

TOWN OF SMITHERS

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council held in Council Chambers, 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C., on Monday, May 25, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.

Council Present:

Cress Farrow, Mayor
Norm Adomeit, Councillor
Mark Bandstra, Councillor
Lorne Benson, Councillor
Jo Ann Groves, Councillor
Charlie Northrup, Councillor
Frank Wray, Councillor.

Staff Present:

Deborah Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark Allen, Director of Development Services
Alison Walker, Planner
Penny Goodacre, Recording Secretary.

Staff Excused:

Susan Bassett, Director of Corporate Services
Leslie Ford, Director of Finance
Andrew Hillaby, Director of Recreation, Parks and Culture
Keith Stecko, Fire Chief
Kelly Zacharias, Airport Manager/Deputy Fire Chief
Wilf Taekema, Director of Works and Operations.

Media Present: None.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Farrow called the meeting to order (6:04 p.m.).

2. **CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

- 2-1. Official Community Plan Draft 1 Review continued – left off last meeting on Page 64 Section 11.

Discussion:

11. TRANSPORTATION

Section 11.1 – Background:

Council raised concern over the wording of the transportation planning, especially the reference to bicycle traffic. Council stressed the importance of keeping bicycles and motorized scooters off the sidewalks and in the streets. They felt that bicycles should follow the same rules of the road as automobiles. D. Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that the use of the word “bicycle” is important for applying for grants.

Council discussed the need to be more specific with wording of the definition of pedestrian traffic, the definition for non-motorized traffic, and the definition of alternate forms of transportation, such as scooters, electric carts and bicycles.

It was suggested that the wording include “all modes of transportation”. D. Sargent cautioned against the use of that phrase as it could include “all terrain vehicles” and snowmobiles.

Northrup/

THAT Council delete the word "bicycle" from the second bullet in Section 11.1 Background, on page 64 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to state "To support transit, ~~bicycle~~ and pedestrian uses as key components of the transportation plan for the community."

**OPPOSED: COUNCILLORS ADOMEIT, BENSON,
and GROVES.**

DEFEATED.

Section 11.1 - Highway 16:

Northrup/

THAT Council remove the fifth paragraph on Section 11.1 Highway 16, page 65 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1, which states "Even though the highway corridor has been greatly improved in recent years, it is still recognized as a planning challenge. Issues identified include its overall attractiveness, lack of sidewalks, lack of attractive, standardized signage, poorly defined street edge due in part to the presence of frontage roads and a poorly defined gateway or entrance to the downtown area. In spite of significant improvements to the highway corridor there remains a perception that it does not reflect the sense of pride residents have in the community overall."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Benson/

THAT Council remove the word "extremely" from the first bullet on page 66 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to state "Business on frontage roads are not directly visible to through traffic, and depend on ~~extremely~~ large, high signage for visibility."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion occurred over the wording "particularly in the Main Street area" the third bullet on page 66 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 as it is referring to the Frontage Road. It was clarified that the wording was in reference to the parkland located in front of McDonald's and Petro Canada along Main Street. Discussion occurred over the need for landscaping to calm the traffic. Mayor Farrow suggested that the sidewalk needs to be a continued along Alberta Street, to keep the pedestrian traffic along the frontage roads and off the highway.

Section 11.1 – Transportation Options:

Adomeit/

THAT Council change section 11.1 transportation options on page 67 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to state that the transit has been in operation since 1991, not 2006.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Section 11.1 – Parking:

Discussion occurred over the section 11.1 parking paragraph on page 67. It was stated that in the past two parking studies have been completed. It was discussed that the downtown core does not have a parking issue but a parking management issue. There are the current existing non-conforming businesses and there are three or four different methods to create parking spots. The Town should just have one method on how to develop parking.

It was suggested that Council could manage parking by ticketing offenders on a regular basis. Councillor Benson replied that during the Brainstorming Session held at the Hudson Bay Lodge with the downtown merchants in February 2008, they raised concern over parking issues and that is why the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 makes a recommendation to create a parking commission.

Council agreed to dedicate a full Committee of the Whole meeting to the topic of parking in the downtown core.

