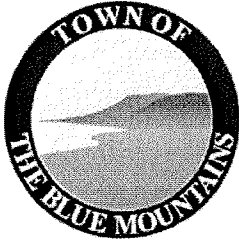


D.1

STAFF REPORT: BUILDING & BY-LAW DEPARTMENT



REPORT TO: Council
MEETING DATE: June 11, 2007
REPORT NO.: SRB.07.22
SUBJECT: Administrative Office Space Needs
PREPARED BY: David Finbow, Director, Building & By-law

A. Recommendations

THAT COUNCIL receive Staff Report SRB.07.22 for information purposes and confirms, directs or receives as follows:

1. That this Council hereby receives the 2007 Town Hall Administrative Office Space Needs Analysis.
2. That this Council hereby confirms that an expanded or new Town Hall is to be designed to address the municipality's projected administrative office space needs for the next 15 years.
3. That this Council hereby confirms that the Thornbury Town Hall site, including the recently acquired lands at Bridge Street East and Mill Street, is the desired location for The Blue Mountains Town Hall.
4. That this Council hereby directs staff to schedule a minimum of two public open houses, one on a week night and one on a Saturday morning, for the purposes of receiving public input related to an expanded or new Town Hall with such open houses including presentations related to:
 - i. Need (present situation, functionality of building and building systems and related operational costs, Town Administrative Office Space Analysis, etc.)
 - ii. Thornbury Town Hall Site Studies (block diagrams/site plans, floor plans, sketches, etc.)
 - iii. Financials/Funding

With it being noted that the primary intent of these sessions is to receive input from the public as to their vision of the design and use of the Thornbury Town Hall site and building(s).

5. That this Council hereby directs that the public open houses be framed on the basis that all Town Administrative Office Space and Council Meeting Space is to be within a single building.
6. That this Council hereby directs that the public open houses be framed on the basis of an expanded or new Town Hall having regard to the "Sense of Place" and "Core Area Design Plan" documents.
7. That this Council hereby directs that the public open houses be framed on the basis of an expanded or new Town Hall design and construction will be in accordance with Sustainable Community Development principles and be LEED Certified (with it being noted that same will result in additional construction costs of approximately 10% with same being recoverable by way of diminished operating costs over an approximate 10 year period).
8. That this Council hereby directs that the public open houses be framed on the basis of a Town Hall design protecting and if possible, enhancing the Special Events Plaza and Garden recently created at the bridge/dam and, incorporate internal public meeting and gallery space to encourage public interest and/or involvement.
9. That this Council hereby directs that Town Staff seek input at the public open houses as to the Town Hall design taking into consideration potential partnerships such as street related commercial space and professional offices.
10. That this Council hereby directs that Town Staff further develop the financing models associated with this Report and be presented at the public open houses with same including, but not limited to, the following options:
 - a. Sale of surplus Town owned land;
 - b. Reserves (such as the Working Capital Reserve, Sewer & Water Reserve, Building Permit Fee Reserve, etc.);
 - c. User fees;
 - d. Current and future taxation; and,
 - e. Rental income from potential tenants, if applicable.

And further that the financing models take into consideration the land acquisition costs for the recently acquired lands at Bridge Street East and Mill Street.

And further that this Council acknowledge that the potential for proposed commercial uses within an expanded or new Town Hall facility would only proceed on the basis of a favourable market analysis opinion and related Business Plan and that the current Town Hall building re-use for commercial purposes is restricted by the Town's lease for the land with the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC).

11. That this Council hereby directs that Town Staff seek input from the public as to potential public uses for the existing Town Hall (such as OPP Office, Recreation Uses, Medical Clinic, etc.) should it be determined that it will not be utilized in the future for Town administrative office purposes and with it being noted that the Town's lease with Ontario Realty Corporation may regulate and/or restrict the use of the building.
12. That this Council hereby authorizes Town Staff to retain The Ventin Group Architects to attend and present at the public input sessions and provide a related presentation to Council at an upset limit of \$3,000.00.

B. Background

The purpose of this Staff Report is to provide Council with background information related to Town administrative office space needs, options previously explored, financial/funding scenarios reviewed and options with respect to moving forward with the provision of additional administrative office and meeting space.

EXISTING TOWN HALL

The existing Town Hall was constructed in 1984 and was originally occupied by the Town of Thornbury, Thornbury PUC and the Thornbury-Meaford Police. Upon amalgamation in 1998, the building was altered to accommodate staff of the new municipality and continued to house the Police and PUC. At that time the building was occupied by approximately 24 persons. Over the next few years, additional staff was added and, in response, the Town did the following:

- 2004 - Acquired a 950 square foot office complex (+/- \$72,000);
- 2005- Altered approximately 1,000 square feet of space at the lower level (+/- \$70,000);
- 2006 – Minor alterations within the Financial Services Department (\$6,000); and,
- 2007 – Conversion of the Council Chamber (+/- \$10,000).

