

**PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Susan MacLeod
Councillor Peter Waterman
John Winters (7:25)
Bev Davison
Heather Kelly
Richard Smith
Robert Ross
Mike MacLeod, Planner

Regrets: Councillor Brian Fralic
Don Kimball
Jessica Van Dyne Evans

1. CALL TO ORDER -

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

It was **MOVED** by **Richard Smith** and **SECONDED** by **Bev Davison** that the Agenda be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 7, 2014

It was **MOVED** by **Robert Ross** and **SECONDED** by **Richard Smith** that the Minutes of May 7, 2014 be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

4. MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY & LAND USE BYLAW – REVISIONS?

Mike MacLeod initiated discussion respecting the potential for conducting a formal review of the Region's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. Comments were made by several members of the PAC last spring respecting existing policy in the planning documents and whether it was reflective of the current challenges and opportunities in Queens County, particularly from an economic standpoint. Mike noted that concern had been expressed in relation to the the number of amendment requests and development agreement applications that have been submitted in the last 6 months. Some felt that this was an indication that current policy did not meet todays development requirements. Mike did not feel that this was entirely the case, as policy allowed for consideration of most of the

development applications through an amendment process or development agreement process. Current policy allows for a degree of flexibility in permitted uses, while at the same time maintaining some control over additional land uses.

Mike advised that a formal review of the MPS and LUB is a significant undertaking and will require some thought and planning prior to initiating. Likely looking at a year to a year and a half to complete.

Bev Davison enquired if the Region was required to conduct a review on the planning documents. Mike advised that the Municipal Government Act does not set out a specific time frame within which a municipality must review its planning documents; however, policy in the Region's MPS sets out that planning documents are to be reviewed at least every eight years, but can be reviewed earlier if needs dictate.

Robert Ross enquired as to the vision of the Region? Significant change has occurred in the Municipality over the last few years and in order to draft appropriate land use policy, Council has to have vision of where it wants to be in the future. From that Council can establish goals and objectives as to how to fulfill this vision. A few examples of things that need to be looked at are:

- ❖ economic development in light of the Bowater closure;
- ❖ commercial development in downtown Liverpool;
- ❖ aging population;
- ❖ climate change; and
- ❖ attracting new people to our area.

Robert felt that, under existing policy, commercial development in the Region was not being driven by the Municipality, but by individual property owners. This has resulted in sporadic commercial development throughout the rural areas. He feels that commercial development ought to be concentrated in core areas. In order to address these issues, stronger policy has to be incorporated into the planning documents. Robert feels that a formal review is justified.

John Winters noted that much discussion has taken place respecting new development in the Liverpool area, but greater attention needs to be given to new development, particularly commercial, in the rural areas of Queens. He questioned what the tipping point was respecting new commercial development in the primarily residential rural areas. John acknowledged that planning amendments and development agreements require a public hearing process to give the public an opportunity to comment on a proposed development, but many people are reluctant to voice their opinions / concerns in such formats.

Heather Kelly agreed with John and noted that many people are oblivious of what is going on around them until after the process has been completed.

Susan MacLeod enquired if the development agreement to allow for automobile sales in Moose Harbour has caused any issues in the area. John Winters noted that he was not aware of any, but felt that we have to define that line between protection of existing land uses and allowing for expansion of new commercial development into the rural areas.

Robert Ross noted that a lot of things have changed since the MPS and LUB were adopted and that there was a different mindset respecting new development. We want to avoid reactionary decision making processes.

Susan MacLeod enquired as to how we proceed from here? Mike MacLeod advised that if it was the wish of PAC to enter into a formal planning document review process, then a recommendation reflecting such should be brought forward to Council. Mike suggested that prior to making a recommendation, PAC could work on identifying and prioritizing issues with current policy to establish a rationale for the review.

Bev Davison noted that a lot of work has been done over the last couple of years, particularly in the area of economic development, which could provide great assistance in development new policy; ie. Queens Attraction Strategy. No need to reinvent the wheel.

Robert Ross reiterated the need to establish a vision that was fully supported by Council. An action strategy is necessary in establishing a vision.

John Winters questioned whether planning documents are too restrictive to development. Are they meant to restrict development or guide it?

Mike MacLeod advised that it is the intention of policy in the MPS to establish a guide to new development; however, this goes back to the earlier comment respecting new development versus existing land uses. Policy should strive to find an acceptable balance between the two.

Robert Ross suggested that perhaps Susan, as Chair of PAC, could give a heads up to Council that it is the intention of PAC to review and prioritize potential issues with existing policy.

Bev Davison suggested that a place to start could be to coordinate with the Region's Economic Development Department in bringing planning policy in line with current goals of the EDD. A lot of work has already been done. Invite representatives of EDD to next meeting to give a presentation. As well, perhaps someone from the South Queens Chambre of Commerce. Mike will try to arrange a presentation for the next meeting.

Peter Waterman felt that we have to rethink what types of development may occur in the future. Youth involvement is critical to this process, as they are the developers of the future. Robert Ross agreed that the youth are our future, and their involvement in the planning process is very important. In order to facilitate their participation, they need to feel a "sence of place" in the process.

Susan MacLeod felt that it was critical that we take an "open for business" approach to our policy.

Bev Davison felt that in conducting a review of current policy, we need to be broad and openminded in our process.

Robert Ross felt that policy should be established that nurtures the types of businesses we want to see here; to guide development.

John Winters felt that while he was very much in support of new development, a "development at all costs" approach must be avoided.

5. OTHER -

5.1 PAC MEMBERSHIP –

Robert Ross enquired as to the status of the membership on PAC, noting that the term for several of our members expires on October 31, 2014. Mike Macleod advised that the term of office for Heather Kelly (District 2), John Winters (District 3), Bev Davison (District 4) and Jessica Van Dyne Evans (District 6) were up this year.

Heather Kelly and John Winters indicated that they would like to stay on for another term.

Bev Davison indicated that he had enjoyed his time on PAC, but that due to a number of other commitments, he would not reoffer for another term. Mike MacLeod advised that he would contact Jessica to get her thoughts. Mike will have this item on the agenda for the October meeting.

6. NEXT MEETING -

The next meeting is scheduled for October 1, 2014.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Councillor Susan MacLeod, Chair

Date