

Hanover-Owen Sound Task Force January 15, 2021 – 9:30 am

The Hanover-Owen Sound Task Force met on the above date through electronic participation with the following members in attendance:

Present: Chair Brian O’Leary; Councillors Desai, Milne and McQueen; and Warden Hicks

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, CAO, Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning, Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture, Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Housing, Barb Fedy, Director of Social Services, Scott Taylor, Senior Planner, Stephanie Lacey-Avon, Intermediate Planner, Heather Morrison, Clerk, Brian Tocheri, Hanover CAO and Tim Simmonds, Owen Sound CAO

Guests: Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services, Amy Cann, Manager of Planning and Heritage, Owen Sound and Don Tedford, Director of Development and Chief Building Official, April Marshall, Economic Development Manager, Hanover

Call to Order

Chair O’Leary called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There was none.

Business Arising

Randy Scherzer noted that the Recommendations and Opportunities document related to the January 11, 2021 meeting has not been finalized and an update will be provided at the next Task Force meeting.

Delegations

Grey County Planning

Randy Scherzer provided the Task Force with an overview of planning in Grey County. He spoke to current provincial policies and recent updates within these policies including the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) as well as recent changes to the Planning Act, Development Charges Act, Conservation Authorities Act, Endangered Species Act and the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT). He then highlighted current Grey County overarching planning policy Recolour Grey, the County's Official Plan. Within the Official Plan are policies related to density, housing, growth, and natural environment.

He noted that the County is the current approval authority for plans of subdivisions and condominiums with the exception of Owen Sound, County Official Plan Amendments, Local Official Plans and Local Official Plan Amendments, with some exceptions in Owen Sound, and Part Lot Control By-laws for all municipalities but Owen Sound. Local municipalities have the approval authority for consents, zoning by-law amendments, minor variances, site plan approvals and building permits.

Mr. Scherzer then provided an overview of county-wide development statistics and growth projections from 2016-2020. He noted that outside of Owen Sound, approximately 5,000 residential lots/units have either been approved or drafted approved between 2016-2020. Owen Sound has had 1,200 units approved as of 2019. He provided an overview of county-wide development statistics and growth projections.

Growth projections, as outlined in the preliminary draft Growth Management Study Update (GMS) 2020, indicate a significant increase in population growth from 2016 with the change being immediate and substantial. The rapid growth is connected to closer connectivity to the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The GMS also looks at housing types and what the future population growth reflects relative to housing preferences. The GMS also noted a migration from the GGH as well as a consistent ageing population.

Mr. Scherzer then outlined potential development constraints including a more complex approval process, land and construction price increases, labour pool shortages, building supply shortages, lack of infrastructure to support the development, demand outpacing supply in the housing market and the increase in average home prices across the area.

The opportunities and initiatives related to growth and development were then reviewed. These include a review and streamlining of the current approval processes, adaptations resulting from the pandemic to improve processes, incentive programs such as the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and development charges exemptions. He also noted that an Official Plan Housekeeping update is planned for 2021 which will include the implementation and updating of various upcoming plans and policies. Other policies

and initiatives such as Cycling and Trails Master Plan, Grey Transit Route (GTR) and Connecting Links policies were also highlighted as opportunities for process enhancements.

Mr. Scherzer also noted there is an opportunity to stack incentives such as the CIP and development charges exemptions to assist developers in building affordable housing and provided an example of such.

Questions and comments then followed from Task Force members. Mr. Scherzer noted that migration will continue to be a large influence for growth in the future. The current pandemic has also shown a change in where people choose to live, noting a migration out of urban areas to smaller communities is going to continue, but at this stage it is unknown if that will be a short or long-term trend. It was noted that the expected population growth will continue to put pressure on communities within Grey County.

It was noted that concerns are starting to arise about population density issues. Mr. Scherzer noted that there is a continued need to complete unique communities that creates a sense of home with cultural, heritage, commercial and industrial areas within Grey County. A question arose related to a one level planning services. Mr. Scherzer noted that there continues to be a collaborative effort between the County and local municipalities. Mr. Scherzer provided further details related to the population growth in Hanover and Owen Sound related to the provision of services within these urban areas.

