

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
SMARTER NIAGARA STEERING COMMITTEE

REPORT 1-2009

Minutes of a meeting of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee held on Wednesday, February 18, 2009 commencing at 5:10 p.m. in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Gabriel, Chair; Augustyn, Vice-Chair; Messrs. Barr, Ensslen; Ms. Landry, Ms. Shipley, Ms. Stewart

Staff: Mr. Robson, Commissioner Integrated Community Planning; Mr. Gummo, Associate Director, Comprehensive Community Planning; Ms. Emeneau, Planner; Ms. Ricci, Legislative Assistant

Working Group: Mr. Slepkov

Quorum

There being a lack of ordinary quorum at the meeting, the Committee Co-Chairs determined that the ordinary quorum for the meeting be reduced to seven members, pursuant to Section 22.10 of the Procedural By-law 96-2007.

ADMINISTRATION

1. **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Mr. Gummo called for nominations for Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Ms. Stewart

That Councillor Gabriel be appointed Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

Carried.

Mr. Gummo called a second and third time for nominations for the position of Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

There being no other nominations Mr. Gummo declared nominations closed and, with the agreement of Councillor Gabriel, declared him Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Gabriel assumed the Chair.

Councillor Gabriel called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

Moved by Mr. Barr
Seconded by Mr. Ensslen

That Councillor Augustyn be appointed Vice Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

Carried.

Councillor Gabriel called a second and third time for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Gabriel declared nominations closed and, with the agreement of Councillor Augustyn, declared him Vice-Chair of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

2. Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Mr. Barr

That the minutes of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee meeting of November 12, 2008, be approved.

Carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. Niagara 2031 – Status and Next Steps

Councillor Gabriel advised Committee members that a February 19, 2009 meeting of Committee of the Whole (COTW) had been scheduled to deal with the delegations received at the January 29, 2009 COTW and to hear one additional delegation. He further stated that a Council meeting had also been tentatively scheduled for 9:00 p.m. on February 19, 2009 if deemed necessary.

Mr. Gummo then provided Committee members with the following overview:

- January 29, 2009 COTW meeting held to hear over 25 delegations (both in support and opposition) respecting Option D
 - Some issues in:
 - Smithville (concern re: Urban Expansion)
 - Niagara Falls (concern re: Urban Expansion)
 - One submission may have been made prior to Places to Grow therefore it may be allowed by the City of Niagara Falls
 - Grimsby (concern re: Greenbelt boundaries); assistance from Regional staff was requested and staff have agreed
 - Welland (application fails to meet “needs test”)
 - Delegations supporting Option D were also heard
- Most municipalities continue to support Option D
- 5 year Review (performance based) under new Places to Grow Document
 - Does not prevent “urgent” review
 - Attention to future employment needs
- February 19, 2009 COTW
 - Scheduled to hear one additional delegation
 - Council to hear staff’s response to information provided at the January 29, 2009 COTW meeting
 - Discuss staff response
 - Decide whether to receive, defer or proceed in to Council for approval
 - If approved staff will proceed in to Phase 5 as early as Friday, February 20 (Area Planners meeting)

Mr. Robson provided Committee members with an explanation as to ‘why’ delegations respecting Urban Boundaries had been heard.

Mr. Robson provided further details respecting:

- Urban Boundary maps; status quo
 - Although it does highlight intensification and Greenfield areas
- Population and Employment guideposts
- Model Urban Policies
- Embedding Urban Design Standards
- Local Plans must match our 40% intensification Growth

- Nominal clarification respecting NetCorp's delegation on January 29, 2009 COTW and its impact
- Development Industries
 - Are not decrying the 'sky is falling' however; are utilizing this time to plan / get ready for when the economy turns around
- Engineers and Financiers are on board
- Growth Strategy is also about where "we're not" going to grow

Ms. Emeneau provided Committee members with a brief overview as to what may transpire at the Area Planners meeting on Friday, February 20, 2009; depending on the outcome of the Committee of the Whole meeting of Thursday, February 19, 2009.

Highlights were, in part, as follows:

- Dillon Consulting will lead discussion respecting next steps
- Area Planners present from each of the 12 municipalities
 - Work together for a collaborative plan
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Niagara Parks Commission and Niagara Escarpment Commission participation
- Deal with topics like:
 - Urban Area Boundaries
 - Intensification targets "how to reach"
 - Greenfield density
 - Complete communities
- Identify Lower Tier differences (e.g. corridors, nodes, how development of features will be transit supportive and meet targets)

(Refer to Information Requests)

4. Smarter Niagara Steering Committee Focus for 2009

Following a lengthy discussion it was decided that the following areas would be the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee's main focus for 2009:

- Committee input / policy advise respecting the Amendment to Regional Plan
- Assistance in developing Performance Indicators
- Assistance in developing Incentives
- Discussion/Focus on "who is planning our communities" (e.g. Funding Authorities and how the decisions made impact Education and Parks and Recreation)

- Develop “Common Language” (e.g. Proximity, Walkable, Metres Expressed, Daily Need, Work Need) – develop definitive statements/definitions

Mr. Barr suggested to Committee members that it may be more productive, due to the magnitude of the task, if a Sub Committee was formed that would specifically deal with Performance Indicators.