11.2 OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Section 11.2.1 Street Network & Pedestrian Movement:

Bandstra/

THAT Council remove section 11.2.1. bullet 4 in policy 4 on Page 70 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 that states “The Town is committed to reducing the physical, social and institutional barriers that limit walking activity.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bandstra/

That Council remove section 11.2.1. policy 6 on page 70 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 that states “Support investigating the feasibility of constructing a more direct route to the ski area as an option to future paving of the existing 24 km access road. This study should also consider the need for future ski base development.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bandstra/

THAT Council remove the last sentence of Policy 9 in section 11.2.1. on page 71 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 that states "Long-term considerations will take priority over short-term cost savings to ensure long-lasting future facilities and minimize unnecessary future maintenance costs."

OPPOSED: COUNCILLORS BENSON and WRAY.

CARRIED.

Mayor Farrow requested that Staff reword and clarify section 11.2.1. policy 11 on page 71 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 and to include Alberta Street.

Section 11.2.2 – Highway 16:

Discussion occurred over section 11.2.2. policy 1 on page 72 that states "Ensure that additional off-street parking is available, for tourist use, in the high demand area between King and Queen Streets. Integrate structural and functional upgrades with adjacent land uses changes to develop safe, accessible parking."

D. Sargent stated this policy focuses on visitor parking, in order to allow tourists to pull off the highway safely and allow them to obtain directions to the town.

Mayor Farrow requested that Staff reword section 11.2.2. policy 1 on page 72 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to reflect more positive wording.

Benson/

THAT Council remove the words "heal and humanize" in the objective in section 11.2.2. on page 72 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion occurred over section 11.2.2. policy 4 on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1. Council stated they did not want a four-lane highway all the way to Chicken Creek and that Staff clarify and reword policy 4.

Council stated that there should be a bike lane installed from the Smithers Golf and Country Club course to Schibli Street, as this is very dangerous for pedestrians and bicycles along this section of the highway.

Section 11.2.3. – Transportation Options:

Bandstra/

THAT Council remove the wording from section 11.2.3. policy 1 on page 73 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 “and as part of new development plans to reduce the impacts of vehicles on the community.”

OPPOSED: COUNCILLORS ADOMEIT, BENSON, and WRAY. CARRIED.

Section 11.2.4. – Downtown Parking:

Northrup/

THAT Council remove the wording from section 11.2.4. policy 2 on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 “or alternative transportation infrastructure.”

OPPOSED: COUNCILLORS BENSON and WRAY. CARRIED.

Councillor Northrup suggested that the Town should number the parking lots with the businesses that paid for parking and that once the parking lots are full, then town should develop a new parking lot.

It was suggested that the designated handicap parking stalls along Main Street be painted blue to differentiate them from other parking stalls. Councilor Groves stated that the Measuring Up the North Working Group is currently conducting a community survey on how the Town could become more accessible.

Discussion occurred over section 11.2.4. policies 3 to 5 on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1. Is Council prepared to implement policy 3? In Policy 4 are we going to establish a downtown parking commission? In Policy 5 are we going to develop a downtown parking plan? The Town has already developed designated parking areas the public just needs to be educated as to where the parking area are.

Northrup/

THAT Council delete section 11.2.4. policy 3 on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “Amend the existing parking regulations in the Zoning Bylaw to reflect the parking recommendations made during the Downtown Charrette.”

OPPOSED: COUNCILLOR BENSON and WRAY. CARRIED.

Northrup/

THAT Council delete section 11.2.4. policy 4 on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “Establish a Downtown

Parking Commission to help decide the allocation of parking revenues and parking-in lieu payments.”

OPPOSED: COUNCILLOR BENSON.

CARRIED.

Northrup/

THAT Council delete section 11.2.4. policy 5 on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “Develop a Downtown Parking Plan to identify areas for additional parking development in conjunction with the cash-in-lieu reserve allocations.”

OPPOSED: COUNCILLOR BENSON.

CARRIED.

Northrup/

THAT Council remove in section 11.2.4. policy 6 the first and second bullet on page 74 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states, bullet one “Wayfinding and Gateway treatment for the enterances onto Main Street.” And bullet two “Goods Movement”.

OPPOSED: COUNCILLORS BENSON and GROVES.

