

**Minutes of the Operational Review Committee
Meeting Held
Monday, January 16, 2017**

Present:

Councillor Maroosis, Committee Chair
Councillor Anthony, Committee Member
Councillor King, Committee Member
Councillor Serran, Committee Member
Councillor Bain, Committee Member
Mayor McDonald, Committee Member
Councillor Vaillancourt
Councillor Vrebosch
Councillor Mayne
Lea Janisse, Interim Chief Administrative Officer
John Severino, Managing Director Community Services
Margaret Karpenko, Chief Financial Officer (5:30 pm)
Domenic Schiavone, Director of Public Works
Beverley Hillier, Manager Planning Services
Shawn Killins, Chief Building Official
Adam Lacombe, Senior Capital Program Engineer
Gord Mulcahey, Executive Member North Bay Professional Firefighters'
Association

Regrets:

Brian Phillips, President CUPE Local 122
David Euler, Managing Director of Engineering, Environmental Service and Works

Special Review Committee Chair, George Maroosis, called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

1. Adoption of Minutes:
The Minutes of November 14, 2016 were reviewed with one amendment to the minutes noting Councillor Serran as a Committee Member. The minutes were approved, as amended, by the Committee and will be presented to Council on January 23, 2017.
2. Business Arising from Minutes:
 - The Chair invited a discussion of the committee regarding the schedule of meetings. The recommendation of the committee is to meet on January 23, 2017 at 5:15 pm and then effective February 7, 2017 meetings will be scheduled bi-weekly at 4:45 pm prior to the Committee meeting.
3. Operational Review of Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Planning Process.
 - John Severino, Beverley Hillier, Shawn Killins, and Adam Lacombe were present in relation to the PAC and the Planning Process. Copies of the presentation were provided to the Committee. Mrs. Hillier led the presentation.
 - The content of the presentation and recommended change to the PAC process is an initiative to improve efficiencies to make the PAC process more effective resulting in less time required for applications.
 - The recommendations are a result of a collaborative consultation process with the Planning, Building and Engineering departments.
 - Mr. Killins explained that Building Services always had a checklist with approximately 36 different handouts for citizens to obtain additional information about new builds. The most popular handout is a collective checklist that assists applicants with relevant information regarding new builds as well as permit fees.
 - The Building Code Act speaks to process and timing and we are compelled to process complete house permit applications within 10 days.

- The current PAC process was reviewed with the Committee highlighting the various time frames mandated by the Planning Act and the Official Plan.
- The PAC is the first step in the development process and although it has been in place in North Bay since 1983 it is not a requirement for our municipality. The PAC reviews comments from the public in an open forum prior to making recommendations to the Community Services Committee.
- The main concern in this process is that it adds 6-8 weeks to the development process. Sometimes a public forum is scheduled and no one from the public attends the meeting.
- The change recommended is to completely remove the PAC from the process and replace it with a 30 day consultation period. The 30 day notice period will remain for organizations or people to comment on the planning process. The result is that the application moves forward in a consolidated manner.
- It is important to note that even with recommending this new process, the process could still be put on pause. Issues may arise that must be solved prior to moving forward with the application process.
- The Committee meeting of Council would be the first public meeting citizens may speak at regarding concerns. If concerns expressed require further review a supplemental report would be prepared to address the concerns raised.
- The impact of removing the PAC process for the Development Community is an opportunity to save time; especially for any applications brought forward without concerns or issues. Additionally the Development Community may save money by getting the shovel in the ground sooner. The impact for the City of North Bay includes an increase in efficiency of staff resources as there would no longer be PAC meetings to attend, minutes to prepare, agendas and other related PAC administrative duties.
- The majority of the committee is in favor of adopting the new change as expressed by members at a recent meeting.
- The original PAC was created by a By-Law. If council chooses to proceed with the recommended change, then a repeal of the By-law will be required.
 - The Chair expressed gratitude to Mr. Severino, Mr. Euler, Mrs. Hillier, the PAC Committee and Councillor Vaillancourt for their work in this review. Kudos to staff as it was clear that a lot of energy was behind this recommendation. Kudos to Councillor Vaillancourt who took the lead.
 - Counsellor Vaillancourt noted that any controversial file that moves forward to Council may be referred back to committee for more information should council choose to do so. It was also highlighted that 6-8 weeks can make the difference for Developers getting a job started due to the shortened building time we have in the North.
 - In looking at the time factors of 45 days, are we not legislated to process applications within 30 days?
 - ❖ Yes. We try to move through applications through faster and generally process them before the mandated time frame.
 - Is Southern Ontario legislated to continue with a PAC process?
 - ❖ Yes. That is the case. We are not required but municipalities south of our area are required to have a PAC.
 - What is the dividing line?
 - ❖ It is determined by a territorial district.
 - What happens if an controversial application is submitted and the matter gets through Council?