Mr. Barr, Mr. Slepko and Ms. Stewart advised Committee members that they would be interested in participating if a Smart Growth Performance Indicator Sub Committee was approved.

(Refer to Information Requests)

5. Inter Municipal Transit within Niagara Region Work Plan Draft Terms of Reference
PWA 101-2009

Moved by Ms. Stewart
Seconded by Ms. Landry

That Report PWA 01-2009, January 14, 2009 respecting, Inter Municipal Transit within Niagara Region Work Plan Draft Terms of Reference, be received for information.

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

6. Moved by Mr. Ensslen
Seconded by Ms. Shipley

That the following communications listed in the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee Correspondence Summary dated January 28, 2009, be received for information.

SNSC 1-2009	An article ‘Showcasing the real green’ thestar.com November 15, 2008
SNSC 2-2009	New Urban News Volume 13 – Number 8 (December 2008)
SNSC 3-2009	An article ‘Saving Buffalo’s Untold Beauty’ The New York Times November 16, 2008
SNSC 4-2009	An article ‘Construction starts on \$55 million Evergreen Brick Works project’ Building 12/22/2008

SNSC 5-2009	An article 'a bright FUTURE? How to seed hope as the trends sour; dedicated funding for parks and cultural
SNSC 6-2009	An article 'For Modern Urban Growth, Don't Forget the Ballpark and River Walk' December 10, 2008
SNSC 7-2009	A letter from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (dated February 3, 2009) respecting Bill 138, Protection of Public Participation Act, 2008
SNSC 8-2009	An article 'Vaughan paves way for new subdivision; Rezoning would alter Hwy. 427 extension plans, cost taxpayers millions' Toronto Star January 31, 2009
SNSC 9-2009	An article 'BILD will be in the fact game not the spin game; New chair blasts crushing regulation but notes industry must adapt to change' Toronto Star January 31, 2009
SNSC 10-2009	American Planning Association "Blue Collar, Green Collar" Cities are learning the merits of saving their industrial land
SNSC 11-2009	New Urban News (Volume 14 – Number 1) January – February 2009

Carried.

Mr. Slepko highlighted an article in the New Urban News (SNSC 2-2009) respecting "Smart Growth Agenda May Mesh With Obama" and stated that Committee members may find it of interest.

Ms. Stewart drew Committee member's attention to an article in the New Urban News (SNSC 2-2009) respecting LEEDS Credits specifically credits surrounding "walkability".

Mr. Ensslen mentioned to Committee members that the article in the New Urban News (SNSC 11-2009) respecting "For Effective Stimulus, Promote Street Networks" may also be of interest.

**SMARTER NIAGARA EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION WORKING
GROUP**

7. Ms. Landry provided Committee members with an update respecting the Smarter Niagara Education and Communications Working Group (SNECWG).

Highlights were, in part, as follows:

- Approval of template for website
- NetCorp had solicited SNECWG comments for content
- Next question; “Where to go from here?” “Who will monitor feedback?”
- Planning session at next SNECWG on March 11, 2009
- Report on progress at the April 1st meeting of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee
- Members only blog has been established
- A ‘Vision Statement’ had been created and is currently listed on the website; members were asked to offer comments / suggestions to either Ms. Landry or Ms. Shipley

Mr. Gummo mentioned to Committee members that he had met with both Mark Brickell and Blake Landry (week of Feb. 9/09) and received a demonstration of the website. He stated that it was outstanding; it was still operating on a temporary server although a permanent server was close to being implemented.

OTHER BUSINESS

8. **New and Revised Planning Application Fees for the Development Services Division
PWA 15-2009**

Mr. Barr advised Committee members of a Report going to the February 25, 2009 Integrated Community Planning and Public Works Committee respecting New and Revised Planning Application Fees for the Development Services Division (PWA 15-2009). He noted that the fees were historically getting higher and higher and that the application fee is the same for large developments as it is for smaller developments.

INFORMATION REQUESTS

Staff was requested to:

- Circulate, to members of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee, copies of Option D of the Growth Management Study (Refer to Minute Item #3) (Mr. Barr)
- Attempt to formulate “sample language” for the April 1, 2009 meeting of the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee (Refer to Minute Item #4) (Councillor Gabriel)

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 7:20 p.m. This Committee will meet again April 1, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. in Committee Room 4 and the Education and Communication Working Group will meet March 11, 2009.

Robert Gabriel
Chair

Lisa Ricci
Legislative Assistant