CARRIED.

12. INFRASTRUCTURE, UTILITIES AND GREEN BUILDINGS

12.1 – Background:

Water:

Councillor Northrup read aloud the section 12.1 the third paragraph under the water heading on page 77 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 that states, “There is a small pocket of development near Fourth Avenue and Virginia Street, and Jackson Avenue, which are supplied with water through individual private wells. The area is isolated from the rest of settled Smithers by the golf course and servicing it with municipal water is not considered practical. It is intended that this area be incorporated into the Town water distribution system once the Town distribution has expanded enough to make it practical.”

Councillor Northrup suggested that the Town implement a water metering program on all water users in the Town boundaries. Mayor Farrow stated that Council schedule a Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss this topic further.

Councillor Wray pointed out that on the last paragraph on page 76 it should read “one sawmill”, not “two”.

12.2 OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Section 12.2.1. Efficient Infrastructure & Buildings:

Discussion over the current buildings all over town not having biofiltration and if this policy would force all buildings to install the new storm water biofiltration systems. It was suggested that policy 7 should include that new developments are to ensure the treatment of storm water. What is the cost to install these filtration systems on the fourteen town outflows? It would cost approximately \$20,000 each. It was suggested that instead of requiring every single building in the Town to install a filtration system, to have them placed instead on all the Town's outflows. There is probably a green grant fund out there for this type of system.

Mayor Farrow stated that Council schedule a Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss this topic further and to place this on the next Gord McIntosh Priorities Setting Workshop agenda.

Groves/

THAT Council reword section 12.2.1 policy 7 on page 79 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to state "Ensure the treatment of all storm water (for example through biofiltration) before discharge into water bodies, as required by provincial and federal regulations."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Farrow requested that Staff reword section 12.2.1. policies 8 to 18 on pages 79 and 80 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to condense into fewer policies and to use the word "encourage" not "require".

12.2.2 Capacity, Financing and Investment:

Groves/

THAT Council delete section 12.2.2. policy 3 on page 81 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states "Establish a Revitalization program to grant tax exemptions for a new or renovated developments that do one or more of the following: incorporate energy efficient technology, brownfield redevelopment, residential intensification, or major façade improvements".

OPPOSED: COUNCILLORS BENSON and WRAY.

CARRIED.

12.2.3. Water Safety and Conservation:

Councillor Northrup read aloud section 12.2.3. policy 1 on page 81 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states " Adopt strategies that reduce water consumption and wastewater generation such as: i. Outdoor technology

(efficient irrigation systems, xeriscaping, etc.); ii. Indoor technology (efficient plumbing fixtures and appliances, water meters); and iii. Educating owners of households and businesses, and the general public.”

Councillor Northrup stated that Council should create a bylaw to place water meters on all water users. D. Sargent suggested that Administration research the creation of a bylaw to install water meters on all water users and for all future developments.

Northrup/

THAT Council replace the word “require” with “encourage/promote” ing in section 12.2.3. policy 3 on page 82 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to state “encourage/promote the installation of low-flow fixtures in new development.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12.2.4. Waste Reduction:

Mayor Farrow requested that Staff reword section 12.2.4. policy 1 on page 82 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to include the Town is in favour of recycling, with the Council working on the objectives over time and when affordable, and the preamble to state that the Town recognizes that the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako manages solid waste and that the Town would like to reduce its solid waste.

Discussion occurred over the use on plastic bags and it was felt that Council should continue to lobby and encourage the Provincial Government to work towards a stewardship program, instead of forcing the municipalities to deal with the issue.

Groves/

THAT Council replace the word “discourage” into a more positive statement in section 12.2.4 policies 5 and 6 on page 82 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1;

AND THAT Council deletes the words “through varied permit fees and regulations.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Staff to reword section 12.2.4. policies 1 to 6 on page 82 as to be more positive.

