



Committee Minutes

Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee

February 25, 2020 – 8:30 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: Brian Davenport, Steacy Den Haan, Sharif Rahman, Ashley Chapman, Councillors Ian Boddy, John Woodbury, and Sue Carleton.

Regrets: Councillors Aakash Desai, Shirley Keaveney and Tom Hutchinson and Warden Paul McQueen, Lisa Taylor.

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture, Scott Taylor, Senior Planner, Steve Furness, Manager Economic Development, Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer, Courtney Miller, Business Enterprise Manager; Jennifer Christie, Program Development Manager; and Heather Morrison, Clerk

Call to Order

The Clerk called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

Election of Chair for 2020

The Clerk called for nominations for Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2020.

ED01-20 Moved by: Councillor Boddy Seconded by: Councillor Woodbury

That Brian Davenport be nominated for Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2020.

Councillor Carleton moved nominations close.

Mr. Davenport accepted the role of Chair for 2020.

Election of Vice Chair for 2020

The Clerk called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee for 2020.

ED02-20 Moved by: Councillor Woodbury Seconded by: Steacy Den Haan

That Sue Carleton be nominated for Vice Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Advisory for 2020.

Councillor Woodbury moved nominations close.

Councillor Carleton accepted the position of Vice Chair for 2020.

Brian Davenport then assumed the Chair.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Reports

Overview of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture

Savanna Myers presented an update on the new Economic Development, Tourism and Culture department. She advised that Steve Furness has been appointed to the Manager of Economic Development and interviews are taking place for the Manager of Grey Roots shortly. Ms. Wingrove noted that there is a lot of synergy between the three portfolios as well as many opportunities available for collaboration including agri-food, seizing opportunities for Grey Roots for various promotions and educational events.

Business Enterprise Centre Year-In -Review

Courtney Miller provided an update on the Business Enterprise Centre (BEC) and the associated training opportunities. Access to the BEC services has increased over the past year along with the visibility in the community, drawing more entrepreneurs through the door to access available resources. The BEC will be moving to the Sydenham Campus shortly along with the Catapult program. She noted that in 2019 there were 647 inquiries, a 31 % increase over 2018 and a total of 24 workshops for the year. The Committee congratulated the BEC on its year end achievements.

Upcoming Events

Farmer's Market Managers and Vendors Event

Ms. Markowitz noted that on April 27 Grey County is hosting a farmer's market managers event with prospective new food businesses. Regulatory changes, new to the business, vendor tables and networking opportunities will be available as well. Farmers markets from Grey, Bruce, Simcoe, Wellington, Dufferin will be attending the event. The last one attracted 60 vendors. Philly noted that climate change is always a topic of conversation at these forums as well as seasonal product enhancements. She also noted that there are more local greenhouse products going out into the markets. Discussion on posting notices on local municipalities websites for further distribution of the information. Facebook is still the spot for sharing events. Philly will send out the information to municipalities for posting closer to the event date.

Young Professionals Network: Special Edition

Savanna provided an update on the Young Professionals Network (YPN). The next event is being held on the Chi-Cheemaun in the Owen Sound harbor. They will be dockside from 6:30pm-7:30pm and then enjoy a private cruise from 7:30pm-9:30pm. There will be another event scheduled for summer and as well as one in the fall. She noted that the events provide a great networking opportunity for young professionals from ages 20-40 and was developed at the request of young professionals in the area as an opportunity to network with others. She also noted that each event has had between 120-150 young professionals consistently. YPN provided an opportunity to engage young people and build networks with one another. The past events have been held in various areas throughout the County.

Other Business

Legislation Change's Update

Scott Taylor provided an update on legislative changes that affect numerous areas within the County. These include:

- Planning Act changes including reduced application timelines, more permissive policies on secondary suites, maximum parking standards for secondary suites, and no longer permitting public appeals on plans of subdivision once decision is made by the governing body
- Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT) - he noted that this was formally the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and although the name has changed the process is primarily back to what was under the OMB. Scott noted that in-person

hearings are still held but mediation is often the first step in the appeals process. He also noted that the LPAT is working through a backlog of appeals.

- Endangered Species Act - Scott noted that there has been a buyout system put in place by the Ministry to bypass restrictions on endangered species in favour of development and the developer will need to pay for the re-establishment of species in other areas.
- Conservation Authorities Act - Scott noted that the Ministry is proposed to scope Conservation Authority role to its core mandate being flooding with all other activities outside of core mandate needing to be completed via agreement with the respective municipality
- Aggregate Resources Act - Scott noted that there are changes related to how and when pit and quarry licenses can go below the water table and how to protect water sources. Municipalities can no longer zone for the depth of the extraction. Scott also stated that the Minister or LPAT can no longer have regard for ongoing road maintenance and there will be no changes to royalties or levies currently for aggregate resources

Questions regarding timelines and staff resources were reviewed specifically related to shortened commenting periods and the amount of changes coming through in a short period of time. Randy Scherzer noted that staff are working with local municipalities to see if there are opportunities for streamlining the process and an application tracking system via Grey County's IT department is being developed.

Kim Wingrove noted that there is an ongoing decline in business investment across the County. The labour force issues and the ability to attract skilled workers continues to be a challenge. Kim noted that the county has recently established an Affordable Housing Task Force to look at housing options and opportunities throughout Grey County. Randy noted that the changes to legislation and policies have been done quickly and concerns are being raised by developers and municipalities related to various aspects of the changes including implementation concerns.

