



MINUTES

Board Meeting

Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 1, 2024
Meeting Time: 10:00AM
Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers
32 Mill Street, Thornbury ON, N0H 2P0
Prepared by Carrie Fairley, Secretary

A. Call to Order

A.1 Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

We would like to begin our meeting by recognizing the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples of Canada as traditional stewards of the land. The municipality is located within the boundary of Treaty 18 region of 1818 which is the traditional land of the Anishinabek, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples.

A.2 Attendance

Chair Everitt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Secretary Carrie noted all members of the Board were present, in Council Chambers.

A.3 Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Erica Dudley Seconded by: Morgan May

THAT the Agenda of May 1, 2024, be adopted as circulated including any amendments.

Yay (12): Shawn Everitt, Sam Dinsmore, Carrie Fairley, Andrea Matrosovs, Shawn McKinlay, Nicholas Cloet, Cat Cooper, Erica Dudley, Marco Hinds, Morgan May, Mylene McDermid, and Carter Triana

Carried.

A.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation board members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Secretary for inclusion on the Registry.

None.

A.5 Previous Minutes

Moved by: Shawn McKinlay Seconded by: Erica Dudley

THAT the Board Meeting Minutes of April 12, 2024, be adopted as circulated including any revisions to be made.

Yay (12): Shawn Everitt, Sam Dinsmore, Carrie Fairley, Andrea Matrosovs, Shawn McKinlay, Nicholas Cloet, Cat Cooper, Erica Dudley, Marco Hinds, Morgan May, Mylene McDermid, and Carter Triana

Carried.

B. Staff Reports, Deputations, and Presentations

B.1 Deputations/Presentations

B.1.1 Shawn Everitt, Chair, Re: History of House Sales and Funding of CIP through Maximum Square Footage Builds Concept

Chair Everitt provided an overview of his presentation noting the steep increase in the cost of the average price for a home in the Town of The Blue Mountains since 2015 until 2023 and the average sales per price point. Chair Everitt spoke about potential initiatives to fund the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) including a maximum dwelling concept, which would add an additional surcharge on building permit fees for dwellings that have square footage above a set maximum threshold. Chair Everitt noted this is not currently possible as the legislation is grey in this area. Chair Everitt further spoke regarding conferences that the Town has presented delegations to the Minister of Affairs and Housing regarding this topic. Chair Everitt noted these delegations came with a request to consider removing the grey area in legislation, so all municipalities could look at this option to fund the CIP, outside of taxation. Chair Everitt noted the Corporation could be the champions of these opportunities, promoting them and requesting a review of the process to identify if there is value and legitimacy to these ideas. The Board discussed the limited ways that the CIP can be funded and noted that finding innovative funding solutions, aside from taxation is one way the CIP can be sustained. Member Cat suggested an increase in the surcharge as the square footage increases, within ranges. Member Cat further noted a potential incentive could be offering exemptions if an accessory residential unit is being build as part of the permit. Member Erica noted that Habitat for Humanity only works with families, not individuals. Member Andrea noted the Board can compile the data, because we know what the numbers are, and present to Council a real-life illustration on what we could have done and what we can do moving forward, to fund the CIP. Member Andrea further noted since the real estate market has slowed down slightly, this is a good time to look at this potential opportunity and noted the sustainable investment this could bring the Town, even with providing exemptions for those are building an accessory residential unit. Member Andrea noted that even if the accessory residential units are not going to be in the open rental market, that unit is still built, so if the dwelling should sell in the future, someone who buys it may put it in the open rental market or use for extended family.

B.2 Public Comment Period

John Milne, Thornbury resident provided his comments regarding the activities of The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation.

B.3 Staff Reports

None

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1.1 Adam Smith, Director of Planning and Development Services and Shawn Postma, Manager of Planning (Verbal), Re: Overview of Official Plan

Director Adam noted the importance of the studies that have been completed that are supporting the review of the Official Plan, including those that relate to densification and the latest study that has been appended to the review which is the Housing Needs Assessment. Adam spoke regarding embedding the housing needs assessment more fully and fleshing out the assessment from a policy standpoint, within the review. Adam noted the interest staff has in looking at innovative and different ideas for housing and noted staff is looking at how to do so to mitigate the risk from an appeal standpoint and some challenges staff have seen previously.

Manager Shawn noted the Official Plan review is well underway and noted there is a project that has been developed and broken into three phases. Shawn noted the first phase was completed at the end of 2023 and second phase is getting close to completion. Shawn noted staff are hopeful to be presenting to Council for a decision in fall with public engagement later this spring.

