

Southwold Economic Development Committee

Southwold Economic Development Committee

MINUTES

Wednesday, January 31, 2018
8:30 a.m., Council Chambers, Fingal

PRESENT: Voting Members: Chair, Deputy Mayor, Ian Chard
Councillor Peter North Peter North
Steve Bushell
Ernst Hoffsuemmer
Barry Harrison

Non-Voting Members: Kate Burns Gallagher, Elgin County
Jeff Sheridan, Elgin Business Resource Centre

Staff Resource: Kim Grogan, Treasurer
Lisa Higgs, CAO

ABSENT: Voting Members: Chris Meyer
Jack VanderKooy
Valerie Cron
Jim Carder

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

2. Election of Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Kim explained the process of nominations and appointments.

Ernst nominated Ian Chard for Chairperson. Ian accepted the nomination. There were no further nominations.

Moved by Ernst - Seconded by Peter: Ian Chard be elected as Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee for 2018.

CARRIED.

Ian nominated Peter North for Vice Chairperson. Peter accepted the nomination. There were no further nominations.

Moved by Ian - Seconded by Steve: Peter North be elected as Vice Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee for 2018.

CARRIED.

3. Confirmation of Agenda

4. Approval of minutes from November 22, 2017 meeting

Moved by Steve - Seconded by Peter: Minutes from the meeting of November 22, 2017 were reviewed and approved.

CARRIED.

5. Business arising from those minutes.

- a) **Visit to Township Owned Commercial Properties in Shedden** - Lisa provided the Committee with a report on the Medical Building, Water Department Building and Parking Lot (former fire hall) and Commercial Plaza (former library), providing lot sizes, restrictions, building and maintenance conditions, zoning and current

use. Lisa shared that additional space in the Medical Centre will be leased by an Esthetician. After inspection of the Commercial Plaza (former library) space, a number of recommendations by the Chief Building Official were discussed. Estimated costs of renovations, ranging from \$746,000 to \$994,800 and reconstruction estimates, ranging from \$1,243,500 to \$1,492,200, were discussed. Demolition costs were discussed and it was advised that Chris Meyer had estimated a cost of approximately \$48,500. Committee members who attended the tour of the spaces, commented on the poor condition of the former library building. Steve commented that the Township does not want to lose the current tenants. Peter provided comments surrounding the Environmental Assessment that is currently being undertaken and the resulting increase in values and uses as a fully serviced property. Lisa provided that the Township received an appraisal for the Commercial Plaza (former library) property of \$190,000 in December 2016. Ian suggested the Committee make a motion to request that Township Staff prepare a report to Council recommending further appraisal of the property with the assumption that municipal sewers will be installed in Shedden. The appraisal could then be compared to the current appraised value of the property. Committee members commented that an additional appraisal would be too costly at this time and were not in agreement with the suggested motion. The Committee discussed the parking lot parcel beside the Water Department Building and the impact to the I.O.O.F. if there was a future change in use or sale. Peter suggested that it may be possible to accommodate the organization at the Complex. Peter also commented on the three corners of Shedden owned by the Township and the need to consider what the community envisions for Shedden's downtown. The County Economic Development Department's gap needs analysis should be used to market the area to developers. Ernst inquired into the number of lots that will be developed in Shedden. Lisa discussed that there could be upwards of 170 lots on the former Stoss property and 35 lots east of the lots on Union Roads, all owned by the Township. There are additional parcels owned privately within the hamlet area that could be developed as well. A sewer collection system could extend to the North side of Shedden and further extend potential areas of growth. The Committee was reminded that Council declared the Commercial Plaza (former library) property surplus in 2017. Peter and Steve provided that the Township should not sell the corner properties too early. Barry commented that if there was an interested buyer, why wouldn't you listen to offers?

Moved by Peter – Seconded by Ian: The Economic Development Committee recommends to Council that the Commercial Plaza (former library) building is not demolished, and that the Township retain ownership of the property pending the Environmental Assessment results, and that tenants are retained in place, and that the Township does not increase tenancy in the building at this time.

CARRIED.

Signage for Township Properties for sale and/or lease - Lisa provided a sample of the content for signage that will be going up on the Township owned lots for sale in Shedden. Ernst questioned if there was a condition included on the purchase and sale agreements of the lots sold by the Township to ensure that building occurs within a specific timeframe. Lisa provided that the Township has not included a condition on the agreements.

Farmland Rental Report - Lisa advised that the Township received bids on farmland for lease and has entered into an agreement with lease revenue of \$13,725, a one year term with annual option to renew.

Sustainability Plan update - Lisa shared the flyer for the upcoming Community Input Meeting on February 27, 2018 at 7 pm at the Keystone Complex. Lisa also shared the anticipated timeline; February-public input meeting; March-summarize comments from public input meeting; April-distribute to Council and Committees for comment; May-update action plans; June-roll out new plan to community at Rosy Rhubarb. Lisa will distribute an electronic version of the plan and annual updates to the Committee.

b) **2018 Advertising** - deferred to a future meeting.

c) **2018 EBRC Meeting Plans** - Jeff provided an update on the business survey results and shared that Southwold businesses are looking for a Marketing event to be held in the evening with business networking in the fall. Jeff provided that a good speaker will draw crowds. Jeff will work towards a fall event open to all.

d) **Economic Development Gap Analysis** - Kate provided the gap analysis results for Southwold. Highlights included: 90% of people who work in Southwold reside outside of Southwold while 90% of people who reside in Southwold work outside of Southwold; 8 retail businesses with employees are located in Southwold; underserved businesses include grocery, gas, health and professional; potential business with market value include dental, accommodation, food, health and personal, haircare. Kate will provide an electronic version of her report for Kim to distribute to the Committee.

Moved by Peter – Seconded by Steve: The Economic Development Committee recommends to Council that County Economic Development staff attend a future meeting of Council to present the Gap Analysis results for Southwold.

CARRIED.

e) **Accommodation in Southwold** - Peter discussed existing accommodations in Southwold. Peter would like to see a recommendation to Council to consider on-farm accommodation to allow City families to visit. Considerations should include all accommodation types including bed and breakfast, in home, surplus dwelling, trailer parks, etc. Kate provided that the County has completed an on-farm accommodation strategy that may be helpful.

f) **Welcome Package and Home Show Staffing** - Ian provided the results of his discussions with local business regarding the inclusion of coupons or materials in the welcome packages for new residents. The St. Thomas Home Show is being held on March 23, 24, 25 and staffing was discussed.

6. New Business

None.

7. Other Business

- The next meeting will be held March 7, 2018 at 8:30 am at the Municipal Office.

Moved Peter- Seconded Barry: Meeting adjournment at 10:20 a.m.

CARRIED.