



Board Report

The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation Board Meeting

Meeting Date: March 4, 2021
Meeting Time: 2:30 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers
32 Mill Street, Thornbury, ON

The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation Recommendations

NOTE: The following are recommendations from The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation to be considered for adoption by Council

- [Receive Minutes \(March 4, 2021\)](#)

Recommended (Move, second)

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation Board Meeting Minutes dated March 4, 2021, as attached, for information purposes.



Minutes

The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation

Meeting Date: Thursday, March 4, 2021
Meeting Time: 2:30 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers
Prepared by Sarah Merrifield, Executive Assistant Committees of Council

A. Call to Order

Mayor Alar Soever called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. and advised that he would Chair the first portion of the meeting as Councillor Sampson had a scheduling conflict. Board members present were Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, and Michael Schaefer. Board member Andrew Siegwart joined the meeting at 2:35 p.m. and Councillor Rob Sampson joined the meeting at 2:55 p.m. Executive Director Sharon McCormick was also present.

Town staff present was Director of Planning and Development Services Nathan Westendorp and Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt who joined the meeting following the call to order.

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 Anishnaabek, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples.

Corporation Member Attendance

Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Gavin Leitch

Seconded by: Michael Schaefer

THAT the Agenda of March 4, 2021 be adopted as circulated, including any additions.

Yay (7): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Mayor Alar Soever

Absent (2): Andrew Siegwart, Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 2 absent)

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

NOTE: In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the Town Procedural By-law 2019-56, Attainable Housing Corporation Members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

None

Previous Minutes (February 4, 2021, February 18, 2021)

Moved by: Cary Eagleson

Seconded by: Janet Findlay

THAT the Board meeting minutes of February 4, 2021 and the Special Board meeting minutes of February 18, 2021 be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made.

Yay (7): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Mayor Alar Soever

Absent (2): Andrew Siegwart, Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 2 absent)

Board member Andrew Siegwart joined the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Previous Closed Session Minutes (February 18, 2021)

Moved by: Andrew Siegwart

Seconded by: Gavin Leitch

THAT the Closed Session Board meeting minutes of February 18, 2021 be adopted as previously circulated.

Yay (8): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever

Absent (1): Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (8 to 0, 1 absent)

B. Staff Reports, Deputations, and Presentations

B.1 Deputations, if any

B.1.1 Nadia Galati, Principal, Process

Re: Communications Focus Group Report

Mayor Soever welcomed Nadia Galati, Principal, Process who provided a presentation regarding the Communications Focus Group Report. Executive Director Sharon McCormick advised that in 2020, The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation approved the expenditure to create a focus group to assess the Corporation's key messaging and leverage community knowledge with respect to communications.

Nadia Galati advised that the Focus Group includes 10 community members which includes adjacent neighbours/residents, prospective residents/tenants, the ratepayer association, local communications and media specialists, and local businesses and entrepreneurs. With respect to key findings, Nadia confirmed that the Focus Group acknowledged the need for attainable housing in The Blue Mountains but the current language used to discuss and describe attainable housing is confusing, unapproachable, and technical. It was noted there is community confusion regarding attainable versus affordable housing, and perhaps visual cues and aids could be used to provide clarity.

Nadia noted the Corporation could consider redefining attainable housing, and could consider rearticulating the impact of attainable housing within the community. Nadia noted the Corporation also may wish to redraft existing attainable housing messaging. The Focus Group felt that the Executive Director should be the core Corporation spokesperson and the messaging should identify attainable housing stories, visualizations, and highlight community benefits of attainable housing.

With respect to process, Nadia emphasized that accountability and transparency is vital, and should include analog methods of communication. The planning process should be clearly mapped out and delineated and a Communications Strategy should be developed to support transparent engagement.

Nadia explained that the participants appreciated being consulted and part of the accessible processes, and previous engagement processes in 2020 damaged relationships between the community and the Corporation. Board member Andrew Siegwart enquired which engagement process in 2020 damaged the Corporation and community's relationship. Nadia clarified that the 2020 survey that was undertaken with the original conceptual drawings and renderings seemed to provide information about what the buildings would look like, but the intent of the drawings was more to generate discussion and solicit feedback. Nadia suggested that perhaps future renderings could be done in sketch form rather than full conceptual modelling.

Board member Gavin Leitch enquired about the recommendation to complete a Communications Strategy, and what a Strategy of this nature would look like. Executive Director Sharon McCormick noted a Strategy could be developed and form part of a larger community engagement plan. There are immediate recommendations such as redrafting existing attainable housing messaging that can be undertaken while the full strategy is being developed. Nadia Galati noted the Strategy is essentially the Corporation's guide book to make it easier to share information.

Nadia noted that the Communications Focus Group is an opportunity to build relationships between the Corporation and the community. Gavin agreed and noted that in the absence of a robust communications plan, the public is developing its own narrative about attainable housing, particularly on social media.

Councillor Rob Sampson joined the meeting at 2:55 p.m. and noted the Corporation was hesitant to communicate until the plans until the Board had a fulsome project to communicate about. However, Council has now approved undertaking a planning application process so communication is imperative.

