



Minutes

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: November 5, 2018
Meeting Time: 9:00 p.m.
Location: Council Chambers
Prepared by: Sarah Merrifield, Administrative Assistant – Clerks & Community Services

A. Call to Order

Steve Simon called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

Also in attendance were EDAC members Andrew Siegwart, Mylisa Henderson, Tony Poole, Andrew Hill, Tim Newton, Councillor Joe Halos, Administrative Assistant Sarah Merrifield, Attainable Housing Committee member Cary Eagleson, Mayor Elect Alar Soever, Council Elect Jim Uram, and Council Elect Rob Sampson.

Steve requested that those in the room briefly introduce themselves prior to proceeding with the business identified on the agenda. Noting the Council Elects and Mayor Elect in the room, Steve offered congratulations on behalf of EDAC. Steve also thanked Councillor Joe Halos for his work on the 2014-2018 term of Council.

Regrets were sent from Mayor John McKean, Deputy Mayor Gail Ardiel, Sarah Fillion, Ken Hale, and Gillian Fairley.

Tim Newton noted that, as quorum was not obtained for Tim Hendry's first EDAC meeting (October 2, 2018), the minutes of November 5, 2018 should reflect Tim Hendry's introduction and welcome by EDAC members.

Interim Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt joined the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

▪ Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Andrew Hill

Seconded by: Tim Newton

THAT the Agenda of November 5, 2018 be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda, Carried.

Previous Minutes

Steve noted that no formal minutes were taken for the August 2018 and October 2018 EDAC meetings due to quorum not being obtained.

Moved by: Andrew Hill

Seconded by: Tim Newton

THAT the Minutes of July 17, 2018 be approved as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

B. Meeting

B.1 Economic Development Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Tim Hendry circulated a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) document to all attendees. To develop the draft document, Tim reviewed previous EDAC minutes where the existing TOR is discussed and researched similar TOR documents used by adjacent municipalities. Tim noted that EDAC had previously discussed whether the number of voting members needs to be updated. With the TOR document being updated, now is a good time to consider whether a structure change is warranted. For example, Tim questioned if EDAC wishes to have voting members of the general public, rather than solely industry sector representation.

Tim Hendry confirmed that the revised TOR document needs Council approval prior to adoption. Further, Tim noted the draft TOR document is not fundamentally different than the existing TOR; for example, it reaffirms that EDAC members function in an advisory capacity to make recommendations to Council. Added to the document is additional language related to the creation of sub-committees for specified and mandated purposes (i.e. Attainable Housing). The group reviewed the Membership / Voting section and noted that the member list outlined in the draft TOR is largely the same as the existing document. Changes include the appointment of two (2) voting members of Council and Mayor as ex officio (where currently there is one (1) voting member of Council and Mayor as ex officio) and inclusion of the Director of Planning and Development Services as a non-voting member. Andrew Hill thanked Tim Hendry for including the Georgian Triangle Development Institute (GTDI) as a voting member as previously the GTDI was not listed.

Steve Simon noted that the term “provide insight” is removed from the draft TOR Purpose Statement. Due to the advisory nature of EDAC, ‘providing insight’ should be added back to the draft TOR document. The group discussed the language in the draft TOR regarding the formation of sub-committees. EDAC is considering the development of a sub-committee for Attainable Housing because the issue has reached a critical point in The Blue Mountains. This is discussed in more detail when EDAC reaches Item B.3 Discussion of Developing an Attainable Housing Sub-Committee.

Tony Poole noted that the draft TOR states there are ten (10) voting members, but the list shows more than 10. Tim Hendry clarified that he needs EDAC members to provide direction on the committee's representation. In his review of the composition of other EDAC boards, Tim noted three group makeups: advisory committees made up solely of business sector, advisory committees made up solely of citizens, or some combination of the two. Tim stressed that EDAC determines who is representing economic development in The Blue Mountains. The group discussed whether youth representation is needed on EDAC and agreed that it is. The TOR will be updated and state representation from the youth sector, rather than specifying a particular organization.

The Town received notice from the representative of the Centre for Business and Economic Development that she is resigning from EDAC. Sarah Merrifield will review the Town's Procedural By-law and consult Town Administration Staff to determine how replacement members are appointed.

Mayor Elect Alar Soever spoke noting that the TOR requires a member of the agricultural community; perhaps the TOR should state that this member cannot also be a member of Council. Steve Simon reiterated the need to ensure the TOR document is generalized to all interest groups. Council Elect Rob Sampson noted that with members of EDAC and the Attainable Housing Corporation (AHC) attending the other's meetings to provide updates, effective 'cross pollination' of the groups is occurring. EDAC will consider whether it is appropriate to have one of its members appointed to the AHC at the next regularly scheduled EDAC meeting.