Development Charges By-law Updates

Randy Scherzer provided an update on changes to the Development Charges Act. He provided an overview of what development charges are and what they are used for. He noted that the concept is that growth pays for growth rather than the costs of infrastructure improvements that are related to growth being placed on the backs of the current taxpayers. Some changes to the Development Charges Act came into effect on January 1, 2020. He also stated that there are some required development charges deferrals including rental housing, institutional development, and nonprofit housing development. These developments will get an automatic deferral on development charges until the time of occupancy and would the development charges would be paid

over a period of time as set out in the Development Charges Act. Related changes are also being proposed in the County's Development Charges By-law update coming shortly which would exempt development charges for rental housing and non-profit housing. Randy also noted that there is a freeze on the development charges rate for site plan control or zoning by-law amendments submitted after January 1, 2020 noting that the rate will be frozen at the application date unless there is a lapse of 2 years from the date of application (currently being proposed as the lapse period by the Province).

Randy stated that municipalities can charge interest from the date of application and municipalities may choose the interest rate as the Province has indicated that they don't plan on setting a maximum prescribed interest rate. He also noted that municipalities will no longer be able to collect certain 'soft services' under development charges based on what the Province was proposing. Soft services can be collected through the new Community Benefit Charge (CBC) but the regulations have not been released yet.

Randy noted that some other changes being proposed in the County's Development Charges By-laws will be a proposed deferral policy for housing units meeting Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act as well as developments for affordable housing units. He also stated that there will be redevelopment credits for commercial space that is redeveloped to residential space as an example, as well as exempting development charges for approved Community Improvement Plan (CIP) projects.

Questions arose related to reactive and proactive development charges. Staff noted that they are always committed to a pre-consultation process in order to avoid surprises related to development charges. Randy noted that the Development Charges Act allows for municipalities to work with developers to front end these charges and recoup once the development is complete.

Councillor Woodbury left the meeting.

Sydenham Campus Update and Catapult Update

Jennifer Christie updated the Committee on Catapult noting that there will be an update to all municipalities, chambers and stakeholders at a session on February 27 from 3-5pm at Sydenham Campus. She noted that they are accepting referrals for those interested in the program. Consultants are used to help business develop and launch. Catapult provides services to business owners to scale and launch their businesses. It is a not for profit organization. It utilizes the Fast Lane Program which has been licensed from Innovation Guelph where great success has been seen.

Steve Furness informed Committee that the remaining interior renovations have begun. Several organizations have made use of the Campus over the past few weeks and interest continues to grow.

Georgian College Announcement-Nursing Program

Brian Davenport provided an update on the announcement of a Registered Nursing program at Georgian College in the fall of 2021. It is hoped that this will help keeping locally trained nurses in the area.

Delegation

Four County Market Labour Board-Mobility Report

Gemma Mendez-Smith, Four County Labour Market Planning Board and Paul Knafelc, Community Benchmarks Inc addressed the Committee on the Four County Market Labour Board's mobility report. The purpose of the presentation is to gain a better understanding of Grey County's ability to attract workers and propensity to lose workers, and to examine the role of movers and commuters.

Statistics surrounding the numbers of people that have both moved to Grey County and left Grey County from 2011-2016 were then outlined, including age cohort and educational attainment statistics. The results indicate that Grey County is quite competitive when it comes to attracting residents who are in the labour force. Similar statistics for commuters were then reviewed.

Ms. Mendez-Smith then outlined the next steps which include publishing the reports and data sets for a more targeted approach in order to build a workforce plan. Grey County is starting to see younger employees coming into the County and this could be for a variety of factors including immigration. It was noted that the historic trends will be changing dramatically after the next census is completed. There is not a lot of excess housing yet many employment opportunities in Grey County at the present time. Transportation and housing are the highest opportunities for change to bring people and keep them in the area.

Gather Update

Philly Markowitz provided an update on the "Gather" campaign for 2020 focusing on local food and bringing people together. It will focus on visual authentic rural food experiences and connecting to people and the economy through food. Target segments have been planned to encourage and stimulate the local economy with small locally owned businesses. The campaign will be launched in the spring 2020. The Made in Grey brand will be tied into this promotion. Product development and local engagement with local food owners to develop skills such as pie and pickle making will also be an integral part of the promotion.

Job Fair Update

Steve Furness provided an update on the recent Job Fair in Owen Sound. He noted that there were over 100 businesses in attendance and over 900 job seekers. There is another job fair planned for February 27, 2020 in Hanover.

Roundtable

Ian Boddy spoke to the success of the Auto Show recently held in Toronto as a way to showcase Grey County and the Cobble Beach Concours De Elegance. He noted that this premier show has provided an increased draw to the area over the past 5 years. Councillor Boddy also noted that Diane Austin is the new Chair of the Owen Sound Chamber of Commerce.

Sue Carleton also noted the success of the Auto Show in promoting Grey County.

Kim Wingrove advised the Committee that two task forces have been established by Grey County, namely an Affordable Housing Task Force and a Climate Change Task Force. Each will have its first meeting in the next week and more information will come forward to this committee at the next meeting.

Ashley Chapman noted that there has been a high turnover rate at Chapmans over the past two years and stated that businesses are finding it challenging to find staff. He welcomes the Affordable Housing Task Force and looks forward to its potential solutions to the housing shortage in the area.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair

Adjournment

On a motion of Councillors Carleton and Boddy, the meeting adjourned at 10:27 AM.

Brian Davenport, Chair