

TOWN OF SMITHERS

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD
IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1027 ALDOUS STREET, SMITHERS, B.C. ON
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011, AT 6:00 PM.

Council Present:

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

Council Excused:

Frank Wray, Councillor.

Staff Present:

Deborah Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark Allen, Director of Development Services
Alison Walker, Planner
Janice McKay, 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
Rob Blackburn, Airport Manager
Wilf Taekema, Director of Works and Operations.

Media Present: R. Schierer, The Interior News.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Farrow called the meeting to order (6:01 p.m.).

2. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS

2.1 SECONDARY SUITES

Benson/

THAT Report DEV 11-04 dated December 24, 2010, from A. Walker, Planner, regarding secondary suites, be received (3760-20).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There was discussion regarding: a) the number of existing secondary suites in Smithers; b) enforcement of illegal suites versus encouraging homeowners to legalize, i.e. by allowing an amnesty period for homeowners to make suites compliant under the Building Code ; c) additional benefits of secondary suites, such as home security; d) the effects to apartment owners by increasing the number of secondary suites; e) utility fees for secondary suites should not be subsidized by taxpayers; f) interconnected heating systems; g) providing the new Secondary Suites Policy to insurance companies, so that their clients are properly insured; and h) the ability to issue a Section 57 Notice on Title if there is a life safety issue.

There was consensus regarding the following: a) Council wishes to encourage affordable housing options; b) an owner of a building with a secondary suite would not be required to live in the home; and c) allowing secondary suites in duplexes is a possibility.

Staff was directed to prepare a survey for the public to complete at the Community Energy Plan Open House being held May 4, 2011.

Northrup/

THAT the Zoning Bylaw be amended to permit secondary suites in the R-1 Single Family Residential Zone.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Adomeit/

THAT the water and sewer services' rate for secondary suites be 40 percent of the full residential rate.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Staff was directed to charge homes with secondary suites at 100 percent of the garbage collection fee, only if a second cart is required.

There was concensus that utilities for secondary suites would be billed for year-round occupancy of the suite, whether or not this is the case.

Adomeit/

THAT staff report back to Council with a list of the pros and cons of allowing secondary suites in duplexes in R-2 zones.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Northrup/

THAT staff rewrites the Secondary Suites Policy to ensure clarity and consistency with the regulation and enforcement of secondary suites, by addressing the five points listed in Recommendation 2 in Report DEV 11-04, and by implementing Council's decisions from this meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2.2 DOWNTOWN PARKING

Adomeit/

THAT Report DEV 11-21 dated March 9, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, regarding Downtown Parking, be received (5480-01).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There was discussion regarding: a) whether or not Smithers has a parking problem, given that there are many unused parking areas around Town; b) whether or not to reduce parking lot development and landscaping requirements, or, alternatively, to maintain the current standards to ensure quality, aesthetics, and the pedestrian ambience of the downtown; c) should a percentage of landscaping, depending on lot size, be implemented?; d) danger of parking areas that result in having to back onto streets; e) the need for enforcement when people use parking spaces that aren't theirs; f) the need for disabled, on-street parking signs along with pavement markings; g) the challenges of crediting on-street parking spaces; and h) the Town's zoning regulations do not address employee/customer parking.

There was consensus regarding: a) Section 2.9.7 (a), Items (i) to (viii) Design and Maintenance Standards; b) keeping the number of parking spaces required for “all other permitted uses in the C-1, C-1A, C-3 and C-6 zone or parking required for similar types of uses”, at 1 per 45 square metres of gross floor area, but changing to 1 per **60** square metres of gross floor area for retail uses; c) widening the street to create parking stalls (as was done by Heartstrings) would be considered by Council, if there were a variance request put forward by the applicant; d) not to change the percentage of parking spaces allowed for small vehicles; and e) not to provide adjacent on-street parking credits.

Staff was directed to: a) install a disabled parking sign in front of Wooden Mallard; b) improve signage directing the public to parking areas (and to Riverside Campground), including areas for RV parking; and c) report back to Council regarding shared parking based on peak times for non-concurrent uses.

Northrup/

THAT the number of parking spaces required for “Auxiliary Residential Uses in the C-1 and C-1A zone” and “Auxiliary Residential” be reduced from 1.5 per dwelling unit to 1 per dwelling unit.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bandstra/

THAT Item f) of Report DEV 11-21, to investigate the Town purchasing land to be developed for future parking, be referred to a future In-Camera Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Northrup/

THAT staff bring back a bylaw to amend the Zoning Bylaw, by the end of September, incorporating Council’s decisions tonight;

AND THAT the amended Zoning Bylaw contain a clause stating that the cash-in-lieu fee will change from \$5,500 to \$11,000 per parking space.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Councillor Bandstra suggested that letters be sent to advise property owners with covenanted parking spaces that Council is considering increasing the cash-in-lieu fee, and offering the opportunity to pay out the covenanted parking spaces at the \$5,500 per space rate, prior to the adoption of the amended Zoning Bylaw.

3. OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS

None.

4. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Northrup/

THAT the meeting be adjourned (8:18 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Cress Farrow
Mayor

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO

Certified a True and Correct Copy of the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held Wednesday, March 30, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Office, 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO