
2019 Warden's Forum

Thursday, April 4, 2019, 4:05 p.m.
Lion's Den, P & H Centre, Hanover

Present: Warden Selwyn Hicks; Mayor Scott Mackey, Paul McQueen, Christine Robinson, Barb Clumpus, Ian Boddy, Alar Soever, Sue Paterson; Deputy Mayors Odette Bartnicki, Brian Milne, Sue Carleton, Tom Hutchinson, Shirley Keaveney, Aakesh Desai; Councillors Diane Rae, Rebecca Hergert, Rob Martin, Stephanie Stewart, Elizabeth Thompson, Paul Allen, Dane Nielson, Tom Allwood, Ross Kentner, Paul Vickers, Harley Greenfield, Richard Thomas, John Tamming, Carol Barfoot, Barbara Dobreen, Michael Sherson, Martin Shipston, Rob Potter, Andrea Matrosovs, Jim Uram, Harold Fleet, Brandon Koebel, Warren Dickert, Steve Fitzsimmons; staff members Kerri Mighton, Cathy Seeney, Brent Glasier, Patty Sinnamon, Rob Adams, Rob Armstrong, Wayne Ritchie, Tim Nicholls Harrison, Wendi Hunter, Dave Milliner, Glenn Walker, April Marshall, Joanne Hyde, Shawn Everitt, Rick Winters, Ruth Prince, Reg Russwurm, Kim Wingrove, Randy Scherzer, Kevin McNab, Grant McLevy, Kevin Weppler, Heather Morrison, Barb Fedy, Michael Letourneau, Rob Hatten and Penny Colton – Recording Secretary

Others: Mark Conway, N.Barry Lyon Consulting.

Opening Remarks

Warden Hicks welcomed everyone to the 2019 Warden's Forum and introduced each of the mayors who then introduced councillors and staff from their municipality. Each Mayor also provided topics of particular interest to their municipality.

West Grey – Mayor Christine Robinson identified the following:

- West Grey is infrastructure management focused, identifying what to plan and budget and where to invest.
- Studies on bridges and structures have been completed; strategic planning will begin to complete the process.
- Success in economic development includes the upcoming grand opening of BC Instruments, partnership with the Durham Art Gallery to refurbish building on main street.

- The community is poised for residential growth including an affordable housing project, new residential and industrial developments.
- Residents are looking for change and council is working hard to provide results.

Blue Mountains – Mayor Alar Soever identified the following:

- The municipality is still experiencing substantial new developments.
- Growth has developed some hardships including high taxes due to the assessment values of the residential developments.
- Development does require change and increase in services provided, which is a cost to the municipality.

Southgate – Deputy Mayor Brian Milne identified the following:

- Development of 100 new houses each year for the next 8 years.
- Ribfest will be held weekend of April 6th and Maplefest is April 13th.

Owen Sound – Mayor Ian Boddy identified the following:

- Excited to have Bruce Power expanding and rebuilding within the City.
- Manufacturing is changing to include less staff and more mechanical, but it still brings growth.
- 1500-1800 new homes to be built, and continue to work for more growth.
- Would suggest municipalities work together to cover areas of repetition; this will provide costs savings for everyone.

Meaford – Mayor Barb Clumpus identified the following:

- Would like to have further discussion on partnership with Blue Mountains to jointly build a recreation centre.
- Meaford has continued growth in 2019; but also looking for diversified housing for families and seniors.
- New school and library will be built.
- Senior's campuses for change in life and lifestyles.
- Long Term Care facilities in the community have provided support. But still require a collaborative approach between County and private operators to ensure we have sufficient long term care spaces for our residents.
- County should take the lead on community health and safety plans for the lower tiers.
- Meaford is following the lead of the County in Tourism and Economic Development and continue to be very supportive.

Hanover – Mayor Sue Paterson identified the following:

- Hanover is the second largest urban area in Grey and one of smallest communities. Concerns centre around growth - 51 acres remaining left to be developed.
- Hanover is the second largest employment provider in the County.
- Continue to work with the County Official Plan and Provincial Policy. Future growth must be accommodated outside the current town boundaries.
- More focus on affordable housing, skilled labour, and jobs; all three are required to have a healthy community.

Grey Highlands – Mayor Paul McQueen identified the following:

- New development in the community includes a new Foodland opening December 5th, and a new Tim Hortons to be built.
- The municipality has endorsed a community improvement plan and has hired an economic development staff person.
- Stonebrook Developments building 79 new homes, Devonliegh Homes have 315 lots, and a rebuild of Beavercrest School is scheduled.
- Grey Road 13 and Grey Road 40 are slated to be resurfaced this construction season.
- An RFP for a new water tower in Markdale will be out soon.
- Mennonite community continues to grow.
- Official plan is close to completion and approval.
- OPP have invested in scales to check for heavy loads during the half load season.

