

Hanover – Owen Sound Task Force September 18, 2020 – 10:00 AM

The Hanover – Owen Sound Task Force met on the above date through electronic means with the following members participating:

Present: Councillors Brian O’Leary, Brian Milne, Selwyn Hicks, and Warden McQueen

Regrets: Councillor Desai

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Stephanie Lacey – Avon, Intermediate Planner; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; Heather Morrison, Clerk, Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Housing, Brian Tocheri, CAO-Hanover, Tim Simmonds-CAO-Owen Sound and Tara Warder, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator

The Chief Administrative Officers from Owen Sound and Hanover were invited to attend and participate in the Task Force discussions.

Call to Order

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 10:07am.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations.

Proposed Task Force Schedule and Meeting Topics

Kim Wingrove outlined the proposed Workplan for the Task Force. She cited themed meetings moving forward as was discussed at the September 1, 2020 meeting and possible stakeholders who could attend to provide insight into the specific themes.

It was noted that a recent request was received from the Chiefs of Police for Hanover and Owen Sound to move the policing discussion from October 2 to October 16 in order to capture recently released Crime Severity statistics in their presentations.

Chair Hicks requested input from the members on any other potential stakeholders to invite. Suggestions around inviting both school boards and potentially the OPP Detachment Commander to participate at a later meeting were supported.

Discussion occurred on the logistics on the site visits. It was recommended that the site visits be split into two days. Staff will work with Councilors Hicks and O'Leary to arrange site visits in each municipality beginning October 2.

The Task Force concurred with the draft work plan as amended. Today's discussion will be focused on affordable housing in the municipalities.

HOS03-20 Moved by: Councillor O'Leary Seconded by: Councillor Milne

THAT the Hanover-Owen Sound Task Force Work Plan be adopted as amended.

Carried

10 Year Homelessness and Housing Plan

Anne Marie Shaw provided an overview of 10 Year Homelessness and Housing Plan. She provided information related to the creation of more affordable housing in Grey County, the preservation of existing housing stock, reduction of chronic homelessness and how to increase supportive housing.

Ms. Shaw spoke about community partners including supportive housing organizations and the limited capacity of some of the stakeholders to provide further assistance with supportive housing and other housing related capacity issues.

October 1 is the launch of the Homelessness Response Table. This is a community partner hub in Owen Sound with six offices to be shared by all to coordinate services with Canadian Mental Health Association, Grey Bruce Health Services and Keystone among others to provide a coordinated approach to serving those in need. If this model is successful, expansion into other areas will be reviewed.

Funding for transitional housing has been applied for from the province in the hope to continue to provide assistance to those that have a need for a high level of support.

Ms. Shaw provided further information on rent supplements. There is still a need for rent supplements, but it is one tool that could assist with perhaps 25% of the waitlist while the other 75% need actual housing because they are currently without a home.

Warden McQueen joined the meeting.

It was noted that clients come with many needs including mental health along with housing related concerns and a multi-prong approach that needs to be taken with many clients. Ms. Shaw noted that Community Relations Workers are in place to provide referrals to various community agencies including employment, mental health and food banks. Staff work together with tenants to put together a work plan that will support the tenant's specific needs. She noted that from a planning perspective, the best-case scenario is to ensure that there is a certain amount of affordable or attainable housing to fulfill the overall need of housing. Future housing builds are generally a mix of affordable and market rent units that help to address the housing situation. Ms. Shaw noted that there are a multitude of people needing supportive housing with a multitude of needs.

Discussion occurred on the length tenants use supportive housing. Ms. Shaw noted that while there are those that only need it for a short period of time, 45% of the current tenants are seniors who tend to stay for a long time. She noted that families do move on while others, due to financial reasons, will stay for a longer period of time. She did note that there is a large population of ODSP clients who also have a longer tenure.

The question was asked as to whether the rent freezes announced by the Province yesterday would affect County services. Ms. Shaw noted that it would not impact rent geared to income tenants but may impact non-profits. Staff are currently awaiting the release of the regulations that will provide further details.

Action Plan for Developing Affordable Housing

Anne Marie Shaw provided an update on the Action Plan related to the development of affordable housing. Ms. Shaw noted that this plan has been presented to the Affordable Housing Task Force and staff are working to present a list of land bank opportunities for the next meeting. She also spoke to rent supplements for more affordable housing in Owen Sound and Hanover. She highlighted the differences between Owen Sound and Hanover being the availability or demand for rental properties with a higher demand in Owen Sound due to the abundance of amenities such as doctors, and other supportive services. The highest demand is for one-bedroom units in both Hanover and Owen Sound with a greater opportunity in Owen Sound due to a larger land mass.

Land Mapping Opportunities-Hanover and Owen Sound

Randy Scherzer provided an overview of available land in both Hanover and Owen Sound. Mapping provided show land ownership, including provincial, county and town owned, location and size. Mr. Scherzer noted areas that may be suitable for the future development of affordable housing in both municipalities. One of the action items for more affordable housing is establishing a land bank for building affordable housing

units. Staff will be sharing this information with municipal staff and planners in October to review and identify areas for future affordable housing builds. Zoning By-law Amendments or other items can be flagged for future planning so projects can be shovel ready as soon as possible. Acquiring land for future builds is also an option if opportunities with current vacant land is not possible. There will be a further review on what land is suitable for use with local municipal staff/planners.

Housing Statistics Review Hanover and Owen Sound

Randy Scherzer spoke to the housing statistics in both Owen Sound and Hanover. Various demographic data was presented. Information related to key trends will assist in presenting action items for a future report. Trends for Owen Sound and Hanover were reviewed including age demographics, population and household make-up, rentals versus owned homes, average income, education, employment occupation and commuting information.

The Task Force asked for background information as to what is influencing these statistics. Staff will bring that information back to a future meeting.

Mr. Scherzer then spoke to individual municipal profiles for both Owen Sound and Hanover noting permanent populations, households, marital status, income, housing related information-dwelling type, housing stock age, etc. He noted that affordable housing is defined differently in each community depending on average income. Spending 30% or more of before tax income being spent on housing costs is not considered affordable housing.

Randy provided an overview of affordable housing in Grey County and a comparison between Grey County and provincially. Data was received from Statistics Canada, Environics, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), municipal building permits etc. He noted comparisons of rental vacancy rates, dwelling value, construction statistics, building permit information and a trend of more multi-unit builds. He spoke on core housing need as defined by the CMHC. He noted that take-aways include more female one person households with a majority of them being seniors and housing wait list with Owen Sound having the greatest need with Hanover having the second highest need.

Grey County Official Plan and Related Housing Policies

Randy Scherzer provided an overview of the Recolour Grey Official Plan. He specifically highlighted the policies within the Official Plan that relate to housing. The policies support several different housing type developments including more affordable

and attainable housing-specifically rental units. Through policy, mixed housing types are supported as well as incentive programs to encourage several housing types.

He highlighted the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) program which provide incentives for certain types of development within Grey County municipalities including affordable housing, brownfield/gray field property development, downtown improvements etc. He provided an overview of the potential incentives available. He noted that most municipalities have adopted or in the process of adopting their CIPs. He highlighted briefly the Development Charges by-laws as they relate to housing projects and the timelines for implementation associated with those.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Meeting Dates

October 2, 2020 for a potential Hanover for a site visit.

On motion by Warden McQueen and Councillor Milne, the meeting adjourned at 11:45am.

Selwyn Hicks, Chair