Tony requested clarification on what constitutes as quorum; his understanding is 50% plus 1 (meaning that, based on 10 voting members, six (6) must attend to obtain quorum). By adding additional members of Council, the number of attendees needed to achieve quorum is increased. The group confirmed that Council will determine which and how many Council Members will be appointed to EDAC, recognizing that having more Council representation on the Committee is preferred. Shawn Everitt confirmed that with the EDAC minutes reflecting an openness to have two (2) members of Council, plus the Mayor as ex officio, Council will consider this option. Based on the direction provided by Council, the TOR will be updated.

The following motion resulted:

Moved by: Andrew Hill

Seconded by: Andrew Siegwart

THAT the Terms of Reference for the Economic Development Advisory Committee be amended based on input received at the November 5, 2018 meeting and presented back to the Economic Development Advisory Committee for adoption, Carried.

Shawn Everitt commented that members of Council, particularly those who are appointed to EDAC, will become the champions of economic development in the Town. With approved minutes being provided to Council upon adoption, Council will be aware of the activities of EDAC and able to lend their support and perspectives to the conversation. This was reiterated by Council Elect Jim Uram.

Councillor Joe Halos spoke, noting that he is pleased The Blue Mountains has a business voice. He encouraged members of EDAC to attend Council and Committee of the Whole meetings to lend their voice to those matters affecting the business community. Having business stakeholders attend Council and Committee of the Whole meetings lends a balanced view of the matter being reviewed. Andrew Hill confirmed that, from a land development perspective, the GTDI already reviews Council and Committee of the Whole meeting agendas for matters of interest. Tony Poole confirmed the same for the Business Improvement Area (BIA).

EDAC and other Committees of Council do function as an extension of Council. EDAC is a mechanism for funneling business concerns to Council with associated recommendations. Andrew Siegwart commented that moving forward, members of Council appointed to EDAC and the Chair of EDAC can present on issues affecting the business community.

B.2 Economic Development Budget - 2019

Tim Hendry and Shawn Everitt provided EDAC with a brief overview of the proposed 2019 Economic Development Budget. Three (3) budget lines are relevant to EDAC: Economic Development Initiatives (economic development programs, i.e. Business in Motion events), Local Business Association Initiatives and the Economic Development Strategy (ED Strategy).

The ED Strategy is a budget item that will be considered as an addition to the budget for 2019. It is anticipated that the 2019 budget will be approved by April 2019. If the ED Strategy is approved by Council, EDAC will be relied on to develop the TOR and proposal that will frame the project.

Shawn Everitt added that the Communications Strategy is a second project that is proposed in the 2019 budget. With the development of these strategies, Staff and consultants will review existing economic development and communications pieces including Red, Hot and Blue and the Sustainable Path document. Shawn cautioned that these documents will require refreshing, given that Red, Hot and Blue was never adopted by Council and the Sustainable Path document is approximately 10 years old.

Steve Simon noted that background work needs to be completed in advance of the ED Strategy. A Migration Study would be useful to account for the impact of baby boomers, and the aging demographic in The Blue Mountains. Mylisa advised that, through the Grey County Environics System, tourism stakeholders have access to this type of information. Tim Hendry agreed that the scope of work for the ED Strategy should include reference to these background studies. Andrew Siegart advised that Economic Development Ontario may have useful resources that can assist in this regard as well. Pending approval of the ED Strategy budget item, Tim Hendry will reach out to neighbouring municipalities for similar TOR as a starting point for developing TBM's ED Strategy.

Tim Newton wondered whether Staff have considered that the volume of need for economic development and communication in The Blue Mountains may require additional Staff resources. Shawn Everitt confirmed that the economic development/communication project sheets being requested in the budget clearly show a requirement for additional staff support. Shawn explained the additions to the base budget will be presented to Senior Management Team (SMT) with the refined list going to Council for their consideration and approval. Having EDAC provide such a strong support of the requested additions to the base budget for economic development is helpful.