Town Hall and the associated office complex currently house 45 employees and, upon the hiring of staff approved via the 2007 budget, will be occupied by 50 employees. In many instances work spaces are inadequate; there is a lack of meeting and public space; staff is not currently housed in a fashion that is conducive to communication within and across work groups; and, Council no longer meets at Town Hall.

SPACE NEEDS ANALYSIS NO. 1

In December 2003 the Town circulated an RFP for a "Space Needs Analysis" and "Building Study". The Analysis was to consider projected growth over a 5 – 10 year period and the "Building Study" was to provide an idea as to how the Town could best accommodate additional office space. The successful firm was The Ventin Group who were subsequently requested by Council to frame their review on the basis of a single administrative office at the Thornbury Town Hall site.

The Ventin Report to Council in June 2004 concluded that administrative offices of approximately 16,765 square feet were required to accommodate existing and future growth (5 – 10 years). The estimated cost associated with the addition and interior and façade alterations at that time was in the magnitude of \$2.4 million.

An important matter to note with respect to this work, and related costing, is that no detailed work was completed as it related to interim or transitional office space plans.

SPACE NEEDS ANALYSIS NO. 2

In late 2005 Town Staff prepared an updated space needs analysis for Council's consideration. This analysis was also based on staffing projections for a 10 year period and concluded that a building of approximately 16,500 square feet was required. Prior to advancing to a schematic design, Town Staff requested that Council provide direction with respect to the development of same. Council confirmed that the current Thornbury Town Hall site was the preferred location.

The schematic design reflecting an addition and extensive alterations was presented to Council in mid-2006. The estimated cost of this work was in the magnitude of \$3 million. Once again, detailed interim or transitional office plans were not explored.

SPACE NEEDS ANALYSIS NO. 3

In June 2007 Town Staff reviewed and updated the previous Space Needs Analysis work completed. This review and updating was based on staffing projections for a 15 year period and concluded that a building of approximately 18,500 square feet was required for Town Administrative Office purposes. The growth of the project from +/- 16,500 square feet is primarily attributable to additional public space and timeframe (2015 versus +/-2020).

SITE OPTIONS

With respect to ownership of the Thornbury Town Hall site, approximately 50% of the lands are leased from the Ontario Realty Corporation and the balance owned by the Town. This lease expires in 2011 however the Town has been advised that a renewal is probable with somewhat similar terms. Further, the Town has been advised that ORC are not opposed to an extended building footprint into the leased lands. ORC have been very clear that they are not interested in deeming these lands as surplus.

The other site that previous Council's considered is the Town's 10 acre site on Grey Road #19 in Craigleith. This site is centrally located within the municipality, in close proximity to Highway #26 and fronts full municipal services.

With respect to these two sites, the following comparison has been prepared for Council's consideration:

Thornbury Town Hall (existing):

1. Accessibility:
 - Will service Thornbury, Camperdown, rural constituents, Highway 26 Corridor and Lora Bay
 - Will adequately service Craigleith
 - Not well suited to service Castle Glen
2. Image/Visual Quality:
 - Site has the potential to provide an excellent image/visual quality (Beaver River, dam, bridge, former train trestle, etc)
3. Visibility
 - Site is challenged visually by the existing service station and retail store (antique) building
4. Demographic Needs/Patterns
 - Well suited to demographic needs (within walking/cycling distance of +/- 25% of Town's permanent population, parking available)
 - Within Thornbury BIA area (demographic pattern)
5. Site Capacity
 - Parking is excellent
 - Challenged re addition to existing building (growth westerly)
6. Neighbourhood Compatibility
 - Appropriate for area
 - Within walking distance of retail stores and restaurants
7. Availability of Utilities
 - Excellent
8. Smart Growth
 - Existing institutional/commercial property
 - Within walking/cycling distance of 25% of Town's population
 - Not a green field development

9. Cost Effectiveness
Town owned land
10. Intangibles
 - Addresses amalgamation concerns

Thornbury Town Hall (proposed new building at intersection of Mill and Bridge):

1. Accessibility:
 - Will service Thornbury, Camperdown, rural constituents, Highway 26 Corridor and Lora Bay
 - Will adequately service Craigleith
 - Not well suited to service Castle Glen
2. Image/Visual Quality:
 - Site has the potential to provide an excellent image/visual quality (Beaver River, dam, bridge, former train trestle, etc)
 - Has the potential to set the tone for future works within the Thornbury corridor
3. Visibility
 - Site is prominent from easterly approach and has the potential for same from the west.
4. Demographic Needs/Patterns
 - Well suited to demographic needs (within walking/cycling distance of 25% of Town's permanent population, parking available)
 - Within Thornbury BIA area (demographic pattern)
5. Site Capacity
 - Parking is excellent
 - Potential for expansion exists
6. Neighbourhood Compatibility
 - Appropriate for area
 - Within walking distance of retail stores and restaurants
7. Availability of Utilities
 - Excellent
8. Smart Growth
 - Existing commercial property
 - Within walking/cycling distance of 25% of Town's population
 - Not a green field development
9. Cost Effectiveness
 - Town owned land
10. Intangibles
 - Addresses amalgamation concerns

