future community improvement plans.

Carried

Update on Recolour Grey

Randy Scherzer provided an update on the Recolour Grey process, noting that the draft Official Plan was presented to Committee of the Whole on November 24th. Information sessions have been held and staff are meeting with the Province on January 31st to review the draft plan.

Mr. Scherzer highlighted the Recolour Grey interactive map for the Committee.

If Committee members have any feedback, they are asked to contact staff. Blocks of time have been set aside in February to give local municipal staff, agencies, developers, consultants, and the public an opportunity to meet with staff to discuss the Official Plan.

The anticipated timelines were noted. The hope is that the Province can approve the Official Plan in six months following adoption of the Plan by Council.

There will be public meetings and workshops for municipal staff and councils in upcoming months.

Hospitality and Tourism Sector Partnership Labour Market Strategy and Manufacturing and Construction Sector Partnership Labour Market Strategy

Savanna Myers spoke to the studies. It was reinforced that there is a labour shortage and also a need for training and affordable/available housing.

The studies also showed that youth, ages 15-24, in the region participate in the work force at a higher rate than the provincial average. It was previously thought that there was potential within this pool to help solve shortages, however they are already participating at a high rate.

The studies have yielded results that will assist staff in further developing their work and strategies.

CAOR-CW-02-18 Community Hub Update (For information)

This report was presented to Council last week and has been brought to the Committee for information.

Discussions have occurred with stakeholders and a staged launch of the Community Hub is expected in September. This partnership gives Georgian College the opportunity to expand programming locally. Mr. Varkaris noted the various programs that may be offered by Georgian College in the future, including millwright programs, hair styling and automotive programs.

One of the things the College is looking at is ensuring the right program mix is available for the community and the facilities that exist. There is a need for space and a hub next door to Georgian will be highly beneficial.

CAOR-CW-03-18 Small Business Enterprise Centre Transition (For information)

This report proceeded to Council last week and is before this Committee for information. If the Small Business Enterprise Centre (BEC) is transitioned to the County, it will help increase the profile as a regional service. It was noted that the service is available to anyone in the Province.

The goal to make the transition is April 1, 2018.

There is an opportunity to build the understanding of what the BEC is and what it provides.

It was noted that the BEC functions best when it's a true network with partnerships. There are many organizations that can assist spreading awareness, including the BIAs, Chambers and organizations such as 4H.

Other Business

The following dates and upcoming events were highlighted:

February 9 – Awake @ 8 (Bruce Power, Grey County), Quality Inn

February 14 – New to Grey Kick Off, Grey Roots Museum

February 28 – Regional Job Fair, Bayshore Community Centre

April 5 – Warden's Breakfast, Grey County Admin Building

Roundtable Updates

Barb Clumpus noted that next Mayor's forum will take place at Meaford Hall on April 6th. It will be a day long event on attainable housing and there will be many relevant organizations present.

Ashley Chapman noted that Chapman's has completed a recent expansion.

It was noted that Grey County is working with Simcoe and Bruce Counties for a regional Agri-Food Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E).

Karen Ferri spoke to a recent Community Longtable event in which funds were able to be donated to various charities.

Fred Varkaris noted that Georgian College has received money towards new equipment to update teaching spaces. It is positive to see revenue being allocated to the Owen Sound.

Staff are getting ready for the upcoming Think Canada event.

Don Lewis spoke to the growing interest in Agri-tourism.

Next Meeting Dates

Wednesday, April 25th at 7:30 AM

On motion by Councillor Bell, the meeting adjourned at 9:17 AM.

Don Lewis, Vice Chair