Owen Sound Planning

Tim Simmonds provided the Task Force with an overview of Owen Sound Planning. Amy Cann then spoke about the development team in Owen Sound noting that this team is involved in the planning process from start to finish with an emphasis on planning ahead. Ms. Coulter provided a snapshot of planning numbers including 204 building permits issued in 2020 with a construction value of \$66,430,163, 22,999 visitors to the 1.4 million square metres of recreational space, 33 new business licenses issued and 13 changes of ownership or location for existing businesses.

Ms. Coulter then provided more specific information related to the breakdown of types of construction and the dollar amounts for each sector including commercial, assembly, residential, institutional, and industrial. She noted that nearly \$700,000 was collected in building permit fees in 2020 and 119 new residential units were also constructed.

An overview of various planning and development projects occurring in Owen Sound was then provided. Ms. Cann spoke about the pre-consultation process for residential, commercial, and industrial builds. She also highlighted the upcoming redevelopment of the former Tenneco building.

Ms. Coulter highlighted the on-going Owen Sound Official Plan Review process as well as the newly approved Community Improvement Plan process. She spoke about current opportunities including growth management, the one-window County comment process, urban growth standards and County roads with the City limits noting there is significant growth occurring on 8th Street East and 3rd Avenue East. She also pointed out the overarching need for affordable housing in Owen Sound noting that the median income is \$51,042 with 16% of homeowners and 49% of renters spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs.

Questions and comments from the members then followed. It was noted that Owen Sound is launching a Work from Home marketing strategy to encourage more residents to move to the region. Mr. Scherzer spoke to the rental costs and the vulnerable population. Infrastructure capabilities were then highlighted noting the current capacity is adequate for upcoming development projects within Owen Sound.

Hanover Planning

Don Tedford provided an overview of planning in Hanover. He noted that there was \$36 million in building development in 2020, the highest in 25 years. He highlighted 60 new dwellings in 2020, a significant increase from 2019 which had 23 new dwellings. Hanover has recently completed two Official Plan Amendments with a third currently ongoing. He indicated that building permits were up substantially in 2020 and indicated this trend will likely continue.

There are 11 subdivisions currently ongoing in various stages of development completion within Hanover. Mr. Tedford provided an overview of each subdivision development noting there are 925 lots in total. He noted that infilling development is constant in Hanover due to boundary constraints.

Hanover has started a Growth Study which will support Official Plan Amendment #3 relating to special policy areas. He noted that most of those lands being studied are currently undevelopable. The hope is to bring them up to a more developable state or find alternate lands more suitable for development.

Mr. Tedford then highlighted some current developments including a 128 bed long-term care home, development within the industrial park and four new cannabis retail stores moving forward. He noted the increase in mini-storage unit requirement that often accompany new residential developments. The P and H Centre has also been expanded along with Wightman's Telecommunication.

Future projects highlighted include a regional car dealership who is looking for a larger parcel of land, new church, repurposing of the former John Diefenbaker Secondary School with a potential for redevelopment to affordable housing units, several multi-residential developments. He also noted that the Community Improvement Plan is now

in place with a hope to provide some incentives for these future development opportunities.

Mr. Tedford noted that land mass constraints represents the biggest hurdle for Hanover. It is lacking in large, developable commercial lands. This has resulted in a loss of larger commercial development due to the lack of large parcels of land within Hanover. He also noted the constraints related to hazard lands within the Hanover boundaries.

He also expressed that the County's Official Plan minimum development density requirements for primary settlement areas (25 units per net hectare) is a challenging standard to uphold for each individual development. And that this standard should be viewed as an average requirement for all subdivision development in the Town.

Questions and comments then followed. There is an upcoming public meeting for the Official Plan Amendment related to special policy areas (SPA) that is required under the Planning Act. Brian Tocheri noted the consultants related to the Growth Management Study has completed several areas of review. Hanover has engaged with several stakeholders including ministry officials, local development and adjacent municipalities. Warden Hicks noted difficulties related to boundary area discussions with West Grey.

Other Business

There was none.

Next Meeting Dates

February 19, 2021 9:30 am.

On motion by Councillor Milne and Councillor McQueen the meeting adjourned at 11:34 am.

Brian O'Leary, Chair