Minutes - The Blue Mountains Special Council Meeting

MEETING DATE: **December 22, 2011**

LOCATION: **Town Hall, Council Chambers**

PREPARED BY: **Krista Royal, Deputy Clerk**

A. Call to Order

- Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order with all members in attendance save Councillor Martin and Councillor Halos, absent due to previous commitments.

- Also in attendance was CAO Troy Speck, Director of Engineering & Public Works Reg Russwurm, Director of Planning and Building David Finbow, Senior Policy Planner Cindy Welsh, and Planner I, Bryan Pearce.

- Council then paused for a moment of Personal Prayer or Reflection.

- Approval of Agenda:

  Moved by: R.J. Gamble Seconded by: John McKean

  THAT the Agenda of December 22, 2011 be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

- No member declared a pecuniary interest with any matter as listed on the Agenda.

B. Deputations/Presentations/Public Meetings

Mayor Anderson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ellen thanked the Steering Committee consisting of R. B. Waind, Chair, John Corrigan, Duncan McKinlay, Scott Taylor and David Finbow, along with Project Manager, Cindy Welsh, for their continued commitment on compiling documentation in moving forward with the review stage of our Official Plan.

David Finbow, Director of Planning and Building introduced Mark Stone and Nick McDonald from Meridian Planning Consultants.

David then spoke noting the purpose of this meeting is to present The Blue Mountains Five Year Official Plan review Draft Discussion and Directions Paper, to seek preliminary comments from Council with respect to the paper and to seek authorization from Council to proceed to a Public Open House in order to receive public input and comments.

David noted the Town's Official Plan must capture our shared vision for the future and establish land use policies that will allow the Town to manage growth in a way that reflects our local community character.

David further noted the guiding principles in the paper will lay the foundation for our Official Plan that will provide policy direction for a complete and healthy community and the basis for making planning decisions that are consistent with our local community character.

David referenced Section 4.4 in the paper informing Council that it is critical to pay special attention to the 13 Guiding Principles. David stressed to Council that the current paper provided is not the final document and is currently in draft form.

David then turned the meeting over to Mark Stone from Meridian Planning Consultants.

B.1 Mark Stone, Meridian Planning Consultants
Re: Official Plan – Five Year Review

Mayor Anderson welcomed Mark Stone and thanked him for attending the Council meeting.

Mark thanked Council for the opportunity to present the draft Official Plan. Mark further thanked the Steering Committee and commended the Committee for their commitment and interest in assisting them to understand the vision and issues facing The Blue Mountains.

Mark advised the intent for tonight's presentation is to provide a high level overview of the Draft Discussion and Directions Paper. Mark asked if Council would consider reviewing the entire presentation then have a discussion session after the review. Council concurred to allow Mark to review the presentation in its entirety with follow-up by questions from Council.

Mark advised that it is important for Council to know that the Draft Discussion and Directions Paper was prepared to provide context, stimulate discussion and allow for comment by Council, the public and agencies.

Councillor Halos joined the meeting at 6:40 pm.

Councillor Ardiel had to be excused from the meeting at 7:10 pm due to a family commitment.

Deputy Mayor Duncan McKinlay addressed Slide 25 of the presentation regarding Natural Heritage and questioned if adjacent land width is up to date.

Mark replied noting that after the presentation was prepared, Staff had met with the Province and have been advised to use the updated Provincial standards.

Mark referred to the upcoming public session and noted Meridian and Town Staff will be present to provide information, explanation and clarification for any discrepancies or questions from the public.

Duncan questioned specialty crop land, if trees are planted, would the owner require an Environmental Assessment (EA). Mark answered by stating there would be no need to require a study, only on new development. Nick McDonald confirmed that an EA is required where there is a Planning Act approval.

Duncan questioned prime agricultural areas designated agricultural lands and must consider Classes 4 & 7 soil areas. Duncan noted that he views that as sterilization of the rural area.

Councillor McKean questioned 5 to 10 acres with rock outcroppings. Nick noted existing prime agricultural land is already established by the County of Grey.

Councillor Halos then questioned Proposed Direction #8, referencing page 40 and 41 of the Paper, in particular Highway Commercial uses. He questioned what defines large commercial and what it is not and what the parameters would be, noting more clarification is needed in this area. Mark then replied there is a need for clarification as there are contradictions in the current Official Plan on permitted uses and standards.