Georgian Bluffs – Deputy Mayor Sue Carleton identified the following:

- Wiarton Keppel international airport announced scheduled passenger flights into Toronto, starting May 24th.
- Working on strategic plan for community.

Chatsworth – Mayor Scott Mackey identified the following:

- Plans have begun to build a new recreation facility.
- Budget approved yesterday.
- Growth is steady, current developments are nearing completion and new ones are commencing

Regional Transportation

Mrs. Wingrove introduced Grey County staff in attendance and provided a presentation on regional transportation. She indicated there is still a lot of work ahead to solve this regional issue. She asked the group to decide within their municipalities, is this a problem that you want to engage in and are you willing to sit at a table to produce a coordinated program?

Kim reviewed the information received from the Ministry of Transportation to provide a service through the County. Kim indicated a coordinated service will be required to create point to point services to connect to backbone highway routes.

Technology will help coordinate rides, but more operators need to take advantage of the application.

Comments and questions: Owen Sound Councillor John Taming indicated he is not in favour of government assistance to transport people.

Blue Mountains Deputy Mayor Odette Bartnicki suggested transportation will assist the vulnerable and give them opportunity to attend work which will remove them from social assistance. Transportation affects many facets of life in the County.

Dinner Break

Attainable/Affordable Housing

Randy Scherzer introduced Mark Conway of N. Barry Lyons Consulting. Mark provided a brief overview of his work within and outside of Grey County.

Mark identified that Grey fits in the "missing middle" component of the market; rapid price growth in housing markets have made it increasingly challenging for moderate income households to find housing.

This discourages young from establishing roots in the area; therefore, tax base weakens, there will be health and family impacts associated with insecure housing and growth stagnates.

Mark reviewed a 2018 workforce housing study provided by N. Barry Lyon Consulting . Our market is being driven by resort/retirement market, not the general workforce. There is a need to gear housing to that first time job seeker who wants to stay in the community; they need quality housing in order to stay.

Key challenges include: regional pricing, costs of delivering affordability, rental housing financing, nature of employment, transportation issues and nimbyism.

What can be done: work through land use policies, encourage partnerships, and new CMHC financing/partnerships.

Roundtable

Southgate – Is there potential for room rentals in the area on an Air B&B model?

Southgate – partnering young people with seniors living at home, assist with living arrangements and everyone benefits.

Kim – Incentivizing the workforce instead of the developers, can you explain further?

Mark provided an example of how the Westin Hotel in The Blue Mountains once a year actively searches for housing to accommodate staff. A better solution would be to build an apartment building and guarantee housing for their staff.

Southgate – what is the vision in 15-20 years for the people purchasing in the \$300K market. Mark - Housing will continue to get more expensive. Immigration will be a huge influence on the market.

Meaford – Suggested smaller communities in the area could provide locations for affordable housing, but servicing is an issue to these locations.

Grey Highlands – Zoning constraints on residential lots to make tiny home “villages”.

Mark - there are ways around it, but it would be better to have a 50 year lease on a small parcel of land. Work is still required to be a feasible option.

Southgate – Residential development charges are per unit and commercial is per square footage. Would like to change residential charges to a square footage. Mark, the calculation to get to this is very complicated. Randy indicated Grey County initially charged residential on square footage (i.e. size of the unit), but it was recommended that we should be charging based on type of residential unit instead based on previous OMB/LPAT decisions.

Owen Sound – Inclusionary zoning is a land economic question. Mark explained inclusionary zoning affects developers profit margin; therefore it's best to stagger in over a three year period.

Blue Mountains – what is the rationale for not charging development charges on the square footage? Randy Scherzer and Michael Letourneau will provide further information on this.

Blue Mountains – Is there an option to provide a secondary unit grant from both the municipality and the County to offer an incentive (i.e. stack grants/programs from both County and municipality). Randy Scherzer will follow up and provide more information. Grey County is not seeing a huge uptake on secondary unit grant programs, may be due to lack of awareness or marketing.

Southgate – Suggested a better approach would be to use the frontage of a property for development charge calculation. Agrees that more affordable housing in hamlet areas is required; but, we need to increase services.

Grey Highlands – Young people retention, we need to create housing they can afford. Suggest putting policies in place to make it happen, provide incentives. Need to create an economy to keep young people in the area.

Chatsworth - need the economic development to provide jobs with a living wage; we need infrastructure.

Grey Highlands – We need to realize the area does not need one large company to set up and provide opportunities. Success can be seen from many small companies that will continue to grow, if supported. Mennonite community creates shops and employment for their family and others in the community.

Selwyn thanked everyone who attended and to staff for their assistance.

Tour of the P & H Centre was provided for those interested.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned 7:16 p.m.

Attachments:

[Community Transportation Update April 2019](#)

[2019 Affordable Attainable Workforce](#)