- ❖ At times the PAC has eliminated issues in the process. At other times those with concerns do not attend PAC but attend Council. If an item is controversial we will use the 30 day period to determine if a special meeting of council may be needed.
- Part of the application fee would have gone to the PAC. Are we reducing fees?
 - ❖ The amount of work remains the same although the PAC will not be sitting.
- Do you see the recommended structure as managing the application process?
 - ❖ Yes
- Going back to the boundary lines for determining the mandatory PAC, is the boundary line from the Muskoka north?
 - ❖ It applies to Northern Ontario although Sudbury has a Planning Advisory Committee.
- Would you say that 50 percent of applications go through unchallenged and without change?
 - ❖ It is estimated that in about 70 percent of the applications there are questions. For example with a recent application in the Airport area there was 15 calls yet no one came to the meeting however the questions were asked in advance and answers provided to these inquiries.
- How do we communicate and ensure that the public is aware that they still have input into this process?
 - ❖ It is important that we reiterate that there is ample opportunity for people to speak to a member of staff regarding their concerns. People may still choose to show up at Council and express their objection although they have the opportunity to speak with staff. PAC does not solve this either. The Communications and Strategic Development Officer will be included in the development of a communications plan to promote this change to the community and explain the feedback method. Central to this communication will be that this change will encourage development, increase efficiencies, offer shorter time frames and be cost effective.
- Has PAC ever stopped any application?
 - ❖ No. They are unable to do so.
- Have they ever said no to an application?
 - ❖ On a rare occasion they have not recommended an application to Committee.
- During the new 30 day process will public feedback be recorded and considered as official?
 - ❖ Yes. Planning staff have always and will always keep track of any comments either by mail or by phone or by electronic mail. All feedback methods are considered equally and staff encourages the public to exercise their rights to provide feedback.
- Could we provide the Public with a form and ensure that Council sees the concerns expressed? If we use a form people cannot say we did not give them a platform.
 - ❖ Staff tracks feedback already however it would be a change to the process to pass this individual feedback on to Council. We would need to review for privacy. Objections are always tracked. If the objection, for example, is parking then other departments are involved and respond. Efficiency was a topic with Developers and adding more paperwork may bog down staff.
- When doing a planning report for Council is there a prescribed process?

- ❖ Yes. We follow a template that gives consideration to Policy, the Northern Ontario Growth Plan and Local Plan.
- Can we move Public comments up on the list and include them in the report.
 - ❖ Yes. We do include Public comments as a summary and recently created a summary section in the report that speaks to comments and general feedback on a planning matter.
- Homeowners are going through this process as well and delays add costs for them. Will they save money as well?
 - ❖ Yes. It will not likely reduce the costs of experts but will save money by timing required in the process.
- Will it remove complexity?
 - ❖ Yes
- Will this new change in process make us more competitive compared to communities around us?
 - ❖ Yes
- When does an application move to a public notice stage?
 - ❖ When the application is deemed complete.
- Is the application posted anywhere?
 - ❖ Yes. It is posted in the notice of applications online.
- Do we update the status of applications along the process?
 - ❖ Not as well as we should but we are working on this.
- Do we invite comments by email?
 - ❖ Yes.

4. Action Items:

- (i) The Clerk is to prepare a Recommendation regarding the dissolution of the Planning Advisory Committee back to the Operational Review Committee for its approval. This recommendation will be brought forward to Council for a final decision.

Next Meeting: Monday, January 23, 2017– 5:15 p.m.

Agenda Item: (i) Engineering, Environmental Services and Works Unit
Review David Euler

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Councillor George Maroosis
Chair Operational Review Committee

Judy Bechard
Deputy City Clerk