

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGES TASK FORCE

REPORT 7-2009

Minutes of a meeting of the Regional Development Charges Task Force held in C.R. 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Monday, October 19, 2009, commencing at 10:06 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

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

Councillors

Other: Councillors Greenwood and Puttick.

Staff: Mr. Brothers, Commissioner, Public Works; Mr. Robson, Commissioner, Integrated Community Planning; Mr. Weaver, Director, Community & Corporate Planning; Mr. Murphy, Manager, Policy & Development; Mr. Colosimo, Director, Development Services; Mr. Steele, Associate Director, Strategic Business Management; Mr. Pilon, Associate Director, Service Quality & Improvement; Mr. Bendell, Financial Analyst; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

PRESENTATIONS

48. Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association

Messrs. Wayne Smith, Treasurer and Joe Sirianni, Vice-President, Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association (SCVFA), attended to request an exemption from Regional Development Charges for the Association's proposed Banquet Hall to be located in Fireman's Park, Niagara Falls. Mr. Smith advised that the not for profit organization was incorporated in 1922 and since its inception has maintained and operated a private park consisting of 113 acres of green space located on Mountain Road in the City of Niagara Falls. Mr. Smith provided information on the Association's partners which include the City of Niagara Falls and many community service clubs and youth organizations. The SCVFA finances the operation of the park as well as benefitting many educational institutions, sports teams and charities. A letter was circulated from Mayor Ted Salci, City of Niagara Falls, supporting the waiver of the development charges in this regard as the Association is a non-profit organization.

(A copy of the presentation on the Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association request is attached to the minutes.)

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That the presentation from Messrs. Wayne Smith and Joe Sirianni, Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association, regarding their request for exemption of Regional Development Charges, be received.

Carried.

49. Habitat Niagara

Messrs. Craig Fowler, and Alastair Davis, Habitat Niagara, attended to request that an exemption of Regional Development Charges be applied to 9 Frazer Street, City of Welland. Mr. Fowler provided background information on Habitat for Humanity Niagara including its Mission and Home Ownership Program and the benefits received by families who are selected for this program. Mr. Fowler requested that Regional Council make Habitat Niagara the recipient of a standing Regional Development fee waiver as before. The presenter also requested that the Region consider donation of surplus Regional land and donation of excess goods to their ReStore in St. Catharines to support their mission.

(A copy of the presentation regarding Habitat Niagara's request is attached to the minutes.)

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Mr. Brothers

That the presentation from Messrs. Craig Fowler and Alastair Davis, Habitat Niagara, regarding their request for exemption of Regional Development Charges, be received.

Carried.

50. Winter Festival of Lights

Mr. Dino Fazio, Winter Festival of Lights, attended to request an exemption for the proposed maintenance structure in the City of Niagara Falls. Mr. Fazio provided background information on the Winter Festival of Lights, noting it as a non-profit organization. Mr. Fazio commented that the Winter Festival of Lights was recognized as one of eighteen Events of Distinction and attracts one million local residents and visitors from around the world. The Festival contributes approximately \$60 million to the local economy. Mr. Fazio described the project which is the development of an ice skating rink called "Rink at the Brink". This will include a 16 x 16 foot structure that will store ice making equipment. The ice skating rink will be open from November to February and will be closed down for the remainder of the year. Mr. Fazio advised that the City of Niagara Falls

recommended the waiving of development charges as it will be a “temporary use”.

The Task Force suggested that Mr. Fazio provide a letter to the Committee advising that the structure is of a temporary nature and will not be used in the off season.

Moved by Mr. Robson
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the presentation from Mr. Dino Fazio, Winter Festival of Lights, regarding the request for exemption of Regional Development Charges, be received.

Carried.

51. St. David’s & District Lion’s Club

Mr. Allen Snider, St. David’s & District Lion’s Club, attended to request an exemption of Regional Development Charges for the proposed Quonset Hut for Storage of Carnival Equipment in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Mr. Snider provided background information on the service club that raises funds for a variety of organizations and focuses its activities in assisting visually impaired persons as well as conditions that cause visual impairments such as Diabetes. Mr. Snider described the project which is a hut for storage of Carnival Equipment to be built on land donated by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the presentation from Mr. Allen Snider, St. David’s & District Lion’s Club, regarding the request for exemption of Regional Development Charges, be received.

Carried.

MINUTES

52. 6-2009 (RDC)

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Burroughs

That Report 6-2009 (RDC) being the minutes of the Regional Development Charges Task Force meeting of July 20, 2009, be received.

Carried.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

53. Memorandum – John Murphy, Manager of Policy and Development
Re: Requests for Exemption from Regional Development Charges

Mr. Murphy provided an overview of his memo regarding the Requests for Exemption from Regional Development Charges as it pertains to the review of the Region's Development Charges By-law cost recovery policies. He noted that it was recommended to Regional Council that:

"All "discretionary" public and institutional exemptions be eliminated from the Region's DC By-law."

Mr. Murphy commented that it is recommended that the four requests presented at today's meeting be evaluated against a set of objective criteria and that a working group be established to address administrative matters of the DC By-law and matters regarding Phase 2 of the DC By-law Review.

Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the memorandum from John Murphy regarding the Requests for Exemption from Regional Development Charges, be received.

Carried.

54. Memorandum – Kirk Weaver, Director, Community and Corporate Planning
Re: Regional Development Charges By-law Review – Phase 2

Mr. Weaver provided an overview of his memo regarding Council's endorsement of the undertaking of a review of the Region's Development Charges cost recovery philosophy, including consideration of the role of development charges as a policy tool, options for area specific charges, and the role of various cost recovery methodologies. A work plan has been developed that will see completion of this review by March 2010. Mr. Weaver commented that the development of the criteria regarding exemptions from payment of development charges on "specific" public and institutional uses is an integral part of the review.

Members of Committee expressed their concerns regarding the timelines for completion of the review and the need to make decisions with respect to the four exemptions requested and suggested that interim criteria be developed to deal with these requests.

Following this discussion, it was:

55. Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the requests for exemption from Regional Development Charges as submitted by the Stamford Centre Volunteer Firemen's Association; Habitat Niagara, Winter Festival of Lights and St. David's & District Lion's Club, be referred to staff for a report and recommendations to the Regional Development Charges Task Force in three weeks (Monday, November 9, 2009).

Carried.

(Refer to Councillor Information Requests.)

56. Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Augustyn

That the memorandum from Kirk Weaver regarding the Regional Development Charges By-law Review – Phase 2, be received.

Carried.

57. Patrick Robson, Commissioner, Integrated Community Planning Dept.
Re: Development Charges Appeal

Mr. Robson advised that an appeal to the Region's Development Charges By-law was received on one component of the By-law and that a meeting is scheduled with the Appellant on Monday, October 26th to try and resolve the issue.

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Mr. Brothers

That the oral report from Patrick Robson regarding the Development Charges Appeal be received.

Carried.

COUNCILLOR INFORMATION REQUESTS

That staff:

- (i) Provide additional information related to the request for exemption from the Winter Festival of Lights (Niagara Parks Commission legislative exemption from Development Charges). Refer to minute item 50.

- (ii) Provide additional information related to the request for exemption from the St. David's & District Lion's Club (Credits available). (Committee members) Refer to minute item 51.
- (iii) Provide information on the revenue source when relief to development charges is granted. (Augustyn) Refer to minute item 55.

ADJOURNMENT

The Regional Development Charges Task Force adjourned at 11:35 a.m. to meet again on Monday, November 9, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in C.R. 4.

Henry D'Angela
Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Kevin Bain
Regional Clerk