Joe then questioned Proposed Direction #11, referencing page 48, and the concern of Thornbury and Clarksburg having only one designation to be low density.
Mark replied that the current OP proposes commercial, industrial and residential for Thornbury and Clarksburg.

Mayor Anderson then asked if Mark could touch briefly on the process as Councillor Halos was absent at the beginning of the meeting. Mark then reviewed the process being that this is a draft document with draft proposals that will be presented at the Open House with Council direction to go to the public and then report back on recommendations with final direction by spring.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay noted the direction would come from community participation and interests of others.

Councillor Gamble then questioned Guiding Principle #8, obtaining affordable housing and further questioned what the plan is on this particular issue. Mark replied that there is no specific policy or direction at this time.

Councillor McKean questioned if the Cultural Heritage Landscape Assessment has been given consideration and whether it has been incorporated in the Official Plan Review. David Finbow then spoke asking Cindy Welsh is aware of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Assessment is being considered. Cindy then replying Section 8.6 references cultural heritage landscape assessment.
Mayor Anderson questioned housing and referenced page 45 with respect to high density noting the number is very high and asked if a lower number could be suggested target. Mark then replied at this point implementation may be a challenge, with year 2026 to reach 46% as medium to high density.

David noted that we are seeking input from the public, to have consistency with the community character. Duncan suggested parallels be provided to the public as an example of what this percentage would mean and also what it would look like.

Nick McDonald then replied noting many municipalities are struggling, even in high urban areas, to reach 36% maximum unit sizes.

Duncan referred to Bill 140 to allow garden suites and basement apartments, but still look like large housing units from the outside, having 2 to 3 unit capacity inside, but noted concern with development of buildings that are square boxes with a capacity of 5 units. Nick then replied that Duncan has raised an interesting point.

David Finbow asked what low, medium and high density might mean to our residents and advised that it would mean different things to different people. David then reflected on a recent OP and Zoning By-law amendment wherein some residents suggested 15 units/hec with approximately 40% open space was high density. Duncan suggested illustrating to residents what density would be with area comparables such as the residential development in Collingwood off of 6th Street.

Council thanked the Consultants for attending the meeting.

C. Motions and Staff Reports

C.1 Official Plan Five-year Review – Discussion and Directions Paper, PL.11.145

David Finbow spoke noting Staff are seeking direction from Council on the day and time to hold the Public Open House.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay suggested holding the Open House on Friday January 27th from 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm to ensure weekend residents have an opportunity to attend. David advised that notification must be a minimum of 21 days notice prior to holding an Open House.

Councillor Halos suggested Saturday may not be a good day as residents may be skiing. R.B. Waind further suggested that Friday night would not be an appropriate time as weekend residents will be dealing with traffic issues and may not get to the meeting on time.

Mayor Anderson agreed with R.B. and Joe, suggesting holding Open House on Saturday 4 pm-7pm. David expressed concern with Saturday afternoon Public Information Session. Duncan asked Council to allow the President of the Ratepayers Association, Michael Seguin to provide his input. Michael agreed that Friday night is not a good day for the session and Saturday afternoon to be the better option of the two.

Council concurred the best option to have the Open House would be a Saturday afternoon and have Staff coordinate advertising and scheduling of the Open House on the 28th of January.

Cindy Welsh advised with the 21 day policy requirement Staff may be pressed to have notice circulated in the newspapers on time. David advised that notification can be met.

Council discussed the 28th of January from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Duncan then suggested holding the Open House later to accommodate residents that may be working during the day. Council agreed from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm for the Public Information Centre for the Official Plan Review.

Moved by: John McKean Seconded by: R. J. Gamble

THAT Council does hereby receive Planning Staff Report PL.11.145, Official Plan Five-year Review-Discussion and Directions Paper for information purposes; and

THAT Council does hereby receive Town of The Blue Mountains DRAFT Discussion and Directions Paper for information purposes; and

THAT Council direct staff to hold Public Meeting/Open House #1 – Policy Options and Recommendations; and

THAT Council authorize staff to proceed to a Public Open House to be held on January 28, 2012 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., **CARRIED**.

D. Adjournment

Moved by: John McKean Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT this Council does now adjourn at 7:45 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

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Ellen Anderson, Mayor Krista Royal, Deputy Clerk