13. HERITAGE, ARTS, CULTURE & EDUCATION

13.1 Background – Arts & Culture:

Wray/

THAT Council remove the words “through grants-in-aid” in section 13.1 first sentence of the fifth paragraph under Arts and Culture on page 85 of the Official

Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “The Town supports, through ~~grants-in-aid~~, the Smithers Public Library Association, the Bulkley Valley Museum and Historical Society, the Smithers Gallery Association and the Bulkley Valley Community Arts Council.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

13.2.1 Objectives & Policies – First Nations:

Bandstra/

THAT Council delete the first two sentences of section 13.2.1 policy 1 on page 87 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “Acknowledge that the Wet’suwet’en First Nation have a relationship to the lands that are now known as Smithers and that this connection extends back in time over thousands of years. The Town recognizes the relationship the Wet’suwet’en have to the land is deeper than the typical land use issues encountered by a municipality”.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

13.2.2. Heritage:

Northrup/

THAT Council remove section 13.2.2 policy 1 on page 87 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “Develop a heritage management plan to guide the protection and use of the Town’s historical buildings and places.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bandstra/

THAT Council reword section 13.2.2 policy 6 on page 88 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 to state “Be open to discussion of significant cultural value” instead of “invite”;

AND THAT Council remove that last sentence of section 13.2.2 policy 6 on page 88 “Protect areas of significant cultural values such as burial grounds, outdoor gathering places, etc.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

13.2.3 Arts & Culture:

Northrup/

THAT Council delete section 13.2.3. policy 2 on page 88 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states “Continue to support, through grants-in-aid funding, as the municipal budget allows, various local arts and cultural organizations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

14. COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

14.1 Background:

Councillor Northrup read aloud paragraph 4 on page 90 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1, which states "In addition to providing educational facilities, the existing school sites provide important recreational amenities for the residents of Smithers, including ball diamonds, soccer fields and play areas." He suggested that Council meeting with the schools to determine they want and need for future school lands on a more frequent basis.

14.2 OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

14.2.1 Schools:

Northrup/

THAT Council delete section 14.2.1 policy 3 on page 92 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states "Vacant school sites should be considered for the re-development of new schools."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Benson/

THAT Council include all schools as well as School District No. 54 in section 14.2.1 policy 3 on page 92 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

15. ECONOMIC, INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

15.1 Background:

Groves/

THAT Council direct Staff to reword section 15.1 paragraphs 2 and 3 on page 94 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 as they contradict each other.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Councillor Bandstra read aloud section 15.1 the last paragraph on page 95 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1, which states "The Bulkley Valley, including Smithers, is a recognized amenity migration destination because of its concentration of environmental, social and cultural amenities." He stated that not all residents are in the Valley due to amenity migration but are here for mineral exploration as well and felt that this statement is very disproportioned.

Northrup/

THAT Council remove the words "rather than chain stores" from section 15.1 the first sentence of paragraph 5 on page 96 of the Official Community Plan

Document Draft #1, which states "There is general agreement that future retail areas should be concentrated in the downtown and many residents would like to support local businesses, rather than chain stores."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Councillor Wray suggested that section 15.1 last sentence of paragraph 4 on page 96 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 replace the word "controlled" to "managed".

Bandstra/

THAT Council delete the wording in section 15.1 downtown paragraph 3 on page 96 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 "and there is overwhelming support to maintenance of this character."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Groves/

THAT Council remove in section 15.1 the first sentence of the last paragraph on page 96 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1 which states "The presence of large-format commercial retail stores or 'big-box' stores in Canada is still an issue for many residents";

AND THAT Council retain the sentence "The 2008 Downtown Charrette suggested that large format commercial ventures be allowed within specified areas of the downtown core subject to form and character regulations designed to ensure a net positive effect on the downtown and the community in general."

AND THAT Council add the wording "Encourage all commercial ventures to locate as close to the downtown core as possible, recognizing site limitations."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bandstra/

THAT Council remove in section 15.1 the last sentence of paragraph three on page 97 of the Official Community Plan Document Draft #1, which states "The impact of any future mining operations and their associated facilities needs to be managed cautiously."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Northrup/

THAT Council table the remainder of the agenda to follow the May 26, 2009, Council In-Camera meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **OTHER BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

None.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

Bandstra/
THAT the meeting be adjourned (9:15 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Certified Correct:

Cress Farrow
Mayor

Mark Allen
Director of Development Services

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Certified a True and Correct Copy of the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on Monday, May 25, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO