

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGES TASK FORCE

REPORT 8-2009

Minutes of a meeting of the Regional Development Charges Task Force held in C.R. 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Monday, November 9, 2009, commencing at 10:05 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Councillors: Councillors D'Angela, Committee Chair; Augustyn; Burroughs.

Staff: Mr. Bergsma, Commissioner, Corporate Services; Mr. Colosimo, Director, Development Services; Mr. Weaver, Director, Community & Corporate Planning; Mr. Murphy, Manager, Policy & Development; Mr. Bendell, Financial Analyst; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

Others: Mr. Teichroeb, Niagara Economic Development Corporation.

PRESENTATIONS

58. Paul Pattison
Heritage Point Subdivision, St. Catharines
25% Exemption of Development Fee (Sidewalk Issue)

Mr. Pattison, attended as a supporter of Garden City Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (GCAST), a group formed to improve infrastructure in St. Catharines for cycling and public transportation with their focus to date primarily on walking and cycling. Accompanying Mr. Pattison was Gary Murphy, Board Member of Share the Road, a Provincial Cycling Coalition which is also supportive of the Complete Streets concept. Mr. Murphy is also a volunteer facilitator assisting Regional and City staff in the implementation of Safe Routes to Schools pilot project in St. Catharines.

Mr. Pattison spoke to the regional policy which granted a 25% waiver of the Regional Development Charges Fees for the Heritage Point Subdivision in St. Catharines. He referred to a drawing he presented which details the development including the surrounding neighbourhood and existing and proposed sidewalks as detailed in the subdivision agreement. Mr. Pattison advised that in August 2008 Brickyard Developments & the City of St. Catharines executed the Subdivision Agreement which explicitly detailed what and where sidewalks were to be constructed in this development. He surmised that this documentation provided sufficient proof that the development was going to be a

walkable neighbourhood. With the walkability component it was deemed to be in compliance with three of the five Smart Growth design criteria and was granted a 25% exemption of the Region's Development Fee. Upon completion this exemption would amount to approximately \$250,000.

Mr. Pattison's concern is that the Region granted a 25% exemption of development fees based on the signed subdivision agreement which details where sidewalks would be built in this development and that the Council of the City of St. Catharines passed a motion on October 5, 2009 that he believes eliminates any sidewalk connectivity within or around the development.

For these reasons, the presenter requested that the 25% Regional Development Fee exemption be immediately withdrawn and upon completion of all sidewalk construction, as detailed in the Subdivision Agreement provision, the Region return the collected fee to the City for them to distribute as they see fit.

Mr. Pattison asked that this matter be referred to staff for a report on his suggestions, in a timely manner, and that he be so advised.

Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the presentation by Mr. Paul Pattison, regarding the Heritage Point Subdivision, St. Catharines, 25% Exemption of Development Fee with respect to the sidewalk issue, be received.

Carried.

(A copy of Mr. Pattison's presentation on the sidewalk issue is attached to the minutes.)

59. Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association (SCVFA)

Mr. Wayne Smith, accompanied by Messrs Joe Sirianni and Nick Louras, Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association (SCVFA), attended to speak to the memorandum from Mr. Patrick Robson, Commissioner, Integrated Community Planning regarding Interim Criteria for the Evaluation of Requests for Regional Development Charge Relief, as it pertains to their development.

Mr. Smith reiterated that the proposed development is for a multi-purpose building that will be used to continue their efforts, as a non-profit organization, to raise funds to finance the operation of their park as well as benefitting many educational institutions, community service clubs and charities. Mr. Smith also highlighted the many partnerships that the SCVFA have developed over the years. The Task Force was also apprised of the municipal services that are available to their association.

Mr. Louras advised that the agreement with the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) states that the proposed building could not be used for wedding banquets or stags and that the SCVFA could only host functions for the association and its membership.

Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the presentation by Mr. Wayne Smith, Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association, regarding their request for exemption of Regional Development Charges for their proposed multi purpose building, be received.

Carried.

MINUTES

60. 7-2009 (RDC)

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That Report 7-2009 (RDC) being the minutes of the Regional Development Charges Task Force meeting of October 19, 2009, be received.

Carried.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

61. Memorandum – Patrick Robson, Commissioner, Integrated Community Planning
Re: Interim Criteria for the Evaluation of Requests for Regional Development Charge Relief

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That the memorandum from Patrick Robson, Commissioner of Integrated Community Planning, respecting Interim Criteria for the Evaluation of Requests for Regional Development Charge Relief, be received and approved, **as amended**.

That the interim criteria detailed in this memorandum be used by staff in evaluation of requests for development charge relief from eligible organizations until the Phase 2 Development Charges Review is complete.

That Development Charge relief be made by way of an Interim Regional Development Charge (RDC) Relief Grant equivalent to the development charges collected and that this relief be tracked as part of our forgone Development Charge (DC revenue with a funding source recommended as part of the Phase 2 Review).

That, subject to acceptance of the interim criteria, Interim RDC Relief Grants be provided to the following organizations in the following amounts:

Habitat Niagara	\$ 8,000
St. David's & District Lion's Club	\$18,225

That future requests for development charge relief be directed to the RDC Staff Working Group for evaluation and recommendation as part of the Phase 2 Review of the DC By-law.

That staff review the discussions that took place at this task force meeting, and to be formulated as part of the Philosophical review of the Regional Development Charges.

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That staff clarify the interim criteria related to compliance with the Regional Policy Plan where it refers to being within a planned settlement area.

Carried.

Upon a vote being taken, the original motion, ***as amended***, was carried.

(Refer to Councillor Information Requests.)

CORRESPONDENCE

62. Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That Communication RDCTF 7-2009, being a letter from Peter Colosimo, Director, Development Services Division (November 2, 2009) to Mr. Paul Pattison regarding Installation of sidewalks in the Heritage Point Subdivision, be received and referred to staff for further information from the City of St. Catharines and a further report to the next Regional Development Charges Task Force meeting.

Carried.

63. Funding - Development Charges

Councillor Augustyn inquired as to what are the principles for which funding of Development Charges are based on. The Councillor referred to budget discussions that indicated that \$6.3 million in capital projects are funded through Development Charges and that an additional \$7 million in projects that are proposed in the foreseeable future, are funded through the levy. He suggested that those projects that are growth related could be funded through Development Charges. Councillor Augustyn requested information providing clarity on this process.

(Refer to Councillor Information Requests.)

COUNCILLOR INFORMATION REQUESTS

That staff:

- (i) In reviewing interim criteria and policy, as part of the Phase 2 DC review, consider the following:
 - more clarity on the description of the title of the criteria
 - determine level of grant – could a percentage be considered
 - how do we budget and track exemptions (line in budget)
 - receive more detail and input from lower tier municipalities – how do we know what they are recommending
 - criteria for projects outside urban boundaries
 - municipal services provided that have not received Regional approval

(Task Force members) Refer to minute item 61.
- (ii) Provide clarity on the process for funding capital projects (Development Charges vs. Levy). (Augustyn) Refer to minute item 63.
- (iii) Provide 4 or 5 examples of how future growth related projects could be funded out of Development Charges for the next RDCTF meeting. (Augustyn/Burroughs) Refer to minute item 63.

ADJOURNMENT

The Regional Development Charges Task Force adjourned at 12:05 a.m. to meet again at the Call of the Chair.

Henry D'Angela
Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Kevin Bain
Regional Clerk