Mayor Soever thanked Nadia for the presentation.

Moved by: Andrew Siegwart

Seconded by: Michael Schaefer

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation receives Item B.1.1 Nadia Galati, Principal, Process Re: Communications Focus Group Report for information purposes and requests the Executive Director to develop an immediate/interim Communications and Action Plan for consideration.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Councillor Rob Sampson, Mayor Alar Soever

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

As Councillor Sampson was now in attendance, he assumed the role of Chair.

B.2 Public Comment Period (each speaker is allotted three minutes)

NOTE: In accordance with the Town Procedural By-law 2019-56 fifteen minutes is allotted at the Meeting to receive public comments regarding Attainable Housing Corporation matters included on the Agenda. The speaker shall provide their name and address, and shall address their comments to the Chair. Comments shall not refer to personnel, litigation or potential litigation matters, or matters that are a follow up to a Public Meeting.

NOTE: Board meetings are taking place virtually to assist with social distancing with respect to COVID-19. Comments received from the public that have not been included on the Agenda will be read at the meeting by the Executive Assistant.

None

B.3 Staff Reports, if any

None

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1 Gateway Site Design Guidelines Task Force Update –Steve Diamond and Jim Torrance Gateway Design Guideline Task Force members (verbal)

Councillor Sampson welcomed Gateway Site Design Guideline Task Force members Jim Torrance and Steve Diamond who provided an update with respect to the Task Force activities.

Jim Torrance, President of Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association, noted that the institution of the Task Force is a positive step and draws on community expertise. The initial focus of the Task Force was on building and design elements, and tenant experience but over the course of the discussion, the focus was expanded to include consideration of building structure.

Jim noted the Task Force took the approach of establishing criteria to guide the development of the Gateway Site, such as: the number of attainable units, the fit with the existing community aesthetic, and consideration of financial structure and viability. Jim emphasized that the Task Force's ultimate endorsement will be dependent on how the financials work for the Gateway Site.

Steve Diamond, Resident, thanked the Board for establishing the Task Force and commended Executive Director Sharon McCormick for her work to get the Task Force to move forward on a consensus basis. Steve confirmed that if the Task Force manages to reach consensus, it would be good for the Gateway Project. Steve noted that financial considerations should not drive planning outputs that affect scale and character. Steve advised he asked a design consultant and architect to review the 2 building option, with the goal of regaining the lost units that would be possible in the 1 building concept. Steve provided a visual aid that showed an L-shaped addition to the easterly building and a small set back between the 2 buildings to avoid the appearance of one continuous building. Steve noted that the Task Force supports the concept in principle, pending financial consideration.

Councillor Sampson noted his thanks to Jim and Steve for the update.

Board member Cary Eagleson enquired whether parking requirements had been discussed in detail. Steve noted the site plan parking does not include landscape design elements that would make the lot more visually appealing, and further noted that the amount of parking identified (170 stalls) is likely in excess of what is required. Jim echoed this, and noted by reducing commercial space, the parking requirements will also be lessened. It was confirmed that in order to substantiate that the number of units lost between one and two buildings, a fulsome modelling exercise would need to be undertaken.

Sharon noted the Task Force also discussed design elements that assist with people's perception of scale, such as materiality and texture beyond height of the building(s).

Councillor Sampson thanked Jim and Steve for the presentation.

Moved by: Janet Findlay

Seconded by: Patrick Gourlay

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation receives Item C.1 Gateway Site Design Guidelines Task Force Update (verbal) for information;

AND THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation directs the Executive Director to create a concept model of the four-storey Task Force proposal for consideration with New Commons Development to update the feasibility model;

AND THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation requests this model and design be compared against the three-storey version of the building for the Task Force's review.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

C.2 Business Community Roundtable Update – Sharon McCormick (verbal)

Sharon noted that with the support of Board member Andrew Siegwart, a roundtable event was hosted with business members of the community in an effort to understand how the business community can assist with the attainable housing initiative. The roundtable discussed potential for head leases or rent supplements, and also considered if there is an opportunity to use vacant properties for long-term rental to meet the housing needs of the community. Sharon noted that change of use limitations currently exist in the Short Term Accommodation framework that make it challenging for property owners to switch between offering short term and long term rentals. This is an impediment that bears further review.

Sharon noted she will leverage the Business Improvement Area, the Chamber of Commerce, and other associations to ensure additional businesses are captured in future roundtable meetings (next meeting date: April 27, 2021).

Board member Andrew Siegwart noted there was good enthusiasm demonstrated by participants, and a desire to ensure that any head lease opportunities could be leveraged by large and small businesses equally. The next step is for business owners who would like to register for units in the Gateway Site for their employees to sign up accordingly. Creation of a Head Lease structure would also be beneficial moving forward.

Board member Gavin Leitch enquired which sectors or business voices were missing from the roundtable, and requested clarity on whether transportation was discussed. Councillor Sampson noted there might be an opportunity to reach out to a ride sharing program and offer reservation of a number of parking stalls for the purpose of enhancing transportation opportunities at the Gateway Site. Andrew Siegwart noted that Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services, could attend to speak to existing and potential transit routes.