Craigleith Site:

1. Accessibility:
 - Will adequately service Craigleith, Highway 26 corridor and Castle Glen
 - Will adequately service Camperdown
 - Not well suited to service Thornbury, rural area and Lora Bay
2. Image/Visual Quality:
 - Site has the potential to provide an excellent image/visual quality (Grey Road #19)
3. Visibility
 - Excellent
4. Demographic Needs/Patterns
 - Well suited to demographic needs (within walking/cycling distance of 25% of Town's permanent population, parking will be available)
5. Site Capacity
 - No restrictions
6. Neighbourhood Compatibility
 - Questionable given surrounding land uses (recreational residential)
 - Not within walking distance of shops and restaurants
7. Availability of Utilities
 - Excellent
8. Smart Growth
 - Green field development
 - Within walking/cycling distance of 25% of Town's population
9. Cost Effectiveness
 - Town owned land
10. Intangibles
 - Perceived isolation of Thornbury and Lora Bay

FINANCIALS

Estimated Cost

With respect to cost, it was estimated that Scenario No 2 would cost approximately \$3.0 million. Since that time, and given construction cost increases and a desire to develop a LEED Certified building, a more detailed review has determined that Scenario No. 2 would now be in the \$3.5 million range.

As to a new LEED Certified building, a current construction cost estimate of approximately \$220 per square foot is projected. Given this, a building of approximately 18,500 square feet would represent an estimated cost of approximately \$4.07 million (plus land acquisition costs plus consulting fees).

Financing

Town Staff have prepared possible financing models for Council's and the public's information and comments (attached). The criteria utilized for the development of these funding proposals are:

1. Include construction and land acquisition costs (total +/- \$4.6 million)
2. Sale of Town owned land deemed surplus to the extent necessary to achieve an approximate \$1.15 million contribution to this project (The Senior Management Team has had a number of meetings over the past 6 months in order to develop recommendations to Council with respect to all Town owned lands as to possible future use and need. SMT will report to Council on this exercise in the near future.)
3. Utilize of approximately \$2.3 million of reserves (Working Capital, Sewer and Water, Building Permit Fee Reserves, etc.).
4. User Fees
5. Rental income
6. Limit any potential taxation impact to 1% per annum (own or municipal purposes)

Financial Services will provide a more detailed overview of these possible funding scenarios and related impacts at the meeting.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LEED CERTIFICATION

Within this Report reference has been had to Sustainable Community Development (SCD) and LEED. SCD is principally design and land use planning approaches that reduce costs and environmental impacts, while maintaining community livability. LEED is an acronym for Leaders in Energy Efficiency and Environmental Design wherein certification is determined on the basis of a point system. In Canada, the LEED Program is delivered by the Canadian Green Building Council (www.cagbc.org). Attached for Council's is information related to the LEED program.

CONSTRUCTION CHALLENGES – EXISTING TOWN HALL

Staff would be remiss not to identify to Council that an addition to Town Hall of any magnitude, along with the replacement of the existing archaic mechanical system and updating of the electrical system, would necessitate the vacating of Town Hall for a period of approximately 12 months. In this regard, it is the opinion of the Senior Management Team that a transition plan would likely entail work groups occupying numerous small spaces throughout the municipality and/or the utilization of an extensive number of trailers on more than one Town owned site.

PUBLIC INPUT

It has become apparent that the Town must advance the development of additional administrative office space. In this regard, it would be appropriate that we consult with the public. Therefore, Town Staff are recommending that Council direct staff to convene a minimum of two public open houses, one on a week night and one on a weekend, to solicit public input. Such public input sessions to include as a minimum:

- A summary of the current situation;
- A summary of future office space needs;
- Building footprint options;
- Vision re materials of construction, LEED, etc. (What do the public envision?); and,
- Funding options.

PREPARATION OF REPORT

This Report has been prepared in consultation with, and reviewed by, the Town's Senior Management Team.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

The provision of a single, comprehensive Town Hall, together with public space, developed with Sustainable Community Development and LEED Certification principles/requirements in mind, will assist in providing a strong, well managed municipal government; address the Town's municipal infrastructure needs; and, preserve and enhance natural and environmental features, and cultural heritage of the community.

D. Budget Impact

\$3,000 - Retention of a consultant for the Public Open Houses and subsequent presentation to Council.

E. Attached

- "A" - 2004 Space Needs Analysis
- "B" - 2004 Schematic Floor Plans & Elevation
- "C" - 2005 Space Needs Analysis
- "D" - 2006 Schematic Floor Plans & Site Plan
- "E" - 2007 Space Needs Report
- "F" - Financing Models
- "G" - Background, LEED Certification

Respectfully submitted,