B.3 Discussion of Developing an Attainable Housing Sub-Committee

Shawn Everitt advised a Staff Report going to Committee of the Whole December 10 identifies five (5) properties potentially available for attainable housing purposes. The direction from Council will dictate how interest groups like EDAC and AHC proceed. Shawn noted there are different conduits to support attainable housing development in The Blue Mountains, beyond land. Steve Simon questioned whether Development Charges (DC) could incentivize attainable housing; Shawn confirmed Hemson Consulting is currently reviewing the potential DC incentivization related to attainable housing. Steve Simon questioned whether the 10m height restriction will be included in attainable housing discussion; Shawn confirmed that it will.

Andrew Hill suggested that an attainable housing sub-committee's role be to provide direction and recommendations to Staff and stakeholders on how to incentivize attainable housing. Town Staff are currently researching attainable housing, EDAC is exploring the need for a sub-committee, and the AHC is also trying to drive attainable housing in The Blue Mountains. With so many interest groups, it might be more effective to have them come together and work in conjunction. Mayor Elect Alar Soever and Andrew Hill reiterated this need to work together. Jim Uram questioned whether any thought has been given to expanding transportation services; as attainable housing is developed, the individuals utilizing the attainable housing resources may also have a need for transportation services. It is noted that transportation does need to be explored further.

Shawn Everitt reminded the group that over the last several months, attainable housing has become an important priority for stakeholders, the Town and the community. By having EDAC members attend the AHC meetings and vice-versa, there has been a level of informed communication between interest groups. He reiterated that the December 10 Staff Report will allow Council to provide clear direction to the interest groups.

To this point, Council may appoint a Committee with a TOR that has a clearly defined start/end point and mandate. AHC member Cary Eagleson advised EDAC that AHC has identified rental housing as one of the highest priorities; AHC is developing a business plan to this end. Understanding that direction is coming out of the report to Council, perhaps it is most effective for members of EDAC to join AHC. It is decided that one or two EDAC members will attend the November 14, 2018 meeting of the AHC. Andrew Siegwart advised he already attends AHC meetings and Andrew Hill confirmed GTDI would be open to attending in the future.

Tim Newton added that the representatives on EDAC have access to resources and research to assist the attainable housing initiative. He questioned whether it is possible for AHC to provide approval for an additional member at the November 14 AHC meeting. Cary noted that the member who attends from EDAC should be a voting member; this will be explored more fully at the November 14 AHC meeting. It was noted that even if the AHC by-laws do not allow for the immediate appointment of an additional AHC member from EDAC, having a representative from EDAC attend the AHC meetings is needed.

It is important to receive Council direction before implementing changes to the makeup of committees or fully committing to a given strategy. The resolution confirming Council's direction will be available after the December 17 Council meeting. It may be determined that an entirely separate committee made up of membership from Town staff including planning staff, EDAC and AHC is necessary. Steve Simon commented that the idea of creating a separate committee would be to fast-track attainable housing initiatives and solely focus on the strategies required to achieve this. Andrew Hill added that in order to fast-track, criteria needs to be established. Members of EDAC meeting with AHC will be able to establish the criteria for moving forward, rather than bringing in a separate group. Council Elect Jim Uram reminded EDAC that fast-tracking is usually achieved when land is already zoned, serviced, etc. to meet the required use. In this case, the private sector might be the best resource available. Tony added the concern he hears is the development process is too time-intensive with too many interest holders. Perhaps a 'concierge' approach (being a focus point for PPPs, developers, builders to make contact with interest groups) to planning matters would be useful. Shawn refocused the discussion to confirm that from a Town perspective, the biggest hurdle to attainable housing is NIMBYism; all developments face scrutiny and the biggest delay is often the public consultation involved. When a development includes an attainable housing component, the Town needs the support of Council, AHC, EDAC, and other interest groups. In the public consultation sessions, vocal supporters of attainable housing should be present.

Andrew Hill left the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

Shawn Everitt confirmed that the December 10 report includes properties with a high-level overview of the zoning and property details. Council Elect Jim Uram voiced his concern over instigating an Official Plan Amendment (OPA). Shawn noted that an OPA is likely necessary at some point. The group ended the discussion by reaffirming that Council must drive the strategy and provide the direction to stakeholders, Town Staff, committees and AHC. Mylisa added that The Blue Mountains (TBM) is a 'community within a community'; part of the research process of supporting attainable housing will be to consider it on a more regional scale. Attainable housing efforts in adjacent municipalities must be reviewed to ensure the appropriate strategies are implemented in TBM.

C. Upcoming Meeting Dates

The next meeting date will take place December 12, 2018 at 8:30 am. Council Chambers at Town Hall.

D. Adjournment

Steve Simon adjourned the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting at 10:58 a.m.