Shawn provided an overview to the Board of the Official Plan noting its importance and noting that it provides the vision, and strategic guidelines in terms of how we are going to grow over the next 25 years. Shawn noted this plan is updated every five to ten years with a brand-new plan coming every 20 years. Shawn noted during this update, every policy is reviewed. Shawn noted the Official Plan notes what residents can and cannot do with their property and noted the more flexibility that is built into the policies, allows for innovative types of growth. Shawn noted when the policies are more restrictive, the Town can really control what can happen on a piece of property. Shawn noted staff are working on finding that balance, to allow for innovative growth and achieving the housing targets identified.

Shawn spoke regarding the background studies that have been prepared on attainable housing.

Shawn spoke further regarding the different phases that he spoke about earlier and provided the Board with more information on the estimate growth of the Town over the next 25 years noting it was estimated that about 3500 more people will reside in the Town and approximately 145 new house or unit, per year. Shawn noted the importance of housing, density and height working well together.

Shawn spoke regarding housing types in the Town noting over 80% of the housing types in the Town are single detached dwellings and those are the most expensive types of

housing. Shawn further noted the construction that is happening is predominantly single detached dwellings with a sales price of at least 1.7 million dollars. Shawn spoke regarding density noting other types of homes such as townhouses and apartment buildings need to be built to not only increase density but to also lower the housing costs.

Shawn provided more information to the Board on studies that have been completed that look at costs associated with different forms of development and the tax revenue that is generated from the developments. Shawn noted single detached dwelling was the most expensive, with less people contributing to the life cycle costs and townhouse developments were the most efficient. Shawn further noted that revenue that comes from density and costs associated with servicing the development, townhouses were fiscally most profitable for the municipality. Shawn noted that apartments came in second.

Shawn provided information to the Board regarding the policy updates that were completed in phase one including increasing the density targets, setting minimum density targets, and increasing the maximum permitted height. Shawn spoke regarding further suggested updates that staff are reviewing as part of the Official Plan review.

Shawn provided information to the Board regarding phase two noting the Housing Needs Assessment was completed in this phase. Shawn noted the assessment gives a snapshot of the community now in terms of supply and where are the gaps that need to be filled. Shawn noted with that assessment, calculations were completed regarding affordable rent, and based on the incomes of the area, that number is \$1,160 per month. Shawn further noted there is not currently a supply of rental housing in the Town and there are no purpose-built rental housing projects in the Town, therefore trying to find a rental is extremely difficult and Shawn noted the current market rate for rentals is \$4200 per month. Shawn spoke regarding home ownership affordability being \$484,000 per unit and reiterated the average home sale price is currently 1.7 million dollars leaves a huge gap to fill.

Shawn spoke regarding the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) noting one housing project was successful in obtaining funding from the CIP, for affordable housing.

Manager Shawn provided information to the Board regarding the policy adjustments staff are looking at to ensure that affordable housing is being built in the Town while incentivizing builders to build these projects.

Shawn spoke regarding the need for public support for attainable and affordable housing noting residents seem to want to see more of the same, single detached homes, which is not going to help address the affordable housing needs.

The Board discussed educating the public and being champions for attainable housing by providing support where appropriate and specifically when staff are bringing these policies Shawn spoke of, in front of Council. The Board further discussed the best way to get the engagement of the public, considering generally people do not like change and what is always seen when developers come forward is resistance and objection to any development, and support is very rarely seen. The Board further discussed removing the stigma around renters and having protections in place for the landlord, to help homeowners want to rent to long term tenants.

Shawn provided an update on the status of the project noting the extensive work being put into various policies and noted housing is at the forefront.

The Board discussed pre-servicing and pre-zoning properties in advance, and if having the community involved at that stage of planning could be a part of the Official Plan. Shawn noted that by doing that, it would eliminate major steps developers need to go through before obtaining approvals and permits.

Chair Everitt spoke regarding the future role of the Board, and the importance of the Terms of Reference, to lay out what the mandate of the Board is, if the Board continues. Chair Everitt also spoke regarding the comments often received about the “character of the town changing” and how to address those comments. Chair Everitt noted that future discussions should be had regarding how Official Plans can maintain the integrity and philosophy and how that can transition from Council to Council without taking a step back and questioning the work from the previous Council. Chair Everitt suggested taking a look back at planning files over the last five years that have come forward with clear rational, to provide attainable units that never got approved, to determine the hurdles experienced and why they didn’t get approved. Chair Everitt spoke regarding good planning practices and noted that includes ensuring services are run to the primary settlement areas. Chair Everitt further spoke regarding the attainable housing ranges Manager Shawn spoke about earlier and noted those should be the goal posts that are provided to developers who want to build attainable homes and receive incentives. Chair Everitt noted these values should be annualized.