Moved by: Carolyn Letourneau

Seconded by: Patrick Gourlay

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation receives Item C.2 Business Community Roundtable Update (verbal) for information purposes.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

C.3 2021 Budget Update – Sharon McCormick

Executive Director Sharon McCormick provided an overview of the operation and preliminary capital budget for The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation. It was noted the request will be taken to Council in one ask to provide better line of sight.

Sharon reviewed the funding backdrop, the funding request to the Town being \$1.2 million in the existing operating/bridge loan to be refinanced from permanent financing arranged for the Gateway Project and reviewed the proposed terms and conditions of the loan.

The request to Council will also include a request to defer development charges due at the building permit stage to the start of construction, planning fees waiver, development charge waiver on attainable units, land contribution and demolition cost contribution with land contribution used to leverage additional grant opportunities from other levels of government for up to \$2.2 million.

Cary Eagleson provided an overview of the Corporation Cash Flow from 2021 to 2023 noting an ending cash balance in 2021 of \$100,967. Cary further reviewed the Gateway Build Cash Flow and noted the costs are currently based on a 4-storey, 1 building approval. Board member Michael Schafer noted the \$19 million hard build costs might be a low estimate, and emphasized that the Corporation needs to secure an independent cost consultant to validate the estimates. It was requested that when the material be provided to Council, the numbers be qualified as “order of magnitude” estimates.

Councillor Sampson noted that Council has already considered development charge contributions through the Community Improvement Plan process. Land Grant consideration was also made when Council and the Town set up The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation. Andrew commented that Whistler Housing Authority and Municipality of Whistler view attainable housing developments as an asset to both the housing authority and the municipality, because the developments allow for greater liquidity for future projects.

Michael noted that there might be too large a gap in the Project Timeline between the building permit and construction start. Sharon agreed and noted she would review the timeline.

Moved by: Patrick Gourlay

Seconded by: Cary Eagleson

THAT The Blue Mountain Attainable Housing Corporation (“BMAHC”) Board of Directors receives Item C.3 2021 Budget Update and adopts the Budget Update to be presented to TBM Council at the March 9 2021 Committee of The Whole Meeting.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, and Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

C.4 Financial Reporting Summary – Sharon McCormick

Moved by: Andrew Siegwart

Seconded by: Alar Soever

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation receives the Financial Reporting Summary for information purposes.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

C.5 Baker Tilly Resignation from Bookkeeping Services – Treasurer Cary Eagleson

Councillor Sampson declared a pecuniary interest and requested that Mayor Soever resume the role of Chair.

Moved by: Cary Eagleson

Seconded by: Patrick Gourlay

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation acknowledges the resignation of Baker Tilly for Bookkeeping Services and directs the Treasurer and Executive Director to solicit quotes for alternate bookkeeping services.

Yay (8): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever

Pecuniary Interest (1): Councillor Sampson

The motion is Carried (8 to 0, 1 pecuniary interest)

D. Correspondence

Councillor Sampson resumed the role of Chair at 4:36 p.m.

D.1 Alex Maxwell, Resident Re: Multi-generational Housing

NOTE: This correspondence referred by Council as it relates to secondary suites

Moved by: Alar Soever

Seconded by: Andrew Siegwart

THAT The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation receives correspondence item D.1 Alex Maxwell, Resident Re: Multi-Generational Housing for information purposes.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, and Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

E. New and Unfinished Business

E.1 Additions to the Agenda

E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at the Next Meeting

- Board sub-committees
- BMAHC Appointment to Town's EDAC Committee
- Code of Conduct Training – April 1, 2021
- Gateway Project Design Guidelines
- Governance Review
- Transportation and Transit Options in The Blue Mountains (invitation extended to Director of Community Services Ryan Gibbons)

F. Closed Session

Moved by: Gavin Leitch

Seconded by: Andrew Siegwart

THAT with regard to subsection 239 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation does now move into closed session in order to address a request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, if the council, board, commission or other body is the head of an institution for the purposes of that Act and with regard to a request received.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, and Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)

The Board went into closed session at 4:41 p.m.

The Board rose from closed session at 4:54 p.m.

Closed Session Reporting Out Statement

Councillor Sampson reported out of closed session that the Board gave direction to the Executive Director as it relates to a *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* request.

G. Notice of Meeting Dates

A Special meeting will be scheduled for mid-March 2021

April 1, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.

Town Hall, Council Chambers (Virtual)

H. Adjournment

Moved by: Gavin Leitch

Seconded by: Patrick Gourlay

The meeting of the Attainable Housing Corporation adjourned at 4:56 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

Yay (9): Cary Eagleson, Janet Findlay, Patrick Gourlay, Gavin Leitch, Carolyn Letourneau, Michael Schaefer, Andrew Siegwart, Mayor Alar Soever, and Councillor Rob Sampson

The motion is Carried (9 to 0)