C.1.2 Follow-up from Previous Meeting – Suggested Leads for these items:

- Conduit with Habitat for Humanity for developers – Town
- Champions for attainable housing to Council – BMAHC
- Identify covenants to protect from increased re-sale – Town
- Identify tools available to ensure affordable rental stays affordable – Town
- Suggested By-law amendments needed to allow all types of homes – Town
- Possibility of maximum square footage for new builds – Town

Chair Everitt started the conversation on the suggested leads identified at the last meeting that the Board agreed would have the most impact or affect to move these items along. Chair Everitt went through the list and discussed the suggested leads for each point. Chair Everitt spoke regarding the item “Identify covenants to protect from increased re-sale – Town” and noted that rentals will be included in that point, to ensure affordable rentals stay affordable. Chair Everitt spoke regarding how the Board can learn from other municipalities and discussed ideas to ensure the wheel is not being re-invented.

Chair Everitt requested that the Board identify any further areas that have been missed in the leads previously identified and provide same within the next two-three weeks, to be ready to go to the Committee of the Whole in June.

Member Nick noted a bold action in the Future Story is to consider the corporations’ potential role as a land trust. Nick spoke regarding the interesting opportunities that a

land trust could provide such as the creation of affordable housing in perpetuity for the Town, by taking land right out of the market to hold in a trust, or to provide assistance to tenants to keep up rent payments or homeowners from defaulting on mortgage payments.

Member Andrea noted an important item to add to the list of leads is the educational piece including providing some real scenarios. Andrea further noted would be helpful if the information was easy for Council and residents to access. Member Andrea also noted the importance of providing awareness in hopes of removing the stigma around renting and that if you are not a homeowner you have not “made it”, recognizing around the world there is a culture where renting your entire life, is okay. Chair Everitt noted the importance of also highlighting the positives about living here, such as the lower tax rate than neighbouring municipalities.

The Board discussed potential opportunities to help with the rental stock such as working with companies that may have staff housing. The Board further discussed requirements for financial reporting from those who receive incentives to provide affordable or attainable housing, to ensure that what was agreed on stays the same and if it does not, a financial implication is imposed.

Member Cat spoke regarding the creation of the living wage document being added to the list and noted that is something the Board could oversee. Member Cat suggested taking the attainable housing numbers and continually comparing them against the living wage numbers.

D. Correspondence

D.1.1 Richard Lamperstorfer dated April 22, 2024

Moved By: Carter Triana Seconded By: Sam Dinsmore

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation receives for information correspondence of Richard Lamperstorfer, dated April 22, 2024.

Yay (12): Shawn Everitt, Sam Dinsmore, Carrie Fairley, Andrea Matrosovs, Shawn McKinlay, Nicholas Cloet, Cat Cooper, Erica Dudley, Marco Hinds, Morgan May, Mylene McDermid, and Carter Triana

Carried.

E. New and Unfinished Business

Member Carter provided an update to the Board regarding the work he has completed on additional residential units noting Council approved a zoning by-law amendment to update some provisions related to those units. Member Carter noted the main changes are reducing some setbacks to allow for these units to be built in their rear yards and increasing the number of units permitted as a right.

Member Carter spoke regarding the Board providing commentary on different development files noting that is an area the Board can champion. Member Carter provided the Board with information regarding the designated area of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, noting the plan only allows for a maximum of one ARU and that ARU must be located in the main building. Member Carter noted the Town is beholden on the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan and cannot be more flexible than their policies, the Town has to at least meet those policies. Member Carter further noted Craighleith is contained in the Niagara Escarpment Plan and a lot of the area has municipal servicing and therefore would normally be permitted to have those additional residential units and permitted in a detached building. Member Carter noted that the Niagara Escarpment Plan does not allow for the additional residential units and noted there are plans to update the Niagara Escarpment Plan, in the near future. Member Carter suggested that as part of the process of updating the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Board can champion change but highlighting that in our Town, this is a huge limitation for those who wish to build ARU's.

F. Notice of Meeting Dates

May 10, 2024 – 10:00 a.m. - CANCELLED

May 28, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

June 6, 2024 – 2:00 p.m.

G. Adjournment

Moved by: Cat Cooper Seconded by: Nick Cloet

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation does now adjourn at (time) p.m. to meet again on May 28, 2024, or at the call of the Chair.

Yay (12): Shawn Everitt, Sam Dinsmore, Carrie Fairley, Andrea Matrosovs, Shawn McKinlay, Nicholas Cloet, Cat Cooper, Erica Dudley, Marco Hinds, Morgan May, Mylene McDermid, and Carter Triana

Carried.